



Risk Management Strategy

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RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

This strategy sets out the requirements for Schools to identify and manage risks that might affect their students, staff or operations.

Definitions

Objective - An objective is an aspirational, results-oriented statement describing what WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisations intends to achieve within the set timeframe and describes what successful delivery would entail.

Risk - The effect (whether positive or negative) of uncertainty on objectives.

Risk Management - The identification, analysis, assessment and prioritisation of risks to the achievement of an objective.

Risk management involves the coordinated allocation of resources to:

- minimise, monitor, communicate and control risk likelihood and/or impact, or
- maximise the potential presented by opportunities.

Risk management includes coordinated activities to direct and control risks to the achievement of an objective.

Risk Register - A formatted list that records identified risks, assesses their impact and describes the actions (controls) to be taken to mitigate them. Typically, it describes the risk, the causes for that risk and the responsible person or group for managing it.

Control - A control is any existing measure that modifies risk such as uniform policy or staff succession plan.

Controls are methods or procedures that assist in achieving objectives, safeguarding assets, ensuring financial information is accurate and reliable and supporting compliance with all financial and operational requirements.

Identifying current controls and their effectiveness is one of the most important aspects of risk management. It allows you to better understand the elements that are impacting the likelihood and/or consequence of a risk.

Treatment - A risk treatment is an action you undertake to reduce a risk to an acceptable level, by adding new or improving/modifying existing controls.

WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, they must proactively manage risks of abuse to children.

- They must have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments (for example, any doors that can lock), and online environments (for example, no staff member is to have contact with a child on social media).
- In addition to occupational health and safety concerns, a Risk Management Strategy should analyse the risk of 'harm' to children and young people.
- WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisations are responsible for delivering the risk management strategy to suit the relevant needs of their programs, and in particular student exchange.
- WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisations has a duty of care to prevent harm before it occurs and will do its utmost to assess and mitigate risks in relation to its activities and services.
- WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisations commit to reviewing any serious incidents or breaches of policy and procedure or order to ensure that all actions and activities are utilised to strengthen child safety.
- WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisation's risk management strategy is designed to suit its needs and accounts for possible risks in both physical and online environments.
- WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisations listen to what children and young people have to say about what keeps them safe/unsafe and their likes/dislikes.

School/Organisation staff and volunteers need to have a clear understanding of:

- Potential risks to children and young people.
- Identifying and assessing the risks associated with the specific services and activities it delivers
- How to develop a plan to prevent risks, or to address them effectively when they occur.

Risk Management Process

The Risk Management Process contains the following steps:

Step 1: Establish the context

Step 2: Risk identification

Step 3: Risk analysis

Step 4: Evaluation

Step 5: Risk treatment

Step 6: Communication and consultation

Step 7: Monitoring and review

Step 8: Recording and reporting

1. Establishing the context

Before identifying risks, WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisations will decide on the scope of the activity, including the objectives, and develop an understanding of the operating environment. Identifying the stakeholders (both internal and external) and considering their concerns, issues and expectations.

2. Risk identification

Risk identification means thinking about what could go wrong when delivering the objectives.

3. Risk analysis

Assess each risk to determine the overall level of risk (the 'risk rating').

This involves:

- identifying any existing controls
- considering the consequences (effect) if the risk eventuates, and
- the likelihood that the risk will occur

4. Risk evaluation

Evaluate each risk to determine whether the level of risk is acceptable and the appropriate response to the risk. The levels of acceptability relate to the risk rating levels and are described as:

- Extreme
- High
- Medium
- Low

5. Risk treatment

A risk treatment is the way in which the school responds to a risk. Options for risk treatments include:

- Share: if practical, share all or some of the risk with outsourced parties or insurers.
- Terminate: cease the activity altogether.
- Accept: this will require appropriate authority.
- Reduce: apply additional treatments until the risk is reduced to an acceptable level

6. Communication and consultation

Consult and update relevant internal and external stakeholders throughout the risk management process.

Report on risks that are shared with relevant stakeholders to provide assurance that WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisations is managing the risk appropriately.

7. Monitoring and review

Schedule monitoring and review periods at intervals appropriate to the nature of the objective and the level of risk.

8. Recording and reporting risk

In recording and reporting risk, WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisations should assess and document the risk(s) associated with:

- Emergency and Critical Incident Management Planning
- Child Safe Standards
- Occupational Health and Safety

When assessing the risks listed above, WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisations must document the identified risks in a Risk Management Register and they can use the Risk Assessment Template to assist in their risk assessment. WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisations are responsible for keeping a record of the site specific Risk Register and ensuring it is available to all relevant persons.

