

ACCUSTOM DRIVING SCHOOL AND TRAINING CENTRE

CHILD SAFE ENVIROMENT POLICY

Purpose of policy

Our child safe environments policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of our organisation to the safety of children and young people and establishing and maintaining child safe and child-friendly environments.

We aim to create a child safe and child-friendly environment where all children and young people are respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential.

This policy will outline the roles of responsibilities of management, employees, contractors, students, volunteers, children, young people and families.

This policy complies with the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*, *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016* and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Commitment to the safety of children and young people

All members of the Accustom Driving School and Training Centre will ensure:

- that children and young people are valued, respected and encouraged to participate and that the safety and protection of children and young people is always the first priority.
- that all children and young people are embraced regardless of their abilities, sex, gender, or social economic or cultural background and equity is upheld.
- that bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.

The management of the Accustom Driving School and Training Centre will ensure that there will be displayed information about services that can assist children and young people (such as the Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800 and Youth Helpline on 1300 13 17 19) in areas accessed by them.

Scope of policy

This policy will outline the roles of responsibilities of Managers, employees, contractors, students, volunteers, children, young people and families.

Management, employees, contractors and volunteers (referred to throughout this policy as workers) will be required to read and agree to comply with both the Code of Conduct for a Child Safe Organisation and this Policy.

Any agreement with contractors will include a condition that they accept and comply with both the Code of Practice and this Policy.

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Definitions

Include the following information:

Child or young person - persons under 18 years of age.

Contractor – Any person employed by Accustom Driving School and Training Centre as a driving instructor or examiner or trainer on a temporary basis.

Worker – Any person employed by Accustom Driving School and Training Centre as a driving instructor or examiner or trainer or administration on a ongoing basis.

Complainant – person who makes a complaint.

Harm - Section 17 of the Safety Act defines 'harm' to mean physical or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission), including harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect.

Manager – any person who holds a management position at the Accustom Driving School and Training Centre and would include but not limited to the positions of Company Director, General Manager and Assistant Manager.

National Police Check - a summary of an individual's offender history in Australia and a record of their criminal history relating to convictions, finding of guilt or pending court proceedings. They are available from South Australia Police (SAPOL) or organisations accredited by the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission.

It is an organisational decision if a National Police Certificate (NPC) is required for workers or volunteers, however the organisation can no longer use the NPC to assess if a person is suitable to work or volunteer with children in South Australia, this must be determined by a valid, not prohibited Working with Children Check.

Working with Children Check - People working or volunteering with children in South Australia must, by law, have a valid, not prohibited Working with Children Check. A Working with Children Check is an assessment of whether a person poses an unacceptable risk to children. As part of the process, the Screening Unit will look at criminal history, child protection information and other information.

Communication

The Code of Conduct for a Child Safe Organisation and Child Safe Environments Policy will be made available to any worker, child and young person or their parent at the request of that person to any member of management of the Accustom Driving School and Training Centre.

The Accustom Driving School and Training Centre web site will include both the Code of Conduct and this Policy.

At the induction of any worker the Code of Conduct and this Policy will be provided, explained and agreed to by the new worker.

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Accustom informs students/clients/children or young people of methods on how to provide Accustom with feedback/complaints upon enrolment and also within training handbooks & communication of confirmation of training.

Code of Conduct is on display in Accustom's office, available to read in provided training handbooks and also on our website.

Examples of how Accustom involve children and young people to participate are:

- clearly communicating using age and developmentally appropriate language
- educating children and young people on their rights including their right to safety and right to be listened to
- Accustom provided hard copy & online feedback forms which invites formal or informal feedback from all students, children and young people about their experiences with Accustom
- Accustom understands that students & child & young people wellbeing means a state of being healthy, happy, and comfortable, both physically and mentally
- Accustom understands that students and child & young people safety includes matters related to protecting all children and young people from harm, managing the risk of harm, providing support to a child at risk of harm, and responding to suspicions, incidents, disclosures or allegations of harm
- Accustom informs children of their rights as per:
<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/education/what-are-childrens-rights>
 - the right to be treated fairly
 - the right to have a say about decisions affecting you
 - the right to live and grow up healthy
 - the right to be safe no matter where you are
 - the right to get an education
 - the right to play and have fun!

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Code of conduct

At the induction of any new worker the Code of Conduct will be provided, explained and agreed to by the new worker.

The Code of Conduct will be available on the Accustom Driving School and Training Centre website.

Reporting of a suspected breach of the Code of Conduct can be made to any member of management. If the report is being made by a worker then the report should be made in person or by telephone on 8821 3340 or email accustomconsulting@gmail.com to a manager as soon as possible, followed by a written report of the incident.

