



Mount Isa City Council

Child Safety Risk Management Framework

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1.0 PURPOSE

This Child Safety Risk Management Framework provides a structured and consistent approach for Council to identify, assess, manage, monitor and review risks to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people across its operations, services, facilities, functions, programs, projects and partnerships.

The purpose of this framework is to support informed decision-making, strengthen accountability, promote a proactive child safe risk culture, and assist Council to meet its legal, regulatory, governance and service delivery obligations in relation to child safety.

This framework supports Council to manage a broad range of risks, including strategic, operational, financial, legal, compliance, safety, reputational, environmental, digital and child safety risks.

This framework supports Council to identify and manage child safety risks arising across Council environments, including directly delivered services, staffed programs, public facilities, open-access settings, shared community spaces and activities delivered by or with third parties.

This framework is intended to:

- provide a consistent approach to child safety risk management across Council
- embed child safety risk considerations into planning, decision-making, service delivery and review
- strengthen Council's capacity to prevent, identify, respond to and learn from child safety risks, incidents, concerns and near misses
- support ongoing monitoring, review and continuous improvement in child safe practices, controls and risk awareness.

This framework should be read alongside relevant Council policies, procedures, risk tools and child safe governance documents.

2.0 SCOPE

This Child Safety Risk Management Framework applies across all Council operations, services, facilities, functions, programs, projects and partnerships where children and young people may be present, participate, access services, attend facilities, or otherwise be affected by Council operations, decisions or third-party use of Council spaces.

This includes, but not limited to libraries, pools and splash parks, civic centres, childcare services, playgroups, school holiday programs, traineeships, parks and playgrounds, visitor centres, youth activities, community events, learning centres, sports and recreation facilities, and other child-connected Council environments.

It applies to all Council personnel, including:

- elected members and councillors
- chief executive officer and executive management
- managers and supervisors
- employees, whether permanent, temporary, casual or fixed term
- volunteers
- contractors, consultants and labour hire workers
- students, trainees, apprentices and work placement participants
- any other persons engaged by or acting on behalf of Council.

This framework applies to risk arising in:

- strategic and operational planning
- direct service delivery and community programs
- public facilities and open-access environments
- community events and functions
- projects and change processes
- procurement, contracting and third-party arrangements
- digital and online environments
- partnerships, co-located services and shared-use settings.

Where Council provides direct service delivery, as well as environments where access to facilities or spaces used by children, young people, families and the broader community are unsupervised. In these setting. Council is still responsible for identifying foreseeable risks within its operations, decisions, facilities and service arrangements, and for taking reasonable steps to eliminate or reduce those risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

All Council personnel share responsibility for identifying, reporting and responding to risks within the scope of their role, including risks that may affect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

This framework is to be applied alongside relevant legislation, Council policies, procedures, contractual obligations and service-specific requirements.

3.0 CONTEXT

Council operates within a complex legislative, regulatory, governance and community environment. Its activities span a wide range of functions, services, facilities and public-facing settings, including administrative operations, community programs, public spaces, events, partnerships, contracted services and shared-use environments.

Council operates across diverse service, facility and community contexts in which child safety risks may arise. These risks may emerge through service delivery, Council Personnel conduct, contractor and third-party arrangements, physical environments, online engagement, community interactions, facility access arrangements, or broader systemic control gaps.

Supervision of council facilities is not uniformed: Some are staffed and directly supervised, while others are open-access, mixed-use or community-managed. In many cases, Council provides access to facilities or spaces used by children, young people, families and the broader community without having full control over all people, behaviour or circumstances in those environments. This framework recognises those operating conditions while requiring Council to identify foreseeable risks within its control or influence and to take reasonable steps to eliminate or reduce those risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

Safeguarding children and young people is an important part of Council's overall risk environment and governance responsibilities. Child safety risks may arise in services, facilities, open-access environments, online settings, events, workforce practices, contractor and hirer arrangements, and broader community interactions. These risks may relate to:

- physical
- psychological
- cultural

- sexual
- emotional or technological harm
- as well as failures in prevention, reporting, response or oversight.

Council child safety risks may arise across a wide range of service and facility contexts, including but not limited to

- libraries
- pools and splash parks
- civic centres
- school holiday programs
- traineeships
- sports and recreation settings
- parks and playgrounds
- visitor centres
- youth activities and community events.

The nature and level of risk may differ across these settings depending on factors such as:

- age of children
- public access
- supervision arrangements
- contractor or hirer involvement
- physical hazards
- one-to-one contact
- online engagement
- and whether children attend independently.

This Child Safety Risk Management Framework has been developed in alignment with ISO 31000:2018 Risk management – Guidelines and is intended to support a consistent, structured and responsive approach to risk management across Council. It also supports Council to meet relevant legal, regulatory, contractual and policy obligations, including those relating to child safety, workplace health and safety, information management, privacy and service-specific compliance requirements.

The context in which Council operates is dynamic. Risks, controls and obligations may change due to legislative reform, regulatory expectations, infrastructure limitations, environmental conditions, changing service models, workforce changes, community expectations, technology use, critical incidents, complaints, emerging issues and lessons learned. This framework is intended to support ongoing monitoring, review and continuous improvement in response to that changing context.

4.0 RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Council's Child Safety Risk Management Framework provides the structure for identifying, assessing, controlling, escalating, monitoring and reviewing risks to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people across Council operations, services, facilities, programs, events and partnerships.

The framework supports a consistent and proactive approach to child safety risk management across a range of council settings, including directly delivered services, staffed programs, public facilities, open-access environments, shared community spaces and activities delivered by or with third parties.

This framework is intended to:

- support a consistent approach to child safety risk management across Council
- embed child safety risk considerations into planning, decision-making, service delivery and review
- strengthen Council's ability to prevent, identify and respond to risks of child abuse, harm, neglect, grooming, exploitation and other child safety concerns
- support timely escalation, reporting and action where child safety risks or concerns are identified
- support continuous improvement in child safe practices, controls and risk awareness across Council.

The framework helps ensure that information about child safety risks is appropriately assessed, documented, escalated and used to inform decision-making, accountability and continuous improvement.

This section outlines the core components of Council's Child Safety Risk Management Framework and how those components work together to support a child safe organisation.

4.1 Architecture of the Risk Management Framework

Council's Child Safety Risk Management Framework applies across the full range of Council environments, services, facilities, activities and arrangements where children and young people may be present, participate, access services, or otherwise be affected by Council operations, decisions, or third-party use of Council spaces.

The framework recognises that child safety risks do not arise in the same way across all Council contexts. Some services, activities and environments may present higher or more complex child safety risks because of factors such as:

- public access,
- limited or no direct supervision,
- physical hazards,
- one-to-one interactions,
- online engagement,
- external contractor involvement,
- community use of facilities,
- workforce age,
- transport,
- or reduced visibility and oversight.

For this reason, child safety risks must be identified, assessed and managed at the level of individual services, facilities, programs, activities and operational contexts, while also recognising broader or systemic child safety risks that may require Council-wide controls, escalation, governance oversight, or changes to policy, procedure, contracting, supervision, communication, environmental design or reporting pathways.

