



ENGAGING OUR FUTURE

CHILD SAFETY POLICY

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1. United Jewish Education Board Policy Commitment

UJEB is a community organisation that is committed to providing the highest quality formal and informal Jewish education to Jewish students outside the Jewish day school system. UJEB's purpose is to provide the building blocks for a connected Jewish life for students of government and independent non-Jewish schools. By attending our programs our students develop a lifetime of knowledge and skills in a dynamic educational environment which ensures their ability to participate in Jewish communal life.

UJEB aims to ensure that future generations of Jewish children understand, and connect to, their heritage, their culture and their history. UJEB's commitment to the principles of child safety, empowerment and inclusion are inculcated in our mission, values, policies and procedures. UJEB practises zero tolerance in relation to child abuse.

UJEB is committed to developing and maintaining a culture that prioritises the safety of children and where children will always feel valued and listened to. UJEB encourages active participation from parents/guardians/carers based on a partnership approach and shared responsibility for children's health, wellbeing and safety.

UJEB embraces the moral and legal responsibility to ensure all children are safe in its care and that timely, effective and supportive responses will occur for children who are at risk of abuse and/or harm.

If any person associated with UJEB believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, he or she must telephone 000.

2. Child Safety Policy Context in Victoria

Under Victorian law, children always have the right to feel safe and be safe. This includes when they access services and participate in activities at school and in the community. It also requires that children have a right to be heard, particularly on matters that affect them, including how to keep them safe or respond to concerns.

In April 2012, the Victorian Government initiated an inquiry into the handling of child abuse allegations by religious and other non-government organisations, known as the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry. Its report highlighted poor and inconsistent practices for keeping children safe. It found some organisations' cultures did not focus on children's safety and many failed to report or act on child abuse allegations.

The report made several recommendations built on the premise that all adults are responsible for the safety of children.

Subsequent law reform has included the introduction of mandatory child safe standards to be implemented by organisations exercising care, supervision or authority over children. A reportable conduct scheme has been legislated for some organisations to ensure reportable conduct (or misconduct that may involve reportable conduct) of adult employees, volunteers, contractors, and Board members is reported and addressed. Additionally, a number of new criminal offences have been introduced, including the failure to protect, failure to disclose and a grooming offence.

The Betrayal of Trust Inquiry addressed submissions regarding child sexual abuse in Jewish organisations. In 2015, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse heard about child sexual abuse within many organisations, including Jewish organisations. There were several findings and recommendations, some of which were specifically in relation to Jewish organisations, including the application of some Jewish law concepts, shunning in response to disclosure of child sexual abuse and inaction by leaders of Jewish organisations.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Recommendation 16.30, pg. 202 states that:

“All Jewish institutions in Australia should ensure that their complaint handling policies explicitly state that the halachic concepts of mesirah, moser and loshon horo do not apply to the communication and reporting of allegations of child sexual abuse to police and other civil authorities.”

3. Purpose

The purpose of this child safety policy is to:

1. prevent child abuse occurring within all UJEB environments;
2. outline UJEB’s commitment to child safety and wellbeing and what UJEB is doing to prevent child abuse and how it will respond to child abuse;
3. work towards an organisational culture of child safety;
4. ensure that children know who to speak with if they are worried about their safety, and that they should be encouraged to voice their concerns;
5. ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs;
6. provide guidance on action that should be taken where a person suspects any child abuse within all UJEB Environments;
7. provide a clear statement to staff, volunteers, parents/guardians/carers, visitors, contractors, Board Members and others attending the programs or activities of UJEB, forbidding any such abuse; and
8. provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be appropriately reported and fully investigated.

UJEB encourages feedback and input from parents/guardians/carers, children and community members and this includes in the area of child safety.

It is intended that this policy is clear, accessible and user friendly. The policy forms an integral part of our registration process and can be accessed on our website. Any questions or comments can be directed to the UJEB Executive Principal.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all UJEB staff, volunteers, parents/guardians/carers, visitors, contractors, Board Members and others attending the programs or activities of UJEB.

5. Legislation

In Victoria there are a range of legislative requirements relating to child safety, including:

- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic);
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic);
- *Working with Children Act 2005* (Vic);
- *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic); and
- *Wrongs Act 1958* (Vic).