If a student, child or young person or a family member wishes to report a suspected breach of the Code of Conduct they can report this suspicion to any worker in person or by telephone on 8821 3340 or email accustomconsulting@gmail.com. On receiving such a report from a student, child or young person or a family member the worker will inform a manager as soon as possible.

On receiving a report of a suspected breach of the Code of Conduct, the Management of the Accustom Driving School and Training Centre will conduct a timely investigation into the allegation.

If the Management of the Accustom Driving School and Training Centre believe the allegation has been proved beyond the balance of probabilities, then disciplinary action will be taken against the worker.

This disciplinary action could include, but not be limited to counselling, suspension of employment or termination of employment or contract.

Recruitment

When recruiting new workers any advertising of positions will include a commitment by the Accustom Driving School and Training Centre to child safety and wellbeing.

Any face to face interviews of potential new worker will include behavioral questions in relation to child safeguarding.

The screening process of potential workers will include at least two referee checks and qualification checks.

The Accustom Driving School and Training Centre will verify new workers have a current, not prohibited Working with Children Check before employing them to work with children and young people, and for existing employees, management will verify they have renewed their Working with Children Check every 5 years and the status remains as not prohibited. Verification will be done online through the Organisation Portal accessed via the DHS Screening Unit. We are registered with the DHS Screening Unit and will link all Working with Children Checks to our registration.

The Accustom Driving School and Training Centre will advise the Screening Unit when the Accustom Driving School and Training Centre becomes aware of certain information regarding any person involved with this organisation, including any serious criminal offence, child protection information, or disciplinary or misconduct information.

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Supervision, training and support for employees and volunteers

All workers will successfully complete a Safe Environments for Children and Young People course within six months of commencing their employment with the Accustom Driving School and Training Centre. All workers will complete 3 yearly refreshers with continuous employment.

Management will appoint a Child Safety Officer who will have a child safety education role within this organisation and can assist in mandatory reporting or other advice.

As of 12/12/23 appointed Child Safety Officer is: Narelle Burgemeister.

During the induction process of any new worker, they will receive copy of this policy and it be made clear to them of their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.

Reporting and responding to harm or risk of harm

The Accustom Driving School and Training Centre's core business is providing driving instruction and other short courses. Many of the driving students are children or young people and some students in the short courses are children or young people.

As a result, children and young people regularly attend the office to speak to the administrative workers.

As the Accustom Driving School and Training Centre is designed to provide training to a child or young person, then all workers would be mandated notifiers.

All mandated notifiers have a legal obligation to report a reasonable belief that a child or young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

A report regarding the reasonable belief that a child or young person is, or may be, at risk of harm is to be made to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 131478, by eCARL or if at immediate risk, report to South Australia Police (SAPOL) on 000.

The worker who identifies the harm or risk of harm is the person who makes the report to CARL/SAPOL and this is not reported internally for another worker to determine if it is a reportable matter.

All adult workers (even if not a mandated notifier) have a legal obligation to report child sexual abuse to the police and to protect a child from sexual abuse. Failure to meet these obligations may be considered a criminal offence.

The worker will be guided by the relevant authority (Department for Child Protection/SA Police) about how to proceed after a notification.

Once a report has been made and the child is safe, management of the Accustom Driving School and Training Centre is to be immediately advised and an Accustom Incident Report Form filled out.

Accustom will provide ongoing support / referrals to support to all workers, students, children or young people involved.

Accustom will follow disciplinary action for any worker if involved in an incident of misconduct to our child safe policy/code of conduct.

If a worker is reported to CARL or SA Police, the worker will be removed from any role that involves working with any child or young person until authorities have concluded their investigation.

Current as at 26/10/2023

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Accustom will support our students, children, young people and their families following a report by:

- referring the child, young person or their family to other appropriate services
- continuing to provide a service to the child or young person and their family and monitoring their circumstances

Reporting and responding to general complaints or feedback^[A1]

We have a separate Accustom Internal Document for customer complaints/feedback that includes a step by step process for workers to follow.

At the end of our services Students are given feedback forms, verbally asked feedback or provided with an online feedback form along the way and at the end of their scheduled training/assessment. Enrolment forms also provide information on how to contact us for providing feedback or complaints via in person to any worker, by phone on 8821 3340 or text 0407 488 200 or email accustomconsulting@gmail.com or post to 43 Russell Street Matta Flat SA 5554.

