



CHILD INFORMATION SHARING AND FAMILY VIOLENCE REFORMS POLICY

The wellbeing and safety of children is a priority for all early childhood professionals and our Service has well-established child safety frameworks and policies in place. We acknowledge that information sharing and collaboration are vital in identifying risks early and facilitating early and appropriately targeted support. The child information sharing and family violence reforms (The Reforms) do not change our child safety obligations; rather, they complement our existing policies to promote and improve the education and life outcomes of Victorian children and reduce family violence.

Our Service will follow the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) processes to identify, manage and respond to family violence risk.

It's OK to share, you could make a difference

[Victorian State Government]

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.3	Child safety and protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities regarding child safety, including the need to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service that is child safe
7.1.3	Roles and Responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood and support effective decision-making and operation of the service.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S. 2A	Paramount consideration—safety, rights and best interests of children
S. 162A	Child protection training
S. 162B	Child safety training
S.167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
84	Awareness of child protection law
85	Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
155	Interactions with children
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
181	Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
183	Storage of records and other documents
184	Storage of records after service approval transferred

RELATED LEGISLATION

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (<i>Vic.</i>)	Family Violence Protection (Information Sharing and Risk Management) Regulations 2018 (<i>Vic.</i>)
Child Wellbeing and Safety (Information Sharing) Regulations 2018 (<i>Vic.</i>)	Health Records Act 2001 (<i>Vic.</i>)
Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (<i>Vic.</i>)	Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (<i>Vic.</i>)
Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (<i>Vic.</i>)	Crimes Act 1958 (<i>Vic.</i>)

RELATED POLICIES

Child Protection Policy	Interaction with Children, Families and Staff Policy
Child Safe Environment Policy	Medical Conditions Policy
Dealing with Complaints Policy	Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
Early Childhood Intervention Practitioner Management Policy	Record Keeping and Retention Policy
Enrolment Policy	Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy
Family Communication Policy	Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy
Governance Policy	Transition to School Policy
Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy	

PURPOSE

As an Information Sharing Entity (ISE), our Service is authorised to request and share relevant information under the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) and is required to respond to requests from other ISEs. Both schemes recognise the importance of seeking the views and promoting the agency of children and adults (who are not perpetrators of family violence) wherever appropriate, safe and reasonable to do so. Our Service will implement practices to support the Information Sharing and Family Violence Reforms (referred to as the Reforms). This policy supports management and educators to understand their requirements to respond to requests for information to promote child wellbeing or safety and/or assess and manage risk of family violence.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE REFORMS

[MARAM](#)

The Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) is Victoria's policy framework. MARAM establishes the foundations for a state-wide approach and shared legislative responsibility for identifying, assessing and managing family violence risk. MARAM guides professionals across the service system, including ECEC services.

[CHILD INFORMATION SHARING SCHEME \(CISS\)](#)

The Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) assists authorised professionals and organisations to better perform their roles and responsibilities by expanding the circumstances in which they can share

confidential information to promote the wellbeing and safety of a child or group of children. CISS supports services to work together and share and request information from other professionals to identify wellbeing and safety needs and risks, promoting earlier and more effective intervention to improve outcomes for children and families.

All Victorian children aged from birth to 18 years are covered under CISS. Consent is not required from any person when sharing under CISS. However, where it is safe, appropriate and reasonable to do so, professionals should seek and consider the views of the child and relevant family members before sharing information. The CISS complements and supports child and family service reforms and other child safety legislation including the Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme.

Sharing of information may assist the Information Sharing Entities (ISEs) to:

- access and engage with supportive services
- access resources for learning and development
- make a decision, assessment or plan
- start or conduct an investigation
- provide a service relating to a child/children
- manage any risk to a child/children

[FAMILY VIOLENCE INFORMATION SHARING SCHEME \(FVISS\)](#)

The Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) enables the sharing of relevant information between authorised organisations to assess and manage family violence risk. Under FVISS, there is also a subset of **specialist** Information Sharing Entities (ISEs) known as Risk Assessment Entities (RAEs). RAEs are authorised to request and receive information for a family violence assessment purpose and have specialised skills to conduct family violence risk assessments. Examples of RAEs include:

- Child Protection and Child FIRST
- The Orange Door
- Victims Support Agency
- Victoria Police
- State funded specialist family violence services

The two schemes must be used together in conjunction with the MARAM framework. The key difference between the two schemes is the purpose for sharing information. Each scheme has certain thresholds to meet before information can be shared.

Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS)

Information may be shared under CISS where:

- 1: it promotes the wellbeing or safety of a child or group of children
- 2: sharing may assist another Information Sharing Entity to carry out one or more specified activities
- 3: the information is not excluded information.

Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS)

Information may be shared under FVISS where:

- 1: sharing is for a family violence assessment purpose or protection purpose, e.g. to establish or assess the risk of a person committing family violence or being the subject of family violence
- 2: the applicable consent requirements are met to manage family violence risk, including the ongoing assessment of the risks (family violence protection purpose)
- 3: the information is not excluded information (information that cannot be shared). Examples of excluded information include information that could endanger a person's life, result in physical harm, contravene a court order, breach legal professional privilege or be contrary to the public interest.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service understands our legislative requirements to respond to all requests for information from other Information Sharing Entities (ISEs) to support children's wellbeing and safety under the Child Information Share Scheme (CISS), and under the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) to respond to family violence risk. We understand our statutory duty of care to comply with all legislative requirements to protect children from harm and respond to concerns, disclosures and any allegation of child abuse. Our Service is committed to ensuring that children's safety, rights and best interests are the paramount consideration in all decisions, actions and practices.

EXPANDING ON EXISTING INFORMATION SHARING PERMISSIONS

Our Service understands our moral and legal obligations to protect any child under our care and supervision from reasonably foreseeable harm. The CISS and the FVISS complement the existing privacy laws and child safety obligations embedded in our policies and procedures. Whenever we are using any of the following reporting schemes related to child wellbeing and safety, we will also consider using the CISS and/or FVISS to share information to promote child and family wellbeing and safety.

REPORTABLE CONDUCT SCHEME

All obligations under the Reportable Conduct scheme apply to Information Sharing Entities (ISEs) prescribed under CISS. Our Service will investigate any child-related reportable conduct or allegations involving a staff member under the Reportable Conduct Scheme and consider whether to use CISS to seek or share information in relation to the reported conduct.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Our Service is committed to providing a child safe environment that protects children and young people from all forms of harm and abuse. We aim to provide a culturally safe environment for all children and embed child safety into our everyday practice by complying with the [Victorian Child Safe Standards](#).

MANDATORY REPORTING

As mandatory reporters, education and care professionals are required to make a report to Child Protection if they have a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection from significant harm as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse, and the child's parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, that child from that harm. To report concerns that are life-threatening, our Service will contact Victoria Police.

DUTY OF CARE

Duty of care refers to our responsibility to take reasonable steps to protect children under our care and supervision from harm. Our Service will:

- act on concerns quickly and in the child's best interests
- protect the safety, health and wellbeing of children in our care
- seek appropriate advice or consultation through the MARAM framework when unsure
- share information with other ISEs upon request to protect and/or promote the child's wellbeing and safety
- provide ongoing support to children and their families.

FAILURE TO DISCLOSE

All adults have a legal obligation to report to Victoria Police if they have a reasonable belief that another adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under the age of 16 in Victoria. Failure to disclose is a criminal offence.

FAILURE TO PROTECT

Persons in a position of authority within an organization commit the offence of failure to protect if:

- they becomes aware that an adult associated with that organisation (e.g. employee, contractor, visitor) poses a substantial risk of committing a sexual offence against any child under the age of 16 in their care, supervision or authority
- they have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove that risk
- they negligently fail to take all reasonable steps to remove or reduce that risk.