6. Definitions

Belief on reasonable grounds	<p>Under the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i> (Vic), a belief is ‘a belief on reasonable grounds if a reasonable person practising the profession or carrying out the duties of the office, position or employment, as the case requires, would have formed the belief on those grounds’.</p> <p>A belief on reasonable grounds is more likely to be formed in circumstances where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. a child states that they have been physically injured or sexually abused (self- disclosure); b. a child states that they know someone who has been physically injured or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about himself or herself); c. a relative, friend, acquaintance or sibling of the child states that the child has been physically injured or sexually abused; d. professional observations of the child’s behaviour or development that lead the mandated reporter to form a belief that the child has been physically injured or sexually abused; e. signs of physical injury or sexual abuse lead to a belief that the child has been abused.
Child	For the purpose of this policy, a child is any person under 18 years of age (unless otherwise specified).
Child abuse	<p>Child abuse includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. any act committed against a child involving – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. a sexual offence; or ii. an offence under section 49M of the <i>Crimes Act 1958</i> (Vic) (grooming); and b. the infliction, on a child, of – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. physical violence; or ii. serious emotional or psychological harm; and c. serious neglect of a child.
Child FIRST	A Victorian community-based intake and referral service provided by the Department of Health and Human Services to provide access to Family Services. Child FIRST ensures that vulnerable children, young people and their families are effectively linked to relevant services, including Child Protection.

Child Protection Service	Child Protection Service (also referred to as Child Protection): The statutory child protection service provided by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, to protect children and young people at risk of abuse and neglect, and receive certain mandatory reports. This service also works closely with Family Services (including Child FIRST) to support the assessment and engagement of vulnerable children and families.
Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP)	A Victorian Government agency that provides independent scrutiny and oversight of services for children and young people, particularly those in the out-of-home-care, child protection and youth justice systems. The CCYP administers Victoria’s new Reportable Conduct Scheme, which applies to some organisations that work with children. The scheme requires these organisations to report, investigate and respond to allegations of child abuse made against their adult employees, volunteers, contractors, and officers, and put in place particular systems to protect children.
Mandatory report	A report made to Child Protection, by a person mandated under the <i>Children Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)</i> (called a mandatory reporter).
Mandatory reporter	Person required under the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)</i> to make a mandatory report to Child Protection if they believe a child (under the age of 17) is in need of protection from abandonment or significant harm as a result of physical injury, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological harm. In UJEB’s context, these persons are registered VIT teachers. Individuals may also be required to make other reports (set out below).
Reportable allegation	For the purpose of the Reportable Conduct Scheme and under the <i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)</i> , “reportable allegation” means any information that leads a person to form a reasonable belief that an employee, volunteer, contractor or officer has committed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. reportable conduct; or b. misconduct that may involve reportable conduct, whether or not the conduct or misconduct is alleged to have occurred within the course of the person’s employment.
Reportable conduct	For the purpose of the Reportable Conduct Scheme and under the <i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)</i> , “reportable conduct” means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. a sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of a child, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the offence has been commenced or concluded; b. sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of a child; c. physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of a child; d. any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child; or e. significant neglect of a child.
Reportable Conduct Scheme	A Victorian government scheme that requires centralised reporting (to the CCYP) by heads of applicable entities in relation to reportable allegations. This requirement is additional to any requirement to report to Victoria Police, Child First or to Child Protection (DHHS agency), and non-heads of applicable entities may choose to make a voluntary report to the CCYP if they have information relating to a reportable allegation.
Staff / Staff	UJEB employees including administration staff, Program Coordinators,

member	teachers, educators and the Executive Principal.
Student sexual offending	Refers to sexual behaviour by a student who is 10 years and older which may amount to a sexual offence.
UJEB Environments	This means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by UJEB’s Board for use by a child, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. UJEB’s official physical locations b. Any offsite locations used in UJEB activities such as camps; and c. Online environments (including UJEB’s website, email and social media etc.)
Volunteer	Any adult who works for UJEB without being paid.

7. Child Safe Standards

The child safe standards (CSS) are compulsory minimum standards for all organisations that provide services to children. As noted under section 2 of this policy, the standards are a result of recommendations of the Betrayal of Trust inquiry. The aim of the standards is to ensure organisations keep children safe from harm and abuse.

Although all children are vulnerable, some children face additional vulnerabilities. The CSS provide three overarching principles for organisations to cover:

- the cultural safety of Aboriginal Children
- the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds; and
- the safety of children with a disability.