Without limiting the application of this framework, Council must consider child safety risks arising specifically in or through the following Council environments, services and activities (Refer to Child Safety Risk Register, Child Safe Supervision and Duty of Care Policy and Procedure, Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedure):

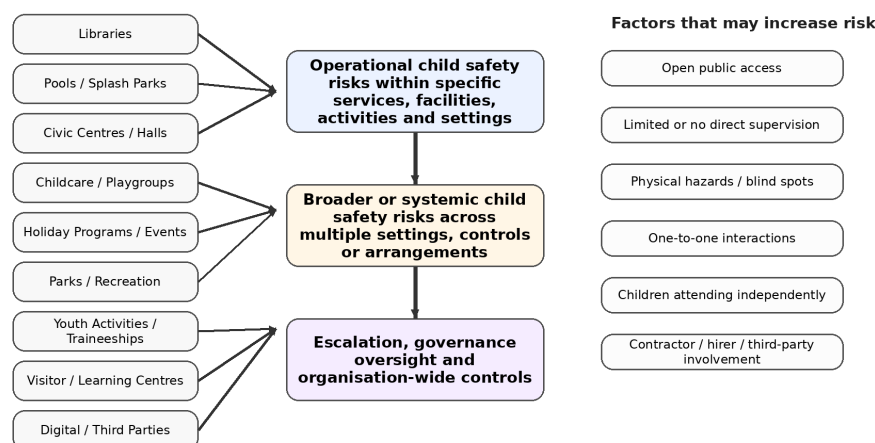
- **libraries**, including library programs, school holiday activities, after-hours activities, public access, independent attendance by children and young people, and the use of contractors or external activity providers

- **swimming pools and splash parks**, including public access, aquatic programs, swimming lessons, physical safety risks, and contractor-operated or contractor-supported services, public change rooms
- **civic centres**, community halls and other multipurpose or hired spaces, including community hire, open access areas, toilets, public entry points, and use without direct Council supervision
- **traineeships, apprenticeships, work experience, school-based traineeships, internships and employment of workers under 18 years of age**
- **school holiday programs**, youth activities and community events, including activities delivered directly by Council or by contractors, entertainers, funded providers, activity operators or community organisations
- **multipurpose centres**, sports and recreation spaces, skate parks, bike areas, sports sheds and other open-access recreation settings
- **public open spaces** such as parks, playgrounds
- **visitor centres**, museums, drop-in centres and similar community-facing facilities
- **youth services**, drop-in centres, youth officers and any Council personnel whose role involves direct engagement with children or young people
- **digital and online environments** used in connection with Council communication, programs, bookings, service access, activities or engagement with children and young people
- **contractor, subcontractor, hirer, tenant, partner and third-party arrangements** where external persons or organisations deliver services to children, interact with children, or operate within Council facilities used by children and young people.

In applying this framework, Council must recognise that some environments are staffed and directly supervised, while others are open-access, mixed-use, community-managed or used by third parties. While Council may not control all people, behaviour or circumstances in those settings, it must still identify foreseeable child safety risks within its operations, facilities, decisions and service arrangements, and take reasonable steps to address them.

Council Child Safety Risk Architecture

Section 4.1 visual



4.2 Implementing Risk Management

In implementing this framework, Council will apply child safety risk management as an ongoing and practical part of governance, planning, service delivery, facility management, contracting, workforce practice and continuous improvement.

Council will implement this framework by:

- identifying where children and young people may be present, participate, access services, attend facilities, or otherwise be affected by Council operations, services, activities, events or decisions
- identifying child safety risks across Council environments, including directly delivered services, public facilities, open-access settings, shared community spaces and third-party arrangements
- assessing the nature, likelihood, consequence and context of those risks, including risks of physical harm, grooming, abuse, neglect, exploitation, unsafe supervision arrangements, inappropriate behaviour, environmental hazards and failures to act
- applying proportionate controls and risk mitigations that reflect the nature of the service, activity, facility or operational context
- embedding child safety requirements into relevant Council systems, including planning, procurement, contracting, recruitment, induction, supervision, incident reporting, complaints handling and facility use arrangements
- ensuring Council personnel understand their responsibilities for identifying, reporting, escalating and responding to child safety risks
- providing information, instruction, training and guidance appropriate to roles and responsibilities
- consulting, where appropriate, with children and young people, families, communities, Council personnel, contractors, community groups and other relevant stakeholders
- monitoring child safety risks, controls, incidents, complaints, concerns, near misses and emerging issues
- reviewing and improving controls, procedures and practices in response to incidents, feedback, audits, complaints, legislative change, environmental change and lessons learned.

Implementation of this framework must reflect the realities of Council operations. This includes environments that are open to the public, settings where children may attend without parents or carers, facilities used by community groups or external providers, and situations where Council provides access to spaces rather than direct supervision. In these contexts, implementation must focus on clear expectations, practical controls, visible reporting pathways, appropriate signage, safe facility use conditions, contractor and hirer requirements, and timely escalation where concerns arise.

Implementation must also recognise that child safety risk management is not limited to Council-run programs. It extends to third-party providers, contractors, hirers, tenants, funded partners and other external persons or organisations where they deliver activities for children, interact with children, or operate within Council facilities used by children and young people.

4.3 Integration into Organisational Processes

Child safety risk management is to be integrated into Council's broader governance, planning, decision-making and operational processes, rather than treated as a standalone or occasional activity.

Child safety risk considerations must be incorporated, where relevant, into:

- strategic and operational planning
- service planning and delivery

- program design, review and evaluation
- use, hire and management of Council facilities and spaces
- community events and public activities
- procurement, contracting and third-party engagement
- recruitment, screening, induction and supervision of Council personnel
- management of volunteers, trainees, apprentices and work experience participants
- complaints handling, incident reporting and response processes
- change management, project planning and service changes
- digital communication, online engagement and use of technology
- environmental design, signage, access controls and other practical risk mitigation measures.

Integration means that child safety risks are considered in the way Council plans, approves, delivers, monitors and reviews its work. This includes considering child safety risks in settings where Council directly provides services, as well as in settings where Council provides access to facilities or spaces used by children and young people, families, community groups, contractors and third parties.

Child safety risk management must also be integrated into decisions about how Council activities are structured and controlled, including:

- who is permitted to deliver child-related activities in Council spaces
- what child safety requirements apply to contractors, hirers, tenants and partners
- what supervision expectations apply in specific services, programs or facilities
- what signage, communication or public information is needed to clarify responsibilities and expected behaviour
- what environmental, procedural or staffing controls are needed to reduce identified risks
- when matters must be escalated for management action, governance oversight or external reporting.

Council must ensure that child safety considerations are embedded into everyday practice across its services and facilities, including libraries, pools and splash parks, civic and community spaces, childcare and playgroup settings, school holiday programs, youth activities, parks and playgrounds, visitor-facing environments, learning spaces, recreation settings and other child-connected environments.

4.4 Resources

Council will allocate and maintain the resources necessary to implement, monitor and improve this Child Safety Risk Management Framework.

Resources must include:

- leadership oversight and governance support
- designated roles or responsibilities for child safety leadership, coordination or advice
- child safety risk assessment and reporting tools
- policies, procedures, guidance materials and implementation resources
- workforce screening, recruitment, induction and training processes
- contractor, hirer and third-party compliance processes
- incident, complaint and concern reporting mechanisms

- communication materials, including signage, posters and public information
- environmental and facility-based risk controls
- systems for monitoring, review, recordkeeping and continuous improvement.