Evaluation

This strategy will be reviewed as part of the WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisations cycle every two years.

Communication of the Risk Management Policy

Principals/Organisation Leaders are responsible for:

- providing staff with relevant training opportunities to support staff to manage risks at an operational level
- ensuring that all staff follow WEP policies and processes, as risk management is integrated into other policies and processes.

Types of communication WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisations should consider in terms of Risk Management:

- Social media / newsletter
- Emails
- Regular risk reports produced for the executive, board, or other stakeholders
- Periodic risk identification / awareness workshops
- Articles included in intranet, emails etc.
- Presentations at meetings
- Risk management messages in annual report
- Delivering training including induction/orientation programs

POLICY APPROVER

CEO, WEP Australia

REVIEW

This strategy is to be reviewed by 31 May 2026.

Appendix: Risk assessment and management templates

To develop effective prevention and mitigation strategies, WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisations need to identify risks of child abuse and harm within their operations. This involves looking at where and how the organisation engages with children (whether in a physical or online environment) and focusing on risks to children, rather than risks to the organisation.

These are designed to help WEP and/or schools/affiliated organisations in identifying, assessing, and managing the risk of child abuse and harm.

An organisational risk assessment template, activity risk assessment template and risk management plan template are provided. The templates can be used to identify, analyse and plan to control risks and to regularly review and monitor risk. They can also be used to conduct a risk assessment of a new program, activity or event.

Organisational risk assessment template

This template asks you to identify and assess the situational, vulnerability, propensity and institutional risks to children. List all the different types of risks to children that you can think of the strategies you already have in place to reduce these risks and then identify any gaps and what needs to be implemented to address these gaps.

After filling out this template and gaining an understanding of the risks in your organisation, use the risk management plan template to record your plan to address gaps.

Date reviewed	[insert date]
Next review due	[insert review date, no longer than one year from date reviewed]

Risk factor	Analysis	Existing risk controls	Is this enough to keep children and young people safe?	New controls required
	<i>Where does risk arise in your organisation?</i>	<i>What is in place now that reduces the risk?</i>	<i>Considering the risk assessment what are the gaps in the existing controls?</i>	<i>What can be put in place to manage the gaps?</i>
Your organisation's activities (situational risk)	<p>Some things to consider about the activities your organisation conducts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the different types of activities? • Where are they held? • How often do activities occur and how long do they run for (for example, a few hours, overnight)? • Is there physical contact between children and adults? • Could activities result in an emotional dependence by children on adults? • What sort of supervision of adults and children is involved? • Is there travel to a venue or activity and how does this happen? 			

Risk factor	Analysis	Existing risk controls	Is this enough to keep children and young people safe?	New controls required
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the activity take place at another organisation's facility (for example, a rented hall, public sports facility, camp site)? 			
Your organisation's physical environment (situational risk)	<p>Consider whether there are any aspects of your organisation's physical environment that may make it easier for child abuse or harm to occur or to go undetected.</p> <p>Does it have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> isolated areas poorly supervised areas facilities that might increase the risk of abuse (for example, pools where children must get changed) shared spaces where children attend with adults that are not from the organisation? 			
Your organisation's online environment (situational risk)	<p>Consider whether there are any aspects of your organisation's online environment that may make it easier for child abuse or harm to occur or to go undetected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What platforms, software or other services do you use? How do people in your organisation engage with children and young people online? Have you set clear expectations for behaviour by adults and children online? Has your organisation shared information with children on how to stay safe online? What policies and procedures are in place to protect privacy? Do you have clear processes in place to report online abuse? Is activity by adults and children online supervised? 			

Risk factor	Analysis	Existing risk controls	Is this enough to keep children and young people safe?	New controls required
The children involved in your organisation (vulnerability risks)	<p>What are the characteristics of the children in your organisation? Are there children who may be at increased risk of abuse or harm, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds • with disability • from culturally and language diverse backgrounds • who identify as LGBTIQ or are questioning their sexuality or gender • with a history of trauma, abuse or neglect • unable to live at home including being homeless or living in foster, residential or kinship care • with a history of drug or alcohol dependence • with mental or physical health issues? <p>Are there other factors that may make some children involved in your organisation more vulnerable to abuse or harm?</p>			
Your organisation's people (propensity risk)	<p>Who are the staff, volunteers and/or members of your organisation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sort of attitudes are held by people in your organisation about children? • How do you manage inappropriate behaviour? • Are there any people with a history of harmful behaviour towards children? • How do you recruit staff and volunteers? • Were all adults properly screened for appropriateness to engage with children before joining the organisation? • Is there a typical profile of the people attracted to a position in your organisation? Are there any challenges to child safety with this profile that need to be managed? • Do you engage third-party contractors? Have they been screened for appropriateness to engage with children? 			