UJEB will make every effort to accommodate and respond to these overarching principles as appropriate. UJEB aims to create a learning environment that will be both motivating and suitable for the full range of diversity among its students. Within this environment, it provides learning opportunities that are stimulating, relevant and developmentally appropriate, and where children’s individual strengths are recognised and valued. UJEB supports the inclusion of students with disabilities and promotes respect and tolerance for individual differences.

UJEB has implemented the Victorian CSS and recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse to ensure best practice.

Child Safe Standard 1 - UJEB has strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety

UJEB plans, implements and reviews strategies that embed a culture of child safety, including through effective governance and leadership. UJEB commits to clearly communicate its dedication to child safety.

The Board is responsible for reviewing and endorsing policies, incidents and risk management strategies to ensure there is a culture of openness, accountability, compliance and service improvement.

The Executive Principal is responsible for ensuring the UJEB community understands and prioritises

child safety, that policies are being adhered to, strategies are monitored and reviewed, and that child abuse is reported to the relevant authorities.

Co-ordinators are responsible for supervising and supporting educators to ensure they understand and adhere to UJEB policies and child safe practices and report any child abuse concerns.

Educators are responsible for the supervision of children and adhering to UJEB policies and child safe practices and reporting any child abuse concerns.

Child Safe Standard 2 - UJEB publicly communicates its commitment to child safety

This policy articulates the UJEB commitment to child safety and, in conjunction with related policies and documents, outlines the UJEB child abuse prevention and response strategies. This policy is made publicly available on the UJEB website and will be communicated to all new and existing UJEB staff, volunteers, Board members and regular contractors on a regular basis.

Child Safe Standard 3 - UJEB has Workplace Behaviour Requirements (WBR)

The UJEB code of conduct, known as the Workplace Behaviour Requirements, provides staff with clear boundaries for their interaction with children for all UJEB activities and programs, including in UJEB Environments. The UJEB Workplace Behaviour Requirements is available on request from the UJEB office.

Child Safe Standard 4 - UJEB undertakes screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse

UJEB implements robust screening, selection and recruitment procedures to help identify the most suitable people for any given role. UJEB recruitment practices also act to deter unsuitable people from being recruited for either paid or voluntary positions.

Screening

All prospective staff need to provide a CV outlining their suitability for the role and for working with children. Staff need to provide a current Working with Children Check and original copies of their qualifications. Some staff also require police checks.

Recruitment

Each position or category of positions for staff or volunteers that involves child-related work will have a clear statement that sets out:

1. the position's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety;
2. the position occupant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety; and
3. UJEB's commitment to child safety and an awareness of its social and legislative responsibilities.

All prospective staff or volunteers must attend an interview about their knowledge of child safety procedures and are asked to give details of any child safety issues that they have dealt with previously.

Interviews are structured and include behavioural techniques.

At least two referees are contacted, preferably from a recent line manager, who is asked questions regarding the prospective staff or volunteer knowledge of child safety issues, if there have been any incidents or disciplinary investigations and if they are suitable for working with children. The referee cannot be a family member or friend and the bona fides of the referee must be established.

Induction and Training

All staff and volunteers receive an induction to the child safe standards and the policies and practices that underpin UJEB's child abuse prevention practices. All legislative requirements and regulations are made clear including mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures as part of their induction procedure. Staff receive training on the Workplace Behaviour Requirements and are required to sign an agreement to indicate they have understood their obligations and expectations. Staff receive training on how to identify and respond to child sexual abuse, grooming and responding to code of conduct issues as well as disclosures of child abuse. Staff are also trained in how to empower children regarding their right to be safe and how to ensure children feel safe to disclose concerns. Staff training is repeated every two years.

Supervision

To create the optimum working conditions where risks to children are minimised, all staff are supervised and supported. Co-ordinators supervise and provide feedback to staff.

During the probation period of employment, the performance of the staff member is observed and discussed. Staff participate in annual performance feedback reviews, attend meetings as well as undertake professional development and training.

Child Safe Standard 5 - UJEB has procedures for responding to concerns and reporting suspected child abuse

Reporting Concerns

UJEB requires all staff and volunteers, and encourages parents/guardians/carers and children, to report concerns, disclosures, indicators of abuse or inappropriate behaviour (under the Workplace Behaviour Requirements) to the Executive Principal, whose contact details are:

Ph: 9523 6844

Email: itzik@ujeb.com.au

The Board President can also be contacted to report any concerns around child abuse:

Email: president@ujeb.org.au

Where a report relating to abuse or inappropriate behaviour has been made to the Executive Principal, the Executive Principal must notify the Board.