The type and level of resources required may vary depending on Council's size, service profile, facilities, staffing arrangements and identified child safety risks. Resources must be proportionate to risk and sufficient to support practical implementation across Council's child-connected environments.

In allocating resources, Council must consider:

- the nature and diversity of Council services, programs, facilities and events involving children and young people
- open-access and mixed-use environments where children may be present without direct Council supervision
- contractor, hirer, tenant and third-party arrangements
- the need for clear reporting pathways and accessible information
- workforce capability, including induction, supervision and training
- environmental design, visibility, signage and other place-based controls
- the need for review, assurance and continuous improvement.

Resources should support both prevention and response. This includes supporting Council personnel to identify and manage child safety risks early, respond appropriately to concerns and incidents, and strengthen controls over time.

4.5 Risk Culture

A positive child safe risk culture is essential to the effective operation of this framework. Risk culture influences how Council personnel understand child safety, identify and respond to risk, make decisions, raise concerns, and apply controls in practice.

Council is committed to fostering a culture in which child safety is understood as a shared responsibility and where risks to children and young people are identified, discussed, reported and addressed early.

A strong child safe risk culture is reflected in Council environments where:

- child safety is considered part of everyday practice and decision-making
- Council personnel understand their individual and shared responsibilities for child safety
- concerns, incidents, near misses and unsafe situations are reported promptly and taken seriously
- children and young people are treated with dignity and respect
- staff, volunteers, contractors and others feel supported to speak up about risks and concerns
- leaders model child safe behaviour and reinforce expectations through action, communication and accountability
- child safety is considered in the planning, delivery and review of services, activities, facilities and partnerships
- learning from incidents, complaints, feedback and review is used to strengthen practice and reduce future risk.

In a Council context, child safe risk culture must extend across a wide range of settings, including staffed services, public facilities, open-access environments, community events, shared spaces and third-party

arrangements. This means promoting clear expectations, visible reporting pathways, appropriate professional boundaries, and practical responses to risks that may arise in environments where Council does not directly supervise all activity.

Child safe risk culture is strengthened when Council:

- reinforces behavioural expectations through policies, procedures, training and supervision
- supports early identification and escalation of concerns
- responds consistently to breaches, concerns and failures to act
- promotes culturally safe, inclusive and respectful practice
- recognises that some children and young people may face increased barriers to safety, help-seeking or participation
- ensures child safety is visible in leadership messages, operational practice and continuous improvement activities.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Council will apply a consistent child safety risk management process to identify, assess, manage, monitor and review risks to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people across Council services, facilities, activities, events, programs and third-party arrangements.

The child safety risk management process supports Council to:

- identify where child safety risks may arise
- understand the nature and source of those risks
- assess the likelihood and consequence of harm or unsafe situations
- determine appropriate controls and risk mitigations
- escalate matters where required
- monitor the effectiveness of controls over time
- respond to changing circumstances, incidents, concerns, complaints, near misses and emerging risks.

This process applies across a range of Council contexts, including directly delivered services, public facilities, open-access environments, shared-use spaces, community events, digital settings, workforce arrangements and activities delivered by or with contractors, hirers, tenants, partners and other third parties.

Child safety risk management must be ongoing, proportionate to risk, and responsive to the operational realities of Council environments. It must consider both:

- risks arising in specific settings, services, programs, facilities or activities, and
- broader or systemic child safety risks that may affect multiple parts of Council or require governance attention.

The risk management process is supported by communication, consultation, documentation, escalation, monitoring and review at each stage.

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- respond to changing circumstances, incidents, concerns, complaints, near misses and emerging risks.

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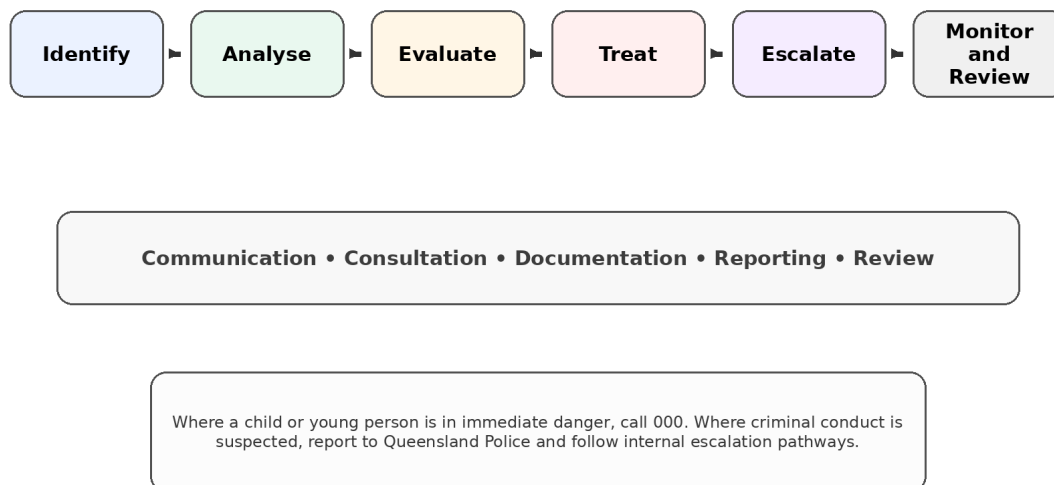
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Child Safety Risk Management Process

Council Child Safety Risk Management Framework



5.1 Risk Identification

Risk identification is the process of recognising where, how and why risks to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people may arise in connection with Council operations, services, facilities, programs, events, activities and third-party arrangements.

Council must identify child safety risks proactively and not only in response to incidents, complaints or disclosures. Risk identification must consider both actual and potential sources of harm, including risks arising from people, practices, environments, systems, service models, community use of facilities, and failures in oversight or response.

Child safety risk identification must occur across the full range of Council child-connected environments, including, where relevant:

- libraries, including public access, independent attendance by children and young people, library programs, school holiday activities and the use of external providers
- swimming pools and splash parks, including physical safety risks, public access, unsupervised or partially supervised use, aquatic activities and contractor-operated services
- civic centres, halls and multipurpose community spaces, including hire arrangements, open access areas, toilets, after-hours use and limited or no direct Council supervision
- childcare services, kindergartens, daycare, after school care and other regulated child-related services
- playgroups, including Council-run and community-run activities using Council spaces
- school holiday programs, youth activities and community events, including entertainers, activity providers, stallholders, external contractors and funded partners
- traineeships, apprenticeships, work experience, school-based traineeships, internships and employment of workers under 18 years of age
- learning centres, Country University Centres, distance education support spaces and school-linked facilities or activities
- sports and recreation facilities, skate parks, bike areas, sports sheds and other open-access recreation settings
- parks, playgrounds and public open spaces
- visitor centres, museums, drop-in centres and similar public-facing facilities
- youth services, youth officers and any Council activities involving direct engagement with children and young people
- health, disability and community support services where children and young people may be present, participate, or be affected by service delivery
- digital and online environments connected to Council communication, activities, bookings, service access or engagement with children and young people
- contractor, subcontractor, hirer, tenant, partner and third-party arrangements involving children, young people, or use of Council facilities by child-related services or activities.