Failure to protect is a criminal offence.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- meet obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations
- prioritise children's safety, wellbeing and best interests as the paramount consideration
- complete professional learning about MARAM and the Information Sharing Schemes
- identify appropriate staff to request and share information on behalf of the Service
- ensure staff identified complete the training for information sharing and MARAM reforms
- provide additional training to other staff to understand and manage information under the schemes
- establish procedures for responding to and managing sharing requests made under the information sharing schemes
- establish procedures for responding to complaints made under the information sharing schemes
- update policies, procedures and practices to align with information sharing schemes and MARAM
- identify and implement any changes required within the Service to support the reforms, including:
 - identifying and responding to family violence
 - information sharing
 - promoting children's wellbeing and safety
 - embedding culturally safe practices
- continue to evaluate and monitor the ongoing implementation of the reforms and record continuous improvement actions within the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)
- meet record keeping obligations under the FVISS and CISS when requesting, receiving or sharing information with any other ISE or RAE, including:
 - record requests to share information
 - date of request
 - the information requested
 - if refusing a request, the request and the reason why it was refused

- when sharing information (either proactively or on request)
 - record what scheme they are sharing under (FVISS, CISS or both)
 - know and record whose information is being shared
 - record how the threshold for sharing was met
- record
 - the information that was shared
 - the date on which the information was shared
 - who the information was shared with
 - relevant risk assessments or safety plans that have been prepared for a person at risk of family violence
 - any complaints made about information sharing under CISS or FVISS.

EDUCATORS AND STAFF WILL:

- read and adhere to the *Child Information Sharing and Family Violence Reforms Policy*
- participate in training about the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS), Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) and Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM)
- promote and protect children’s wellbeing and safety
- always consider the child’s safety, rights and best interests first, in all decisions and actions
- prioritise the immediate and ongoing safety of all children and family members at risk of family violence in line with MARAM
- engage specialist services where required and promote collaborative practice to support children and families
- give precedence to the wellbeing and safety of a child or group of children over the right to privacy where permitted by law
- preserve and promote positive relationships between a child and their family members and persons of significance to the child
- be respectful of and have regard to each child’s social, individual and cultural identity, their strengths and abilities and any vulnerability relevant to their safety or wellbeing
- promote the cultural safety and recognise the cultural rights, and family and community connections of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children
- maintain respectful and culturally responsive engagement with children and families
- work collaboratively with other services and authorised organisations to support the wellbeing and safety of children and families.

COMPLAINTS

Any complaints or grievances relating to the sharing of information under the Child Information Sharing Scheme or Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme will be documented and responded to as per our *Complaints and Grievance Procedure*.

Our complaints procedures ensure a fair opportunity for all stakeholders to be heard. We consider the nature of the complaint and the best way to address the concerns. Any complaint related to CISS or FVISS will be investigated by staff who have been appropriately authorised and trained in relation to information sharing under the Reforms.

Families are advised that consent is not always required for our Service to share information with other Information Sharing Entities (ISEs) under the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act (2005) or the Family Violence Protection Act (2008), provided the legal requirements for sharing are met.

The Service will meet all record keeping requirements for any complaint made about information sharing under CISS or FVISS. If a complaint cannot be resolved, the Office of the Victorian Information Commission (OVIC) or the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) may be contacted for further investigation.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Child Information Sharing and Family Violence Reforms Policy* will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if there are changes to legislation or ACECQA guidance, or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management. All families will be notified 14 days before any policy change that may have a significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the Service or the family's ability to utilise the Service.

RELATED RESOURCES

Complaints and Grievance Procedure	Complaints and Grievance Guide and Form
------------------------------------	---

SOURCES

[Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#)

[Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011](#)

Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC). [Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme and Privacy](#)

Victoria State Government. (2026). [Child Information Sharing Scheme Ministerial Guidelines](#)

Victoria State Government. (2026). [About Child Safe Standards](#)

Victoria State Government. (2026). [About the information sharing and MARAM reforms](#)

Victoria State Government. (2026). [Information Sharing Entity List user guide](#)

Victoria State Government. (2025). [Mandatory reporting](#)

Victoria State Government. (2023). [MARAM practice guides and resources](#)

Victoria State Government. (2026). [PROTECT for early childhood](#)

Victoria State Government. (2026). [Training for the information sharing and MARAM reforms](#)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	JULY 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	JULY 2027
VERSION NUMBER	V7.07.26		
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy review • edits made to improve clarity and consistency • child safety principles added - paramount consideration • information checked and edited as per the Information Sharing schemes • added a related resources section • continuous improvement section added • sources added and updated as required		
PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS			
JULY 2025	• annual policy review • sources checked and updated as required		
JANUARY 2024	• annual policy review • updated Victorian Child Safe Standards link and sources as required • no major changes to policy		