



aquatic achievers
swim schools

Aquatic Achievers Safeguarding Children and Young People Inclusion, Equity and Diversity Statement

Responsible Officer: General Manager

Document History

Key Changes	Prepared By	Checked By	Approved By	Date
V1. Statements created for ACF approval	Anita P & Anitha M	ACF	Rob	16.3.22

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Purpose

This statement aims to ensure all persons involved with Aquatic Achievers are treated equitably and with respect, regardless of their age, gender, race, language, disability, religion, political or other opinion, sexual orientation, national or social origin.

Aquatic Achievers promotes inclusive practices to ensure all children and young people involved with our programs, services and/or activities feel safe and supported. At the heart of this are participatory engagement practices that integrate all aspects of diversity into the strategic planning, policy development, resourcing, and reporting processes in the delivery of our programs, services, and activities.

Central to this is a commitment to ensure all engagement and communications with children, young people, their parents, or care givers uphold values of inclusion, equity, and diversity to support the equity and diversity of the children and young people, including but not limited to supporting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with a disability, LGBTQI+ and those unable to live at home.

Aquatic Achievers is committed to communicating honestly and openly with parents and care givers about the wellbeing and safety of their children and will seek to involve them whenever possible and practicable in shaping the services we provide to them and their children. We will promote and distribute information about our Safeguarding Children and Young People commitment as part of the information provided to children, young people and parents and care givers when they access any of our services.

This statement supports all team members in:

- acknowledging and respecting the rights of all children and young people to be provided with and participate in quality programs, services, and activities free from harm and discrimination
- creating an environment that supports, reflects, and promotes equitable and inclusive behaviours and practices
- creating a sense of belonging for all children, families, and team members, where diverse identities, backgrounds, experiences, skills, and interests are respected, valued, and given opportunities to be expressed/developed
- ensuring that programs, services, and activities are reflective of, and responsive to, the values and cultural beliefs of families using our organisations services, and of those within the local community and broader society
- providing all children and young people with the opportunity to access programs with our organisation and recognising that all families are unique
- regularly updating and supporting the knowledge, skills, practices and attitudes of team members and children or young people to encourage and ensure inclusion and equity
- seeking and incorporating input and feedback from children, young people, and their families to ensure continuous review and improvement of our services.

Aquatic Achievers abides by the 'United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child' and believes that everyone has the right to feel safe and be free from discrimination. All actions and behaviours from our team members must be non-discriminatory and always in the best interests of the child.

Related Policies

- Safeguarding Children and Young People Information for Parents/Care Givers
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Commitment Statement
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Incident Management Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Reporting Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Guideline for Parents & Carers

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all persons within our organisation to promote equity and respect diversity by:

- actively anticipating children and young people’s diverse circumstances and responding effectively to those with additional vulnerabilities
- informing children and young people of their rights and giving all children and young people access to information, support, and complaints processes
- respecting the rights of children and young people to participate in decision making, paying appropriate attention to the needs of the following groups:
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
 - Children and young people with a disability
 - Children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
 - LGBTQI+ (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex) children and young people
 - Children and young people who are unable to live at home.

Position	Responsibility
Board and General Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively develop and maintain stakeholder relationships that promote a culture of inclusion and diversity • Implement policies and procedures across the organisation that demonstrate diversity and inclusion • Ensure team members have access to and understand this policy and related procedures • Ensure all managers/supervisors have access to support and advice to understand and implement policies and procedures.
Workforce / HR / Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update this document and supporting resources in consultation with relevant stakeholders • Support the coordination of the Safeguarding Children and Young People framework and implementation • Provide training and advice in the application of policies and procedures.
Managers / Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure policies and procedures are followed and implemented.
Team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with policy and procedure.

Key Requirements

The overall aim of this Engagement Procedure is to develop a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment that prioritises the participation of and communication with children and young people, and their parents and care givers in ways that respects and promotes principles of equity and diversity.

All team members will promote equity and diversity through any form of engagement with children, young people, their parents and care givers, and other team members.

Wherever possible, team members are required to:

- uphold and respect the rights and dignity of all people in society and to encourage children and young people to do the same and participate actively and responsibly as individuals
- ensure that their approach and interactions with children and young people are sensitive, respectful, and inclusive of all backgrounds and abilities
- respect decisions that people make about their gender identity and consult and support children and young people to feel, and to be, safe
- promote an organisational culture that is inclusive and respectful of the different ways that families are formed and structured
- where our organisation is involved with children and young people who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, have a disability, LGBTI and those who are unable to live at home, promote their safety (including cultural safety), participation and empowerment
- be sensitive to the needs and anticipate the requirements of children and young people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and diverse circumstances and be responsive to the individual needs and particular circumstances of individuals.
- report any discriminatory behaviours, actions, prejudiced attitudes to Manager / Supervisor.