Risk identification must recognise that the nature and level of child safety risk may vary across these settings. Some environments may present heightened risk because of:

- open public access
- limited or no direct supervision
- children attending independently
- one-to-one interactions
- physical hazards or restricted visibility
- mixed-age or mixed-use environments

- online communication or technology use
- contractor, hirer or third-party involvement
- workforce age or inexperience
- cultural, communication or accessibility barriers
- uncertainty about roles, responsibilities or supervision expectations.

When identifying child safety risks, Council must consider risks such as:

- child abuse, assault, neglect, grooming or exploitation
- unsafe physical environments or activities
- inadequate supervision or unclear duty of care arrangements
- inappropriate staff, volunteer, contractor or peer behaviour
- unauthorised access to children or child-related spaces
- failures in screening, induction, training or supervision
- unsafe contractor, hirer or third-party practices
- online risks, including direct messaging, image sharing, privacy breaches or inappropriate digital contact
- failure to respond to concerns, disclosures, complaints, incidents or near misses
- retaliation, intimidation or other barriers to speaking up
- risks to cultural safety, inclusion and participation, including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and other children who may face increased vulnerability or barriers to help-seeking.

Child safety risks must be identified:

- during planning and design of services, programs, activities, events and facilities
- before new activities, partnerships, contractors or hire arrangements commence
- when facilities, staffing, access arrangements or service models change
- when incidents, complaints, concerns, disclosures or near misses occur
- during periodic review of existing services, facilities and operations
- when legislative, regulatory or community expectations change
- when feedback, consultation, audits or monitoring identifies emerging issues or gaps.

All Council personnel are responsible for identifying and raising child safety risks within the scope of their role. Identified risks, concerns, unsafe situations, incidents and near misses must be reported through the appropriate Council reporting pathways and escalated in accordance with this framework and related procedures.

5.2 Risk Analysis

Risk analysis involves considering the nature of an identified child safety risk, how and why it may arise, who may be affected, the existing controls in place, and the likelihood and consequence of harm if the risk is not adequately managed.

The purpose of risk analysis is to support informed decision-making about the level of risk, whether current controls are sufficient, and whether further action, escalation or mitigation is required.

Risk analysis must be undertaken in a way that reflects the specific Council context in which the risk arises. This includes considering:

- the type of service, facility, activity, event or arrangement involved
- the ages, needs and likely vulnerabilities of the children and young people affected
- whether the environment is staffed, supervised, open-access, mixed-use or operated by or with third parties
- the nature of any physical, behavioural, environmental, online, cultural or systemic risks present
- whether there are known patterns, concerns, incidents, complaints or near misses relevant to the risk
- whether the risk may affect one child, a group of children, or multiple Council settings or services
- the effectiveness of existing controls, including policies, procedures, supervision arrangements, environmental design, signage, workforce capability, screening, communication, or contractor requirements.

Risk analysis should not be undertaken by one person alone where consultation or additional expertise is needed. Relevant managers should involve other appropriate personnel or stakeholders where this will improve the quality of the analysis, particularly where the risk relates to:

- open public environments
- physical infrastructure or facility design
- regulated child-related services
- contractors, hirers or partner organisations
- digital or online activity
- cultural safety, inclusion or accessibility
- incidents, complaints, disclosures or patterns of concern.

In analysing child safety risks, Council should consider both:

- the likelihood that harm, abuse, grooming, neglect, exploitation or another child safety concern may occur, and
- the potential consequence if that risk event occurs, including the impact on the child or young person, other children, Council's response obligations, and the safety of the wider environment.

Risk analysis must also consider whether existing controls are:

- clearly defined
- actually in place
- understood by relevant Council personnel or third parties
- consistently applied in practice
- suitable for the setting and level of risk
- sufficient to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

Where analysis identifies uncertainty, weak controls, gaps in responsibility, or settings in which children may be exposed to heightened vulnerability, the risk should be treated cautiously and considered for further control or escalation.

5.3 Evaluating Risks

Risk evaluation is the process of determining the level, priority and required response to a child safety risk after considering the risk analysis and the effectiveness of existing controls.

The purpose of risk evaluation is to support consistent decision-making about:

- which risks require further mitigation
- the urgency and priority of action
- whether escalation is required
- whether existing controls are adequate
- whether the risk should be monitored at an operational level or considered at a broader governance level.

Council will evaluate child safety risks using its approved risk assessment criteria, including consequence, likelihood and the effectiveness of existing controls.

In evaluating child safety risks, Council must consider:

- the seriousness of the potential harm to a child or young person
- whether the risk involves abuse, grooming, neglect, exploitation, unsafe supervision, unsafe environments, inappropriate behaviour, or failure to act
- whether the risk is isolated or may affect multiple children, services, facilities or Council environments
- whether the risk is heightened by open public access, limited supervision, contractor or third-party involvement, unclear responsibilities, environmental design, or barriers to help-seeking
- whether the risk indicates a broader or systemic issue requiring stronger oversight or organisation-wide action.

Risk evaluation must not be based only on whether an incident has already occurred. A risk may require mitigation or escalation where there is a foreseeable risk of harm, a pattern of concerns, a near miss, a control gap, or a setting in which children may be exposed to increased vulnerability.

Where the evaluation identifies that existing controls are inadequate, inconsistently applied, poorly understood, or not suited to the environment, the risk must be prioritised for further mitigation.

Child safety risks that involve actual harm, suspected abuse, grooming, serious control failures, repeated concerns, or risks that may expose children to significant harm must be treated as priority risks and managed in accordance with this framework and related reporting and escalation procedures.

5.4 Risk Escalation

Child safety risks must be escalated when the nature, seriousness, complexity or urgency of the risk requires a higher level of action, oversight, decision-making or reporting.

Escalation ensures that child safety risks are responded to promptly and at the appropriate level, including where immediate action is needed to protect a child or young person, where broader management or governance attention is required, or where external reporting obligations may apply.

Child safety risks must be escalated immediately where:

- a child or young person is in immediate danger
- there is an allegation, disclosure, suspicion or indication of abuse, harm, neglect, grooming or exploitation
- criminal conduct is suspected

- a serious incident, complaint, near miss or unsafe situation indicates a significant risk to a child or young person
- there is a serious failure in supervision, access control, staffing, contractor compliance or other key child safety controls
- the risk is assessed as high or extreme
- the risk may affect multiple children, services, facilities, programs or Council environments
- the risk indicates a broader or systemic issue
- external reporting, regulatory notification or executive oversight may be required.

Where a child is in immediate danger, Council personnel must call 000. Where criminal conduct is suspected, the matter must be reported to Queensland Police.

Internal escalation must occur in accordance with Council's reporting pathways, including escalation to the relevant manager, designated child safety lead or contact, and executive leadership as required.

External reporting must occur where required by law, regulation, contract, funding conditions or service-specific obligations. This may include reporting to child protection, police, regulatory bodies, oversight agencies, or other authorities, depending on the nature of the matter and the Council setting involved.