UJEB encourages open communication where any concerns or feedback are welcomed and seen as opportunities to improve. Parents/guardians/carers or children can discuss concerns with their educator or program coordinator. Alternatively, they can contact the Executive Principal directly.

Reports of an allegation of abuse will be handled in a confidential, sensitive manner prioritising the safety of children whilst ensuring procedural fairness. UJEB will report all child abuse to Child Protection and the police. In addition, UJEB will ask Child Protection, or the police, as the case may be, whether it is appropriate for UJEB to report the abuse to the relevant school (if applicable) or the parents/guardians/carers, and will comply with the advice given by Child Protection / the police in response.

UJEB encourages all persons who believe on reasonable grounds that a child needs protection or may have been abused to report their concerns to:

- **Child Protection Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS):** 1300 655 795 (8:45am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday) or 13 12 78 (after hours)
- **Moorabbin Police - Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Team (SOCIT):** 9665 6125
- **Child FIRST:** 1300 367 441

If a child is in immediate danger, the concerned person should call 000 for emergency assistance.

Mandatory Reporting

Mandatory Reporters (including for the purpose of UJEB, registered VIT teachers) must make a report to Child Protection as soon as practicable if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a student (under the age of 17) is in need of protection from abandonment or significant harm as a result of physical injury, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological harm, and the child's parents/guardians/carers are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

Responding to Sexual Offences

Any person (18 years or older), whether a mandatory reporter or not, must make a report to Victoria Police as soon as practicable if they receive information that leads them to form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult to a child (under the age of 16) (also called the failure to disclose offence). This also includes reporting to Victoria Police if they know or reasonably believe that grooming has been committed by an adult to a child under the age of 16 (grooming offence). It is a criminal offence to fail to comply with these obligations. Student sexual offending will be addressed by following the Victorian Department of Education and Training Guidelines.

Any allegations of criminal conduct will be reported to Victoria Police as a priority. The Jewish Law of *mesirah* (reporting to a non-Jewish authority) does not apply when it comes to child abuse. Protecting children comes under the *mitzvah of pikuach nefesh* (saving a life).

Voluntary Reporting

In addition to the above reporting obligations, any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse, may disclose that information to the police or Child Protection.

Any person may also disclose a reportable allegation to the CCYP.

It is UJEB policy to report any abuse of a student which, but for the student's age, would constitute a criminal offence.

Reportable Conduct Scheme

The Executive Principal will comply with his or her individual obligations under the Reportable Conduct Scheme by reporting any reportable allegations to the CCYP within the required timeframe, and continuing to update it in relation to any subsequent investigations.

The Executive Principal will also ensure that there are systems in place for:

- preventing reportable conduct by a staff member, volunteer, contractor and Board member (within the course of the person's engagement);
- enabling any person, including a staff member, volunteer, contractor and Board member, to notify the Executive Principal of a reportable allegation;
- enabling any person, including a staff member, volunteer, contractor and Board member, to notify the CCYP of a reportable allegation involving the Executive Principal; and
- investigating and responding to a reportable allegation against a staff member, volunteer, contractor and Board member of UJEB.

Protection of Reporters

Any staff member, volunteer, contractor and Board member of UJEB who makes a report in good faith in accordance with their reporting obligations will be supported by UJEB, and will not be penalised or disciplined by UJEB for making their report.

The Executive Principal will offer appropriate pastoral support for the individual making the report, for children and their families, and all those involved. The Executive Principal's actions in this regard should be informed by UJEB's policies and procedures for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children.

The Executive Principal will offer the services of a psychologist to any individual involved. This may be the staff member who made the report, the child about whom the report was made, the family of the child, or any other individual impacted by the circumstances of the report. All records will be securely stored.

The Jewish concept of *lashon hara* does not apply when it come to child abuse and UJEB expects unconditional support by and for anyone in the UJEB community who communicates concerns or discloses allegations of child abuse.

Procedures for Investigation

UJEB's first response to concerns or allegations will be to ensure the immediate safety and support for the child. That might include the need for a staff member to discontinue duties while an investigation is being conducted. UJEB will apply the principles of natural justice when investigating.

