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# Child Safe Code of Conduct

## Coverage:

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, children, young people, parents and carers who access Busways services and anyone working with or around children in our organisation.

## 1 Purpose

Busways is committed to ensuring that children and young people are treated with sensitivity, respect, fairness and dignity within a welcoming and supportive environment that is free from all types of abuse and inappropriate behaviour.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children from abuse, promote their rights, and create a safe and positive environment for all children involved in our programs and activities and outlines the minimum standards of behaviour expected during any interactions with children and young people in accessing Busways services.

This Code of Conduct does not cover every situation – however, the values, ethics and standards it sets are a reference point to help make decisions relating to situations not referred to in this Code of Conduct.

## 2 Overview

Employees, contractors and volunteers ('Workers') must be aware of potential situations and actions that may be misinterpreted or misconstrued when working with children or young people. It is important to adopt safe work practices, such as working in open and visible environments when with children and young people.

Workers are expected to role model positive behaviours by ensuring that children and young people feel included, valued, and respected in all interactions. Adopting a calm and non-judgmental attitude helps young people feel safe to raise complaints or concerns. Where necessary, Workers should explain grievance procedures and avenues for complaint in simple and clear language that is appropriate to the age of the child or young person as is set out in Section 5 below.

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## 2.1 Breaches of the Code

All Workers have a responsibility for promoting and supporting these values and standards of behaviour.

When a Worker is found to have acted outside of this Child Safe Code of Conduct, they may be subject to disciplinary action commensurate with the seriousness of their actions. This disciplinary action may take the form of a warning, counselling or termination of their employment.

Breaches of this Code of Conduct will be investigated on a case-by-case basis and may result in disciplinary action, including termination of a Worker's engagement. Serious breaches may be reported to the appropriate legal authorities.

Busways will also comply with mandatory reporting obligations in accordance with relevant legislation.

## 2.2 Acknowledgment

All Workers must sign an acknowledgment form to confirm that they have read, understood, and agree to comply with the Child Safe Code of Conduct through Busways Learning Management System.

# 3 Behaviour Guidelines

## 3.1 Principles

1. **Respect and Dignity:** Treat all children with respect and dignity, regardless of their race, gender, religion, culture, or abilities. This foundational principle ensures that every child feels valued and respected in all interactions.
2. **Best Interests of the Child:** Prioritise the best interests of the child in all actions and decisions. Workers should always consider what is most beneficial for the child's well-being and development.
3. **Zero Tolerance for Harm:** Maintain a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of harm, exploitation, or neglect of children. Any suspicions or evidence of abuse must be reported immediately to the designated safeguarding officer via email: [er@busways.com.au](mailto:er@busways.com.au) or via phone: 02 9497 1800 as well as the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 as soon as practicable. If the child or young person is at immediate risk, report to the NSW or SA Police on 000.
4. **Safe Environment:** Provide a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment for children. This includes physical safety as well as emotional and psychological well-being.

## 3.2 Acceptable Behaviour

The following outlines the minimum expectations of acceptable behaviour when dealing with children and young people:

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- Treat children with respect and be a positive role model in my conduct with them.
  - Communicate with the children in an age appropriate and realistic manner.
  - Set clear boundaries about appropriate behaviour between myself and a child.
  - Be aware of physical boundaries and avoid any physical contact to themselves or their property.
  - Be willing to listen and respond appropriately to a child's views and concerns.
  - Respond quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by a child or related to a child.
  - Abide by any reporting obligations to ensure the safety of children and young people.
  - Adopt a calm and non-judgemental attitude to allow young people to feel safe to raise complaints or concerns.
  - Where necessary, explain grievance procedures and avenues for complaints in simple and clear language that is appropriate to the age of the child or young person.

### **3.3 Unacceptable Behaviour**

The following outlines the minimum expectations of unacceptable behaviour when dealing with children and young people:

- Refrain from any physical contact with a child or their belongings.
- Do not develop personal relationships with children outside of professional responsibilities.
- Never subject a child to corporal punishment, social isolation, immobilisation, sexual suggestion, offense, or misconduct.
- Do not direct a child to perform in a sexually provocative or unsafe manner.
- Avoid communicating with a child in ways that may humiliate, frighten, or distress them.
- Do not engage in private messaging or social media contact with children.
- Abstain from using tobacco products or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while working with children.
- Avoid developing any 'special' relationships with children that may be perceived as grooming or favouritism, such as offering gifts or special treatment.
- Refrain from performing tasks of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Discrimination against a child or young person based on ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, sexuality, or any other grounds is unacceptable.