Escalation must not be delayed because:

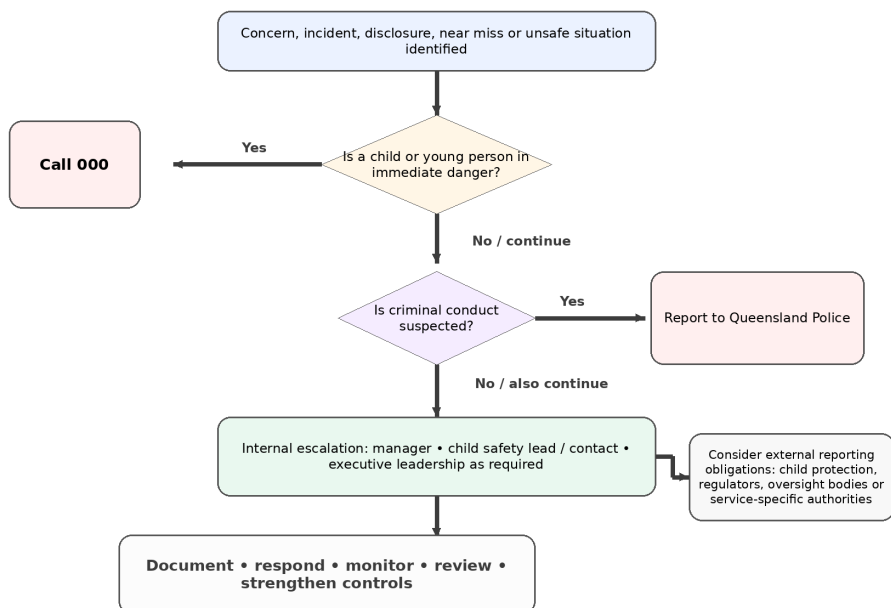
- all facts are not yet known
- the matter appears informal or uncertain
- the risk has not yet been formally recorded in a register
- the risk arises in an open-access or third-party setting
- responsibility is shared with another organisation or provider.

Where a child safety risk arises in connection with a contractor, hirer, tenant, partner, funded provider or other third party, Council personnel must escalate the matter internally and take action in accordance with Council procedures, contractual requirements and any immediate protective actions available to Council.

All escalated matters must be documented and managed in accordance with this framework and related Council policies and procedures.

Child Safety Risk Escalation Flow

Section 5.4 visual



5.5 Risk Controls and Mitigations

Risk controls and mitigations are the measures Council uses to prevent, reduce, respond to and monitor child safety risks.

A control is any existing measure that reduces the likelihood of a child safety risk occurring or reduces the consequence if it does occur. A mitigation is an additional action or improvement introduced to further reduce the risk where existing controls are not adequate. Once implemented, a mitigation becomes part of Council's control environment.

Risk controls and mitigations must be practical, proportionate to the level of risk, and suited to the specific Council context in which the risk arises.

Controls and mitigations may include:

- policies, procedures and clear behavioural expectations
- recruitment, screening, induction, training and supervision of Council personnel
- child safe requirements for contractors, hirers, tenants, volunteers and third parties
- role clarity, escalation pathways and reporting processes
- environmental design and facility-based controls, including visibility, access control, signage and safe use arrangements
- supervision arrangements and workforce practices
- program rules, participation conditions and activity planning
- incident, complaint and concern response processes
- communication and public information materials
- monitoring, review, auditing and continuous improvement actions.

When determining appropriate controls and mitigations, Council must consider:

- the nature and seriousness of the identified risk

- the setting in which the risk arises
- the ages, needs and likely vulnerabilities of the children and young people affected
- whether the environment is staffed, open-access, mixed-use, hired out, contractor-operated or community-managed
- whether the risk relates to physical safety, grooming, abuse, neglect, online safety, cultural safety, supervision, environmental design, or failure to act
- the effectiveness and reliability of existing controls
- whether the proposed mitigation is realistic, enforceable and able to be monitored in practice.

Controls and mitigations must not rely only on assumptions that parents, carers, contractors or other third parties will manage the risk. Where Council has identified a foreseeable child safety risk within its services, facilities, decisions or operational arrangements, **Council must take reasonable steps within its control to prevent or reduce that risk and to support appropriate escalation and response.**

In open-access and shared-use environments, risk mitigations may include:

- clear signage,
- public messaging,
- safe facility design,
- restricted access to certain areas,
- conditions of hire or use,
- contractor requirements,
- visibility measures,
- staff guidance, and
- reporting pathways for concerns or unsafe situations.

Where risks arise through contractors, hirers, tenants, funded providers, partner organisations or other third parties, controls and mitigations may include:

- contractual child safety requirements
- screening and compliance checks
- induction or information requirements
- role and responsibility clarification
- supervision and access expectations
- incident and concern reporting obligations
- suspension, removal or other action where child safety requirements are not met.

Risk controls and mitigations must be documented, assigned, implemented, monitored and reviewed.

5.5.1 Preparing and Implementing Risk Mitigation Tasks

Where additional action is required to address a child safety risk, Council must document and implement risk mitigation tasks in a clear, accountable and timely way.

Risk mitigation tasks should describe:

- the child safety risk being addressed
- the control gap, improvement need or issue identified
- the actions required to prevent, reduce or better manage the risk
- who is responsible for implementing the action
- any supporting roles or consultation required
- the timeframe for implementation
- any resources, approvals or budget required
- how completion and effectiveness will be monitored.

Risk mitigation tasks must be practical and suited to the Council environment in which the risk arises. This includes considering whether the action can be implemented effectively in:

- open-access public settings
- facilities with limited staffing
- shared-use or hired spaces
- contractor or third-party operated environments
- programs or activities involving children attending independently
- settings with physical, cultural, communication or access-related challenges.

Examples of risk mitigation tasks may include:

- introducing or updating signage or public information
- clarifying supervision or escalation expectations
- updating hire conditions, contractor requirements or partnership agreements
- improving visibility, access control or environmental design
- strengthening induction, training or briefing arrangements
- updating reporting pathways or response procedures
- introducing additional screening, monitoring or compliance checks
- reviewing program design, staffing arrangements or activity conditions
- developing additional guidance or tools to support consistent implementation.

Risk mitigation tasks should be prioritised according to the seriousness and urgency of the risk, with immediate action taken where necessary to reduce the risk of harm to a child or young person.

Where a mitigation task relates to a contractor, hirer, tenant, partner or other third party, Council must ensure the required action is clearly communicated, documented and followed up, and that Council takes any further action available to it where requirements are not met.

Once implemented, mitigation actions must be reviewed to confirm whether they are operating as intended and whether further action is required.

5.6 Risk Appetite and Tolerance

Council recognises that some level of risk may arise in the delivery of services, operation of facilities, community engagement, public access environments and third-party arrangements.

Council has zero tolerance for child abuse, grooming, neglect, exploitation, deliberate harmful behaviour, or failures to act on known or suspected child safety concerns.

For the purposes of this framework, **child safety risks must not be accepted simply because:**

- a setting is open to the public
- supervision is limited or shared
- children attend independently
- a contractor, hirer, tenant, partner or other third party is involved
- the risk has existed for a long time without a reported incident
- the service or facility is informal, community-based or difficult to control in full.

Where child safety risks are identified, Council must take reasonable steps within its control to eliminate the risk where possible, or to reduce the risk as far as reasonably practicable where it cannot be eliminated.