Risk factor	Analysis	Existing risk controls	Is this enough to keep children and young people safe?	New controls required
Your organisation's structures (institutional risk)	<p>Consider how your organisation is set up and operates. Some organisational structures can increase the risk¹ of abuse and harm such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having a strong hierarchical structure • encouraging deference to authority or unquestioning trust of leaders • having a close-knit community, where people have known each other for years or are family members • services or facilities for children are not seen as a key part of the organisation's business • containing people whose attitudes towards children are that they should be seen and not heard. 			

Risk factor	Analysis	Existing risk controls	Is this enough to keep children and young people safe?	New controls required
Your organisation's culture (institutional risk)	<p>Consider whether attitudes and culture in your organisation increase or decrease the risk that child abuse and harm will be prevented, detected and/or stopped.</p> <p>Does your organisation have a culture that makes sure child safety is a priority?</p> <p>Consider if people in your organisation:²</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand child abuse and harm and are aware of the signs • see the prevention of child abuse and harm as a everyone's responsibility • prioritise the safety of children over the reputation of the organisation • listen to and empower children • educate children about what is appropriate behaviour by adults • understand how discrimination can cause harm to children and take action if it occurs • take short cuts without thinking about the risks. 			
Your organisation's policies and procedures (institutional risk)	<p>Effective policies and procedures can greatly reduce the risk of child abuse and harm occurring. However, for policies and procedures to be effective they must be properly implemented, up to date and communicated to everyone.</p> <p>Consider if your organisation has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate recruitment policies (including Working with Children Checks and/or other screening) for staff and volunteers 			

Risk factor	Analysis	Existing risk controls	Is this enough to keep children and young people safe?	New controls required
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Code of Conduct that clearly establishes what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour towards children with consequences for breaches • an easily understood Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Complaints Handling Policy • clear processes for reporting and responding to allegations of child abuse or harm and child safety concerns that are understood by staff, volunteers, children and families • appropriate induction, training and communication with staff and volunteers so they are aware of policies and procedures, and understand their role and responsibility to protect children from abuse and harm • third-party procurement policies and practices that prioritise child safety when using contractors. 			

Activity risk assessment template

This template asks you to identify and assess the situational, vulnerability, propensity and institutional risks in an individual activity. You should list all of the different risks that you can think of, the strategies you already have in place to mitigate these risks and then identify any gaps and what needs to be implemented to address these gaps.

After filling out this template and gaining an understanding of the risks in your activity, use the risk management plan template to record your plan to address gaps.

Date reviewed	[insert date]
Next review due	[insert review date, no longer than one year from date reviewed]
Activity	Student Exchange Program

Types of risk	Types of harm	Existing risk controls	Is this enough to keep children and young people safe?	New controls required
<i>Identify the situational, propensity, vulnerability, and institutional risks of this activity.</i>	<i>What type of harm may arise from the risk?</i>	<i>What is in place now that reduces the risk?</i>	<i>What are the gaps in the existing controls?</i>	<i>What can be put in place to manage the gaps?</i>
Situational risk: Online				

Types of risk	Types of harm	Existing risk controls	Is this enough to keep children and young people safe?	New controls required
<p>Students and young people attend with mobile phones.</p> <p>Staff send updates/class cancellation notices to children and young people directly.</p>	<p>Online bullying or anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Opportunity for staff to have unsupervised contact with children and young people online/by phone. Creates an opportunity for grooming.</p>	<p>Code of Conduct</p> <p>Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy</p>	<p>Somewhat, but improvements identified</p>	<p>Code of Conduct and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy to be revised to include specific content about behaviour online/by phone. Share with students.</p> <p>Tell students what sort of communication they can expect from staff online/by phone, so they know if contact from staff is not authorised.</p> <p>Hold a special staff meeting at the start of each year to discuss the Code of Conduct including appropriate behaviour online/by phone.</p> <p>Share resources with students about online bullying from the eSafety Commissioner and tell them how they can raise concerns.</p>
Vulnerability risk				
<p>Mixed ages of students attending (12–18).</p>	<p>Bullying</p> <p>Older students may act inappropriately with/around younger children.</p> <p>Peer pressure could create barriers for some students to stop them making a complaint or raise concerns.</p>	<p>Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy</p>	<p>No:</p> <p>Organisation's Code of Conduct is for staff conduct only</p> <p>Complaint handling policy not written in accessible language and not given to students and parents/carers</p>	<p>Staff to hold information session/consultation with students and parents/carers on the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and complaint handling policy. Discuss whether students understand how to make a complaint and seek feedback on what else to include. Policies to be updated.</p> <p>Develop a child safety and complaints information sheet students and parents/carers with all the information they need. Provide information sheet as</p>