UJEB will report allegations of abuse to the relevant authorities including Child Protection, the police, the CCYP (under the Reportable Conduct scheme) and any other regulatory body as required.

If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, UJEB will provide updates to the children and families on the progress and any actions the organisation takes (subject to any express directions from the police or other regulatory body).

Disciplinary measures may be imposed on any person in breach of this policy and the Workplace Behaviour Requirements, including but not limited to:

- Dismissal, cessation of engagement, warning or suspension;
- Requiring a verbal and/or written apology;
- Requiring counselling, training and/or further supervision to address behaviour; and/or
- Reassignment of duties with no contact with children.

Privacy

UJEB will collect, use, disclose and hold personal information in accordance with applicable privacy legislation and will respect the privacy of the individuals involved. UJEB has safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected.

Principles

There are two guiding principles in respect to a child's privacy:

- First, UJEB will operate on the best interests principle. All staff, volunteers, Board members and contractors of UJEB will do what they believe to be in the best interests of the child. This principle overrides all others.
- Second, UJEB will respect a child's confidentiality except in situations where it conflicts with the best interests principle.

As much as is reasonably possible, an individual's confidentiality is to be protected. Both those who are making reports and those about whom accusations are being made are entitled to confidentiality.

Where there is suspected abuse or misconduct, staff members, volunteers, Board members and contractors of UJEB must not disclose or make use of the information in a manner that breaches confidentiality, other than to report and act consistently with this policy, and relevant statutory requirements.

Child Safe Standard 6 - UJEB has strategies to identify, reduce or remove the risk of child abuse including face to face and online risk

Risk Assessment

UJEB has developed, implemented, monitored and regularly reviewed its risk management strategies to ensure compliance with all aspects of child safety. UJEB's risk management processes are outlined in policies and procedures and training is undertaken to ensure all staff understand their responsibilities to identify and respond. A risk assessment is conducted for all UJEB programs and activities which involves the identification, assessment and documentation of UJEB's risks in relation to child safety. A risk mitigation plan is developed and reviewed to evaluate the effectiveness of the risk management strategies.

Physical and Online Environment Risks

UJEB's risk management strategies around child safety identify and mitigate the risks of child abuse in the physical environment in which UJEB's various programs and activities occur by taking into account the nature of each environment, the activities expected to be conducted in that environment (including the provision of services by contractors or outside organisations and visitors), the characteristics and needs of all children expected to be present in that environment. The same applies to the online environment in which UJEB operates. The UJEB Workplace Behaviour Requirements outline clear boundaries relating to physical and online child abuse risks.

UJEB conducts all its regular programs at facilities and in environments that comply with the Child Safety Standards. UJEB conducts risk assessments of all UJEB's programs including camps and other activities. Staff must complete risk assessments that encompass all forms of risk to children's safety and submit them for approval to the Executive Principal prior to the activity's commencement. Incident reports will be completed and utilised for consideration and future risk reduction.

Assessment of new or changed physical environments for child safety risks, supervision or monitoring of activities will be incorporated into the risk assessment. Off campus activities such as excursions, camps and overseas trips are carefully planned, and child safety risk assessments are carried out for them including in respect of staff supervision and on-site facilities.

Child Safe Standard 7 - UJEB has strategies to promote child participation and empowerment

UJEB will ensure that children know who to talk to and how, if they are worried or feeling unsafe. UJEB will ensure that children are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues. As part of the teaching curriculum, age appropriate education and communication is provided about the rights of a child to feel safe when participating in our programs and activities. UJEB recognises the specialised needs of children with a disability and will ensure their safe inclusion.

Upon registering for a program, the link to this policy will be provided to children and their parents/guardians/carers.

8. Related Documents

- Staff Manual which includes the Workplace Behaviour Requirements
- Staff Recruitment and Induction Policy
- Privacy Policy

9. Authorisation and Responsibility

UJEB's governing body, the Board, reviews and ratifies this policy and receives regular reports on risk management issues and procedures.

The Executive Principal is responsible for monitoring overall compliance with all aspects of this policy on behalf of UJEB's Board. In the Executive Principal's absence, the President of UJEB takes over responsibility.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or as required to update relevant changes. UJEB will seek feedback from all parties regarding its effectiveness.

Date adopted by UJEB Board

28 October 2019

Next review date

28 October 2021