Council may accept that some residual child safety risk remains in open-access, mixed-use or public environments after appropriate controls have been implemented. This does not mean the risk is ignored or tolerated without action. It means the risk must be:

- clearly identified and assessed
- subject to proportionate controls and mitigation
- monitored and reviewed
- escalated where required
- reconsidered if conditions, controls, incidents or concerns change.

Risks involving actual harm, suspected abuse, grooming, serious supervision failures, serious control breakdowns, repeated concerns, or foreseeable risk of significant harm to children and young people are outside Council's tolerance and **require immediate action, escalation and response.**

Risk appetite and tolerance decisions must not override legal obligations, reporting duties, child safe standards, or Council's duty to act on child safety concerns.

5.7 Risk Monitoring and Review

Monitoring and review are essential to ensure that child safety risks, controls and mitigation actions remain effective, relevant and responsive to Council's operating environment.

Council must monitor child safety risks on an ongoing basis and review them regularly to determine whether:

- identified risks remain current
- controls are operating as intended
- mitigation actions have been completed and are effective
- new or changed risks have emerged
- further action, escalation or review is required.

Monitoring and review must consider:

- incidents, complaints, disclosures, concerns and near misses
- changes to services, programs, facilities, events or operational arrangements
- changes to staffing, supervision, contractors, hirers, partners or third-party providers

- changes to physical environments, access arrangements, technology or online engagement
- feedback from children, young people, families, communities, Council personnel and other stakeholders
- audit findings, compliance reviews, observations and lessons learned
- changes to legislation, standards, regulatory expectations or local context.

Child safety risks must also be reviewed:

- at regular intervals determined by Council
- when new programs, activities or partnerships are introduced
- before significant changes to child-connected environments or service models
- after any serious incident, allegation, complaint, near miss or identified control failure
- where patterns of concern or repeated issues are identified
- where monitoring indicates that controls are not operating effectively.

Monitoring and review should not be limited to Council-run programs. It must also include third-party, contractor, hirer, tenant and partner arrangements where child safety obligations apply or where children and young people may be affected by the use of Council facilities, services or spaces.

The outcomes of monitoring and review must be documented and used to:

- update risk assessments and risk registers
- strengthen controls and mitigation actions
- inform supervision, training, contracting and communication arrangements
- improve signage, facility use conditions, environmental design or public messaging where needed
- support escalation, governance oversight and continuous improvement.

5.8 Communication, Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Communication, consultation and stakeholder engagement are essential to effective child safety risk management. They help Council identify risks early, understand how risks arise in different settings, clarify responsibilities, strengthen controls, and support consistent responses across Council environments.

Council must ensure that child safety risk information is communicated clearly, appropriately and at the right level to support prevention, reporting, escalation, decision-making and continuous improvement.

Communication and consultation should occur throughout the child safety risk management process, including when:

- identifying and assessing child safety risks
- planning new services, programs, events, partnerships or facility uses
- engaging contractors, hirers, tenants, funded providers or other third parties
- reviewing incidents, complaints, concerns, disclosures or near misses
- developing, implementing or reviewing controls and mitigation actions
- responding to changes in services, staffing, facilities, community use or regulatory expectations.

Council should communicate and consult, as appropriate, with:

- Council personnel
- children and young people

- parents, carers and families
- community members and user groups
- contractors, consultants, hirers, tenants and partner organisations
- child safe leads, managers and executive leadership
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives, advisory groups or local community members
- disability advocates, support persons or other relevant stakeholders
- regulators, statutory agencies or other external bodies where required.

Communication and consultation processes must be appropriate to the setting, the nature of the risk, and the people involved. This includes recognising that some children, young people and community members may face barriers to participation, understanding, safety or help-seeking due to age, disability, language, culture, trauma, literacy, remoteness or previous experiences with services or authorities.

In a Council context, effective communication and consultation may include:

- providing clear child safety information to Council personnel, contractors and third parties
- using signage, posters, public messaging and facility information to communicate supervision expectations, reporting pathways and behaviour standards
- consulting with relevant personnel and stakeholders when assessing risks in specific facilities, services or activities
- seeking feedback on safety issues, barriers, access and visibility in public or shared-use environments
- ensuring that children and young people are informed, where appropriate, about how to raise concerns and who they can speak to
- communicating child safety expectations in contracts, hire agreements, program conditions and partnership arrangements.

Communication and consultation must support, not delay, action. Where a child safety concern, allegation, disclosure, incident or immediate risk is identified, Council personnel must take prompt action in accordance with this framework and related reporting procedures.

The outcomes of communication, consultation and stakeholder engagement should be used to improve risk identification, strengthen controls, support culturally safe and inclusive practice, and inform ongoing monitoring and review.

6.0 RISK REPORTING

Risk reporting is an essential part of Council's Child Safety Risk Management Framework. It supports accountability, oversight, timely action and continuous improvement by ensuring that child safety risks, control gaps, mitigation actions, incidents, concerns, complaints and emerging issues are recorded, communicated and escalated appropriately.

Council must ensure that child safety risk information is documented and reported in a way that is accurate, timely, proportionate and suited to the seriousness of the matter.

Risk reporting must support:

- early identification of child safety risks and control gaps
- timely escalation of serious or urgent matters

- monitoring of risk mitigation and outstanding actions
- oversight of recurring issues, patterns and systemic concerns
- governance and leadership visibility of significant child safety risks
- evidence of compliance, review and continuous improvement.

Child safety risk reporting may include reporting on:

- identified risks and risk assessments
- control effectiveness and mitigation actions
- incidents, complaints, disclosures, concerns and near misses
- contractor, hirer, tenant or third-party compliance issues
- environmental or facility-related safety issues
- training, screening or induction compliance
- recurring themes, patterns or emerging risks
- actions taken to address identified issues and strengthen controls.

The level and frequency of reporting should reflect the nature and seriousness of the risk, the setting in which it arises, and the level of oversight required. Serious child safety risks, high-risk matters, repeated concerns and systemic issues must be reported at the appropriate management, executive or governance level.

Risk reporting under this framework must also align with related Council reporting obligations, including incident management, complaints handling, reportable conduct, contractor management, workplace health and safety, and any service-specific or statutory reporting requirements.

6.1 Internal Communication and Reporting Mechanisms

Council must have clear internal communication and reporting mechanisms to support the timely identification, recording, escalation and management of child safety risks, concerns, incidents, complaints, disclosures and near misses.

Internal reporting mechanisms must enable Council personnel to:

- recognise and report child safety risks and concerns
- escalate urgent or serious matters promptly
- document identified risks, incidents, concerns and actions taken
- report failures in controls, supervision, contractor compliance or other child safety arrangements
- raise recurring issues, patterns or systemic concerns
- seek guidance or support where they are unsure how to respond.

Internal communication and reporting mechanisms should be clear, accessible and understood by Council personnel across different roles and settings, including employees, volunteers, trainees, work placement participants, contractors and others engaged by or acting on behalf of Council.

These mechanisms should support reporting through appropriate internal pathways, including to:

- a direct manager or supervisor
- a designated child safety lead, contact person or relevant officer
- executive management, where required

- other relevant internal roles responsible for incident management, complaints, risk, governance and compliance, human resources or service oversight.

