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## Child Protection Policy

Approved by the EREA Board: 5 December 2017

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**Rationale:** EREA is committed to the creation of positive and robust child protection cultures, ensuring that all children who are a part of the EREA Network are safe and valued members of their school communities.

EREA has zero tolerance for child abuse and regards its child protection responsibilities with the utmost importance. EREA is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations, and to maintaining a child safe culture.

**Principles:** This policy is based on the EREA Charter and underpinned by EREA core values. The following principles guide the development and regular review of our work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse:

1. All children have the right to be safe.
2. The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount.
3. The views of the child and a child's privacy must be respected.
4. Clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children are established in the EREA Child Safety Code of Conduct within the EREA Code of Conduct.
5. The safety of children is dependent upon the existence of a child safe culture.
6. Procedures are in place to screen all staff, Direct Contact Volunteers, Third Party Contractors and External Education Providers who have direct contact with children.
7. Child safety and protection is everyone's responsibility.
8. Child protection training is mandatory for all workers as required by legislation.
9. Procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse are simple and accessible.
10. Children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds have the right to special care and support including those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
11. Children who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support.

**Policy Statement:** Child abuse includes sexual offences, grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, serious neglect and a child's exposure to family violence. EREA is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and demonstrates this commitment through the implementation of a comprehensive Child Protection Program designed to keep children safe.

The purpose of this policy is to provide the overall framework for child protection within EREA. Specifically, the policy provides a statement of the overall goals of EREA to protect all children in the EREA network and keep them free from harm. The policy directs individuals to specific guidelines, processes and procedures that must be followed when a child is in need of protection. The policy aims to ensure that child protection is a paramount consideration in all EREA schools and entities.

**Applicable To:** All in EREA including its schools and entities.

**Key Responsibilities: EREA Board**

The **EREA Board** has responsibility for approving the Child Protection Policy and to ensure that appropriate procedures and guidelines are in place to assist all to comply with the policy.

**EREA Executive Director**

The **Executive Director** is responsible for ensuring that EREA complies with its legal, regulatory and procedural obligations through the implementation of this policy and the development of procedures and guidelines to be followed in adhering to this policy.

The **Executive Director** will ensure that sound governance and management practices are applied and that EREA meets the highest standards in relation to the protection of children.

The **Executive Director** will ensure that all who have the delegated responsibility to employ in EREA, screen employees in accord with relevant state or territory legislated requirements.

The **Executive Director** will ensure written reports regarding abuse or potential abuse of a child are received by EREA and promptly provided to a police officer and the relevant State Government Child Protection Department where this is required by legislation.

### **EREA Regional Directors and Chair Youth+**

The **Regional Directors** and the **Chair Youth+** have a primary responsibility to ensure that EREA schools and entities within their region maintain the highest standards in relation to the protection of children.

The **Regional Directors and the Chair Youth+** will receive written reports regarding abuse or potential abuse of a child and will promptly give a copy of reports to a police officer, the Executive Director and the relevant State Government Child Protection Department where this is required by legislation.

### **Principals**

**Principals** are responsible for adhering to this policy and ensuring the Child Protection programs developed for all EREA schools as part of the EREA national Governance, Risk, Compliance and Policy project are implemented, managed and reported, as per their role

**Principals** will receive written reports regarding abuse or potential abuse of a child and will promptly give a copy of the report to a police officer, and the relevant State Government Child Protection Department where this is required by legislation. In cases involving Reportable Conduct, Principals will give a copy of the report to the Regional Director and the EREA Executive Director.

**Principals** will advise the School Board of significant Child Protection issues.

### **Obligations:**

State legislation provides for mandatory reporting when it is suspected that a child is being harmed or abused. EREA expects strict compliance with legislative mandatory reporting requirements and all other child protection laws.

When a person suspects that a child is in need of protection, the person **must** comply with the procedures in the EREA Child Protection Program of their jurisdiction.

When engaging with children, persons within the EREA community **must** comply with the appropriate behaviour standards in the EREA Child Safety Code of Conduct in the EREA Code of Conduct.

### **Effective from:**

**5 December 2017**

### **Review:**

The EREA Child Protection Policy will be reviewed every four years unless there is a legislative or regulatory requirement to do so earlier.

**Related Information:** The EREA Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

EREA Child Protection Program (NSW) – *ComplisSpace web-enabled content*

EREA Child Protection Program (QLD) - *ComplisSpace web-enabled content*

EREA Child Protection Program (SA) - *ComplisSpace web-enabled content*

EREA Child Protection Program (VIC) - *ComplisSpace web-enabled content*

TCEO Child Protection Program (TAS) - *ComplisSpace web-enabled content*

EREA Child Protection Program (WA) - *ComplisSpace web-enabled content*

EREA Child Protection Program (ACT) - *ComplisSpace web-enabled content*

EREA Student Duty of Care Program - *ComplisSpace web-enabled content*

EREA Code of Conduct

Relevant Legislation in each State and Territory