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- Hitting or physically assaulting a child or young person is strictly prohibited.
  - Using offensive, abusive, or inappropriate language is not tolerated.
  - Showing preferential treatment to a child or young person over others is not allowed.
  - Shouting, yelling, or speaking to a child or young person in an angry, intimidating, or threatening manner is unacceptable.
  - Engaging in rough physical play or unnecessary physical contact with children or young people is prohibited.
  - Condoning or participating in illegal or unsafe behaviours when working with children or young people is strictly prohibited.
  - Making inappropriate self-disclosures related to participation (past or present) in illegal or unsafe behaviours is not permitted.
  - Initiating or engaging in 'friendship' relationships with a child or young person, socializing outside the work environment, or taking them to your home or unauthorized outings is unacceptable.
  - Acting in a sexually inappropriate manner, including verbal, physical, or implied behaviours, is strictly prohibited.
  - Initiating or developing a physical/sexual 'relationship' with a child or young person, or any relationship that could be deemed as exploitative or abusive, is not tolerated.

## 4 Reporting Obligations

All Workers have a responsibility to immediately report any suspicions, allegations, or disclosures of harm or child abuse to the designated safeguarding officer via email: [er@busways.com.au](mailto:er@busways.com.au) or phone: 02 9497 1800. It is crucial to always maintain confidentiality while ensuring that necessary information is shared with the appropriate authorities.

All Workers play a role in supporting this Code of Conduct by raising any concerns with their Team Leader, Manager, or Human Resources. Compliance questions raised by Workers, or the community will be addressed by the relevant Human Resources team member.

All Workers have a legal obligation to report child sexual abuse to the police and to protect a child from sexual abuse.

If Workers have any difficulties or questions regarding this Child Safe Code of Conduct, they should discuss these with their Team Leader, Manager or Human Resources.



## 5 Complaints and feedback

Providing opportunities for complaints and feedback ensures that children, young people and their families feel valued and respected and enables us to improve the quality of our service.

Compliments, complaints or feedback can be provided verbally to any Worker or direct to management either by telephone on [insert phone number] or via email at [insert email address].

We will deal with all complaints and feedback received 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 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 in a timely manner;
- clearly document and securely store decisions and actions taken in response to complaints and feedback; and
- make sure that procedural fairness is followed at all times.

## 6 Reference

### 6.1 Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Child or young person	Any person under 18 years of age
Harm	includes physical and psychological harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse caused by neglect.
Workers	Employees, contractors and volunteers

### 6.2 Supporting Documentation

Name
Child Protection Policy

### 6.3 Reference Documents (External)

Name
Nil

## 6.4 Performance Indicators / Reporting

Performance indicator	Date source(s)	Comments
Nil		

# 7 Governance

## 7.1 Responsibilities

Appointment	Responsibilities
All Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate the appropriate behaviours outlined within this document at all times</li> <li>Report any instance of breaches to your Manager immediately</li> </ul>
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure this Code of Conduct is implemented and regularly reviewed</li> <li>Manage any occurrences of breaches to this document</li> <li>Manage any reports of child abuse, ensure appropriate action is taken, and provide support and guidance to staff and volunteers.</li> <li>Ensure this Code of Conduct is accessible to employees, clients and customers through appropriate channels</li> <li>Maintain accurate records of mandatory reporting obligations and ensure any reporting is conducted in accordance with legal requirements</li> </ul>
Learning & Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all employees are adequately trained and have acknowledged acceptance of this document</li> </ul>
<b>Procedure Reviewer</b>	HR Strategy & Project Manager
<b>HR Compliance Reviewer</b>	HR Strategy & Project Manager
<b>Procedure Approval Authority</b>	Head of Human Resources

## 7.2 Change History

Version	Date	Action Officer	Change
1	15 Mar 2024	HR Strategy & Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial Issue</li> </ul>
2	16 June 2026	HR Strategy & Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 5 added addressing requirements for complaints and feedback</li> </ul>

## 7.3

## 7.4 Approval

<b>Document Number</b>	
<b>Responsible Department</b>	Human Resources
<b>Approval authority</b>	Head of Human Resources
<b>Date effective</b>	16 June 2024
<b>Review date*</b>	15 June 2026
<b>Version</b>	2
<b>Content enquiries</b>	<a href="mailto:hrhelpdesk@busways.com.au">hrhelpdesk@busways.com.au</a>

*\*Unless otherwise indicated, this document will still apply beyond the review date.*

## 7.5 Review

This document and the effectiveness of its implementation, including all associated forms and documents will be reviewed every 24 months.