Council must ensure that internal reporting mechanisms are workable across a range of Council contexts, including:

- staffed services and programs
- open-access public facilities
- remote or isolated work settings
- community events and after-hours activities
- contractor-operated or shared-use environments
- settings involving children attending independently or without direct parental supervision.

Internal communication mechanisms may include policies, procedures, reporting forms, incident systems, escalation pathways, supervision arrangements, briefings, inductions, training, signage for personnel, and other practical tools that support consistent reporting and response.

Internal reporting mechanisms must support early action and must not create barriers to speaking up. Council personnel must be encouraged and expected to raise concerns, even where:

- they are uncertain whether a matter is serious
- the concern relates to a near miss or unsafe situation rather than a confirmed incident
- the risk arises in a public or third-party setting
- the concern involves another worker, contractor, volunteer, hirer or community member.

Council must also ensure that internal reporting is linked to appropriate action, including risk assessment, escalation, response, review and follow-up.

6.2 Establishing External Communication and Reporting Mechanisms

Council must establish and maintain appropriate external communication and reporting mechanisms to support compliance with legal, regulatory, contractual and service-specific child safety obligations.

External communication and reporting mechanisms help ensure that child safety risks, concerns, incidents and allegations are communicated to the appropriate external authority, regulator, service partner, funding body or community stakeholder where required.

Depending on the nature of the matter and the Council setting involved, external reporting may include communication or reporting to:

- Queensland Police
- child protection authorities
- regulators or oversight bodies
- funding bodies or contracting entities
- partner organisations or lead agencies
- service-specific regulators, statutory bodies or complaint bodies
- parents, carers or other responsible persons, where appropriate and lawful.

Council must ensure that external reporting pathways are:

- clearly identified

- consistent with relevant legislation and service-specific requirements
- linked to internal escalation processes
- understood by relevant Council personnel
- supported by appropriate documentation, templates or guidance where needed.

External communication and reporting mechanisms must take into account that different Council services, facilities and activities may be subject to different external obligations. This includes, for example, obligations that may arise in relation to childcare services, regulated programs, police matters, reportable conduct matters, disability-related services, contracted services or other child-connected activities.

Where the child safety risk or concern arises in connection with a contractor, hirer, tenant, partner, funded provider or other third party, Council must ensure that:

- internal escalation occurs promptly
- any external reporting obligations are considered and actioned
- communication with the external party is managed appropriately
- Council's contractual, governance and protective actions are considered.

External communication must also be handled carefully to protect privacy, support child safety, avoid compromising investigations, and ensure information is only shared as permitted or required.

Council should maintain or have access to current guidance identifying the key external reporting pathways relevant to its services, facilities and activities.

6.3 Key Performance Indicators

Council should monitor the effectiveness of this Child Safety Risk Management Framework through appropriate indicators, review mechanisms and other sources of assurance.

Key performance indicators and other monitoring measures should help Council assess whether:

- child safety risks are being identified and assessed
- controls and mitigation actions are being implemented and reviewed
- child safety reporting and escalation pathways are being used appropriately
- Council personnel understand and meet their child safety responsibilities
- contractor, hirer and third-party child safety requirements are being applied
- recurring issues, control gaps and emerging risks are being identified and addressed
- the framework is contributing to safer Council environments for children and young people.

Indicators may include, for example:

- completion of child safety risk assessments for relevant services, facilities, programs, events and activities
- progress and completion rates for risk mitigation actions
- frequency and timeliness of risk reviews
- completion of child safety induction, training and refresher requirements
- compliance with screening requirements for relevant roles
- completion of contractor, hirer or third-party child safety compliance checks where required

- reporting trends relating to incidents, concerns, complaints, disclosures and near misses
- identification and follow-up of recurring issues or systemic risks
- review of child safety controls in open-access, shared-use or higher-risk environments
- evidence of review and improvement following incidents, complaints, audits or feedback
- evidence that child safety information, signage and reporting pathways are available where needed
- evidence of culturally safe and inclusive risk controls being considered and implemented.

Council must also monitor child safety compliance indicators such as:

- evidence that Council policies, procedures and implementation measures align with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- completion and review of actions required to meet applicable child safe legislative, regulatory and service-specific obligations
- compliance with Working with Children Check requirements for relevant roles
- completion of required child safety induction, onboarding and refresher training for relevant Council personnel
- evidence that mandatory reporting, incident escalation, reportable conduct and external reporting requirements are reflected in Council procedures and applied where required
- completion of contractor, hirer and third-party child safety compliance requirements where applicable
- documented review of child-related risks at planned intervals and following incidents, complaints, near misses or significant changes
- timely reporting, escalation and closure of child safety concerns, incidents and near misses
- evidence that regulatory notification and service-specific reporting obligations are met where applicable
- evidence that cultural safety commitments, including actions relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, are reflected in risk controls, implementation and review.

Indicators should be used to support improvement, not just compliance reporting. Council should consider both quantitative and qualitative information, including trends, audit findings, stakeholder feedback, lessons learned and the lived experience of Council environments.

Where indicators identify gaps, delays, recurring issues, poor compliance, or ineffective controls, Council must take appropriate follow-up action.

7.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective child safety risk management requires clear roles, responsibilities and accountability across Council.

All Council personnel have a role in identifying, preventing, reporting, escalating and responding to child safety risks within the scope of their role. Responsibilities will vary depending on position, authority and operational context, but child safety risk management is not the responsibility of one role or team alone.

Council must ensure that:

- governance bodies and senior leaders provide oversight, direction and accountability for child safety risk management
- managers and supervisors implement the framework in practice and respond to identified risks

- designated child safety, risk, compliance or relevant advisory roles provide coordination, guidance and support
- Council personnel understand and carry out their responsibilities
- contractor, hirer, tenant, partner and third-party responsibilities are clearly communicated and enforced where relevant.

The roles and responsibilities set out below are intended to support clear accountability across Council's child-connected services, facilities, programs, events, public environments and third-party arrangements.

7.1 Council and elected representatives

Council is accountable for oversight of this Child Safety Risk Management Framework and for ensuring that child safety risks are appropriately governed, prioritised and addressed across Council operations, services, facilities, programs, events and third-party arrangements.

Council's responsibilities include:

- approving and supporting the implementation of this framework
- ensuring child safety risks are appropriately considered in governance, planning and decision-making
- providing oversight of significant child safety risks, systemic issues and emerging concerns
- ensuring appropriate systems, controls and reporting mechanisms are in place to support effective child safety risk management
- supporting a child safe culture across Council
- ensuring adequate resourcing for implementation, monitoring, review and continuous improvement
- overseeing compliance with relevant child safe legal, regulatory and policy obligations
- receiving and considering reporting on significant child safety risks, incidents, trends, control gaps and improvement actions
- ensuring that child safety risks are not treated as an isolated operational issue, but as an important part of Council's overall governance responsibilities.

Where governance functions are delegated, Council must ensure that delegated bodies, committees, executives or officers understand and discharge their responsibilities in line with this framework.

7.2 Executive Management Team

The Executive Management Team is responsible for leading and supporting the implementation of this Child Safety Risk Management Framework across Council.