We will deal with all complaints and feedback received from children, young people or their families promptly, sensitively and fairly. We will:

- listen to the complaint/feedback
- the person receiving the complaint will make a record of it if received verbally
- advise of the time expected for an outcome
- if a worker receives a complaint, they must forward it to management as soon as possible
- management will respond to the complainant with an outcome within 2 business days
- clearly document and securely store decisions and actions taken in response to complaints and feedback
- make sure that procedural fairness is followed at all times.

If the child, young person or their family is not happy with the outcome from the complaints process they can contact

- Australian Human Rights Commission Online: www.humanrights.gov.au Tel: 1300 656 419
- South Australian Equal Opportunities Commission (for complaints relating to discrimination) Online: www.eoc.sa.gov.au Tel: 08 8207 1977.

Once Accustom Management receives information of a complaint or feedback it will then be decided if this breaches code of conduct or staff misconduct.

Current as at 26/10/2023

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The process of general complaints/feedback should not be confused with mandatory reporting. Reporting and responding to harm or risk of harm in Child Safe Policy should be followed e.g. the mandatory reporter who is made aware of harm/ receives a disclosure, is the person to make the report to CARL/SAPOL.

Risk management

Identified risk	Actions to minimise risk
Culture of organisation is not child-safe focussed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> child focused Code of Conduct is in place that sets the behavioural standards expected including what happens when a breach occurs culture of management reflects our strong commitment to the safety of children and young people the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations are embedded in policies and procedures we meet the requirements of the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</i> (which mandates child safe environments) and the <i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i> (which mandates Working with Children Checks)
Organisational workers harm children/young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recruitment processes including undertaking referee checks to ensure the suitability of persons before they are employed/volunteer with our organisation interview questions (no prior preparation) should gauge an applicant's understanding of child safe principles and actions that would be taken to prevent harm to children and young people all workers have WWCC with 'not prohibited' result prior to working with children and young people WWCCs updated every 5 years and status remains as not prohibited children and young people and their families are given a copy of our Child Safe Environments policy and complaints and feedback process
Organisational workers don't understand their obligations to report harm and risk of harm to the Child Abuse Report Line (or SA Police if child/young person is at immediate risk)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all workers trained in Safe Environments – Through their Eyes on commencement and refresher training every 3 years after all workers trained in Responding to Risk of Harm and Neglect – Education and Care on commencement and refresher training every 3 years after all workers must abide by the child safe environments policy and Code of Conduct (latter is signed on commencement with organisation)
Physical contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> any physical contact must be appropriate to the delivery of services being provided

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• where physical contact is required, this is undertaken in a safe way by explaining why contact is required and what will happen, and asking the child/young person for their permission (or their family if this is more appropriate) before proceeding• unnecessary physical contact is not allowed
Online communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• cyber safety and social media guidelines are in place and provided to all workers• appropriate supervision is provided for all online activities• workers must not communicate with children or young people via social media
Transport of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the worker must have a valid, unrestricted driver's licence• the vehicle must be registered, insured and in roadworthy condition• a worker when alone in a vehicle with a child or young person must follow this policy
Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• if child/young person not collected by parent/guardian at end of class/training, one adult is to stay in view of CCTV with child/young person until they are collected
Taking images of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• consent of child young person and their parent/guardian required• disclosure will be made as to how the image is to be used and consent must be provided by the child, young person and parent/guardian• images must be presented in a way that de-identifies the child or young person
Physical environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• maintain a risk register that is reviewed annually to ensure effectiveness• conduct risk assessments for all activities• ensure all equipment is in good working order
Privacy and confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• all documents containing confidential information will be stored privately in a locked filing cabinet (or similar place with restricted access)• digital files containing confidential information shall be protected electronically by restricting the access to only those requiring it to perform their duties• workers must not disclose information regarding any child or young person without written consent of the child, young person and their parent/guardian
Off-site activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• privacy when children or young people are toileting must be provided• children and young people will not be left under the supervision of unauthorised persons• children and young people have the right to contact their parents, or another adult, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or distressed during the off site activities

Policy review

Accustom Driving School & Training Centre will, at a minimum, review this policy and the related procedures once every 5 years as required by the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017. Accustom Driving School & Training Centre will also review this policy when:

- new or added risks are identified for children or young people, which may require a change in the policy or procedures
- a critical incident where a child or young person has experienced harm through involvement in the organisation
- concerns are raised by anyone involved in your organisation about child safety or welfare in the organisation
- awareness or compliance to the child safe policy and/or procedures is low
- legislative changes/requirements.

Accustom Driving School & Training Centre will lodge a new child safe environments compliance statement with the Department of Human Services each time Accustom Driving School & Training Centre review and update this policy.

Policy Date: 23/10/2023

Review Date: 23/10/2028