We will prioritise participatory and inclusive practices

In ensuring equal access, inclusive practice and the right of every child and young person regardless of their circumstances to participate as active members in our programs, services and/or activities, Aquatic Achievers will:

- ensure its programs are designed and constructed to provide equal access to a wide range of learning opportunities for all children, young people, and their families
- ensure modifications or adjustments are provided so all children and young people can participate fully in our services, activities, and programs with peers
- assess any new (or substantially revised) policies, programs, or services for their direct impact on the lives of people from diverse circumstances prior to any decision to pursue such proposals
- any new (or substantially revised) policies or programs that impact in different ways on the lives of people from diverse circumstances shall, wherever possible, be developed by Aquatic Achievers in consultation with people from those backgrounds. For any new (or substantially revised) policies or services, our organisation will develop a communication strategy sufficiently resourced to inform people from diverse circumstances and/or relevant cultural and linguistic backgrounds of these changes
- ensure publicly available resources and accessible information on our policies and procedures are communicated appropriately to people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds
- where required, provide information in languages other than English, and through print, electronic media, and disability-appropriate methods of communication.

- provide a 'complaints/ reporting' procedure that enables people (regardless of cultural and linguistic backgrounds) to address issues and raise concerns about Aquatic Achievers team members and performance
- where possible, provide for the needs of children and young people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds by providing language assistance using interpreters or facilitators
- consider diversity and cultural and sensitivities in the design and delivery of any training programs provided
- provide team members with regular, relevant diversity and cultural sensitivity training so that they develop knowledge and skills in cultural competency
- promote diversity in the membership of our board, committees and working groups
- ensure all people have equal access to advertised positions, interviews, equipment, office accommodation, training, and promotion.

In considering principles of participation, we will ensure that:

- Children and young people are listened to
- Children and young people are supported in expressing their views
- Children and young people's views are considered
- Children and young people are involved in decision making
- Children and young people share power and responsibility for decision making.

We will ensure that all forms of communication are accessible and child-friendly

These principles entail the following:

- Listen to young people: Listening is a fundamental part of communicating. In other words, young people should be given opportunities to make their views known about what they do or don't want or need
- Understand the audience: It is critically important to make efforts to understand the target audience—their needs, attitudes, and behaviours—before developing messages aimed at them. The diverse backgrounds of children, young people, their parents, and care givers should be considered as part of this
- Encourage participation: young people should expect to be consulted about and participate in developing communication directed to them
- Create appropriate, relevant content:
 - Be brief: young people and children appreciate a straightforward, brief, and to-the-point message
 - Send positive, aspirational messages: Often communication with children and young people is negative in nature and tone, focused on rules and logistics. Instead, consider the tone of the communication and ensure that it respects the individual it is speaking with
 - Check language and images: Always pre-test communications before distributing more widely to check on audience understanding, and appropriateness of the language and images used
 - Establish what's in it for young people: Quickly establish that the communication is for young people and that it is a two-way conversation. Consider whether your communications can be created by or with young people, rather than just being a one-way channel of speaking to them. Create a conversational approach that is honest and respectful

- Empower the audience: It is important to empower children and young people to have ownership of an issue and the conversation around it (in an age-appropriate manner). Consider safe, positive use of technology and how digital tools can support this.
- Assess all communications through a lens of inclusion, equity, and diversity: commit resources to support the equity and diversity of the children and young people, including but not limited to supporting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with a disability, LGBTQI+, and those unable to live at home.

The methods used for communicating with children, young people, their parents, and care givers are:

- Policies and procedures
- Organisation website
- Posters available at our centres
- Welcome Packs and other information booklets
- Surveys, complaints forms or other feedback mechanisms
- Formal and informal verbal communication through events, in-person discussions, webinars

These methods will include information about our commitment to Safeguarding Children and Young People including our Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct Policy. Reporting policies will be made available for children and young people and their families including in developmentally appropriate language and languages used by the main communities that access our services.

At a minimum, we will commit to providing:

- Information to parents and care givers about our commitment and approach to safeguarding children and young people. This includes as a minimum, reference to our:
 - Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
 - Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct Policy
 - Safeguarding Children and Young People Reporting Policy
- Our Parents / Care Givers' Code of Conduct outlining the expected behaviours of them whilst engaged with our organisation.
- Child-friendly versions of our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy that reflect the age, developmental stage, diversity and abilities of the children and young people to whom we deliver services. These include information to ensure children and young people are aware that they have a right to:
 - Always feel safe when they are participating in our services.
 - tell a particular person within our organisation about any situation in which they do not feel safe.
 - be taken seriously if they disclose a situation in which they do or did not feel safe.
- Child-friendly information for children about their rights, the behaviours they can expect of team members, and the behaviours our organisation expects of them. The information reflects the age, developmental stage, diversity and abilities of the children and young people to whom we deliver services.

Supporting Resources

- Keeping Our Kids Safe: Cultural safety and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations <https://www.snaicc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/SNAICC-VACCA-OCS-ChildSafeReport-LR-with-alt-tags-May2021.pdf>
- LGBTI Inclusive Practice Guide <https://www.snaicc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/SNAICC-VACCA-OCS-ChildSafeReport-LR-with-alt-tags-May2021.pdf>

Review and Approval

This Safeguarding Children and Young People – Inclusion, Equity and Diversity Statement will be reviewed every 3 years, or more frequently as required. Any significant proposed changes are to be approved by Aquatic Achievers Board and/or General Manager.

Approved by:



Rob Macfarlane
General Manager

This document was reviewed and approved by the General Manager on 16th March 2022