Types of risk	Types of harm	Existing risk controls	Is this enough to keep children and young people safe?	New controls required
	<p>Organisation does not know much about the characteristics of the students that could make them more vulnerable to abuse/harm.</p>		<p>No information is collected on characteristics of students that may make them more vulnerable to harm.</p>	<p>part of induction pack, display on the organisation's website and include in the next newsletter. Use accessible language so students can understand.</p> <p>Display the organisation's child safety poster at the venue.</p> <p>Enrolment form updated to give the option of sharing information about student's characteristics. Conduct survey (participants remain anonymous) seeking feedback about the organisation and asking about characteristics of students.</p> <p>Survey results to be shared at upcoming staff meeting with a discussion about factors that may increase vulnerability to abuse and what staff should do to reduce vulnerability.</p>
Propensity risk				

Types of risk	Types of harm	Existing risk controls	Is this enough to keep children and young people safe?	New controls required
Staff are former students of the school/student exchange program.	Professional boundaries not maintained. Staff may be friends with some of the students and not act professionally with them. Staff may socialise with students outside.	Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy Code of Conduct Recruitment process	Yes: Policies already address this, requiring staff who are former students to always remain professional and prioritise child safety. Code of Conduct prohibits intimate relationships between staff and students In recruitment process, potential staff are asked what they would do if one of their students was a friend who was bullying another student. Staff training also covers friendships between staff and students	No further action needed.
Institutional risk				

Types of risk	Types of harm	Existing risk controls	Is this enough to keep children and young people safe?	New controls required
<p>Close knit community where staff are former students/student exchange program participants.</p> <p>Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy has not been annually reviewed.</p>	<p>Grooming behaviour or other harmful behaviour not identified or reported because of ongoing connection with the organisation.</p>	<p>Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy</p> <p>Code of Conduct</p>	<p>Somewhat, but improvements identified</p>	<p>All child safety and wellbeing policies to be reviewed and updated annually. Consultation with students parents/carers and staff to inform the review of the policies.</p> <p>Child safety and complaints information sheet and Code of Conduct to be provided to all students and parents/carers on enrolment.</p> <p>Regular reminders to students and parents/carers that the organisation encourages them to raise concerns or complaints.</p> <p>Organisation takes action and responds when complaints are raised. There are consequences for staff who breach the Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Child safety and complaints information sheet and Code of Conduct to be provided to all students and parents/carers on enrolment.</p>

Risk management plan template

After assessing the risks, use this template to make a plan of action to manage any organisational or activity risks to child safety and wellbeing.

Date reviewed	[insert date]
Next review due	[insert review date, no longer than one year from date reviewed]

Risk	Risk controls	Who is responsible?	By when?
<i>Risks identified in your organisation or in the activity</i>	<i>Actions you will take to manage the identified risks</i>	<i>Who will take these actions and make sure they are effective?</i>	<i>When will the actions be taken and reviewed?</i>
Students aren't sure how to let someone know if they have child safety concerns or want to make a complaint.	<p>Develop, in consultation with students, a process for making complaints or raising concerns.</p> <p>Put up posters with the complaints process around the venue.</p> <p>Put the complaints process on the website.</p> <p>Hold regular discussions with each class on the process for making complaints or raising concerns.</p>	<p>The Child Safe Officer will create a students' reference group, consult with them and develop the organisation's complaint process for students.</p> <p>The Child Safe Officer will review the Complaint Handling Policy.</p> <p>The complaint process and Complaint Handling Policy are to be approved by the CEO.</p> <p>The Child Safe Officer will create a poster and a brochure on how to make a complaint, update the website with information on making a complaint.</p> <p>The Child Safe Officer will include the complaints process in the enrolment pack for all students.</p> <p>The CEO will check the effectiveness of the complaints process.</p>	<p>Brochure and poster in time for next round of student exchange.</p> <p>Review and make any changes to process and policy by 30 May 2025.</p>