The Executive Management Team's responsibilities include:

- ensuring this framework is implemented, communicated and maintained across relevant Council operations, services, facilities and activities
- promoting child safety as a leadership and governance priority
- ensuring child safety risks are considered in operational and strategic decision-making
- overseeing the identification, assessment, mitigation and escalation of significant child safety risks
- ensuring appropriate systems, procedures, controls and reporting arrangements are in place
- allocating or recommending appropriate resources to support implementation, monitoring and improvement
- monitoring significant child safety risks, trends, incidents, recurring issues and systemic concerns

- ensuring that relevant managers, child safety leads and other responsible personnel are supported to carry out their responsibilities
- escalating significant matters to Council, governance bodies or external authorities where required
- supporting review and continuous improvement of child safety risk management across Council.

The Executive Management Team must also ensure that child safety risk management is applied across different Council environments, including public facilities, open-access settings, community programs, child-related services, events and third-party arrangements.

7.3 Risk Plan Owners

Risk Plan Owners are responsible for overseeing identified child safety risks within the services, facilities, programs, activities, functions or operational areas assigned to them.

Risk Plan Owners' responsibilities include:

- ensuring child safety risks within their area are identified, assessed, documented and reviewed
- ensuring appropriate controls and mitigation actions are developed, implemented and monitored
- escalating child safety risks where required under this framework
- monitoring the effectiveness of controls and mitigation actions within their area of responsibility
- ensuring child safety risk information is kept current and reflects changes in operations, environments, staffing, contractors, community use or other relevant conditions
- responding to identified control gaps, recurring issues, complaints, incidents, near misses or emerging concerns
- ensuring child safety considerations are incorporated into relevant planning, activities, service delivery, contractor arrangements and facility use decisions
- seeking advice, support or escalation where the risk is complex, serious, systemic or outside their authority to manage.

Risk Plan Owners must take a proactive approach to child safety risk management and must not wait for a serious incident before acting on known or foreseeable risks.

7.4 Audit and Risk Management Committee

Council has an Audit and Risk Management Committee, this committee is responsible for supporting oversight, review and continuous improvement of child safety risk management.

Its responsibilities may include:

- reviewing significant child safety risks, trends, control gaps and emerging issues
- monitoring the effectiveness of this framework and related child safety controls
- considering reports on incidents, complaints, near misses, audits, reviews and compliance issues relevant to child safety risk
- providing advice or recommendations to Council, the Executive Leadership Team or other relevant decision-makers
- supporting oversight of improvement actions arising from identified risks, reviews, audits or serious incidents
- considering whether broader or systemic child safety issues require stronger governance attention or organisation-wide response

- monitoring the effectiveness of reporting, escalation and assurance mechanisms relevant to child safety risk management.

7.5 Coordinator Governance

Council has Coordinator Governance who's role is responsible for supporting the administration, coordination and continuous improvement of child safety risk management processes.

Responsibilities may include:

- supporting implementation and review of this framework
- providing advice on child safety risk management processes, documentation and reporting
- coordinating risk registers, risk reviews or other child safety risk management records where applicable
- supporting the development, monitoring and follow-up of mitigation actions
- assisting with reporting on child safety risks, trends, control gaps and compliance issues
- facilitating or supporting risk assessment, review or improvement activities
- assisting Council personnel and managers to understand and apply child safety risk management requirements
- supporting alignment between this framework and related child safety, complaints, incident, contractor and compliance processes
- identifying areas where additional guidance, tools, training or review may be needed.

7.6 Council Personnel

All Council personnel are responsible for contributing to a child safe organisation and for applying this framework within the scope of their role.

Council personnel responsibilities include:

- identifying and raising child safety risks, concerns, unsafe situations, incidents and near misses
- complying with relevant child safety policies, procedures, directions and reporting requirements
- taking reasonable steps to support the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in connection with Council work, services, facilities and activities
- following child safety reporting, escalation and response pathways
- implementing and following relevant controls, supervision arrangements and risk mitigation
- participating in child safety induction, training, supervision and review processes as required
- maintaining appropriate professional boundaries and behaviour
- cooperating with risk reviews, investigations, audits or improvement activities where required
- acting promptly where a child safety concern, allegation, disclosure or immediate risk is identified.

Council personnel must not ignore, minimise or delay action on child safety risks or concerns, including where the matter appears uncertain, involves another person or organisation, or arises in a public, shared-use or third-party environment.

Where Council personnel engage with children and young people directly, or work in child-connected environments, they must understand the child safety risks relevant to their role and the controls, expectations and reporting pathways that apply.

8.0 EVALUATION OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Council will review and evaluate this Child Safety Risk Management Framework on a regular basis to ensure it remains effective, relevant and fit for purpose.

Evaluation of the framework should consider whether:

- the framework is being implemented in practice across relevant Council services, facilities, programs, events and activities
- child safety risks are being identified, assessed, escalated, treated, monitored and reviewed appropriately
- reporting pathways, controls and mitigation actions are functioning effectively
- the framework remains aligned with current legislation, standards, regulatory expectations and Council operations
- the framework is supporting safer environments for children and young people across staffed, open-access, mixed-use and third-party settings
- there are recurring issues, control gaps, implementation barriers or systemic concerns requiring improvement.

Evaluation should be informed by:

- risk reviews and risk reporting
- incidents, complaints, disclosures, concerns and near misses
- audit findings, compliance reviews and other assurance activities
- feedback from Council personnel, children and young people, families, communities and other stakeholders where appropriate
- contractor, hirer, tenant and third-party compliance issues
- changes in services, facilities, staffing, community use, technology or operating conditions
- changes in legislation, regulation, standards or local context.

Council should review this framework:

- at planned intervals
- following any significant child safety incident, systemic issue or serious control failure
- where there are substantial changes to Council operations, services, facilities or child-connected activities
- where review findings indicate that updates or improvements are required.

Where evaluation identifies gaps or improvement opportunities, Council must take appropriate action to strengthen the framework, related controls, implementation tools, guidance materials and supporting procedures.

9.0 GLOSSARY

CHILD SAFETY RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

RESOLUTION NO. OM06/ 08/26 VERSION V1

Term	Definition
Abuse	Any act or omission that causes harm to a child or young person, including physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse, neglect, grooming, exploitation or exposure to family and domestic violence.
Child	A child is a person under 18 years of age.
Child Harm	Any physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or cultural harm, abuse, neglect, exploitation or other mis mitigation of a child or young person, including exposure to unsafe environments or inappropriate behaviour.
Child Safe Culture	The shared values, attitudes, behaviours and practices within Council that support the safety, participation and wellbeing of children and young people and encourage early identification and response to risk.
Child Safe Environment	An environment in which children and young people are respected, included and protected from harm, and where people, systems, practices and physical settings support their safety and wellbeing.
Child Safety Concern	Any observation, allegation, disclosure, suspicion, complaint, incident, near miss, behaviour, situation or pattern that indicates a risk to the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person.
Child Safety Risk	Any actual, potential or foreseeable circumstance, behaviour, practice, environmental factor, control gap or systemic issue that may cause or contribute to harm to a child or young person, or reduce Council's ability to prevent, identify, respond to or report child safety concerns.
Control	A measure, action, process, system, practice or safeguard that reduces the likelihood of a risk occurring or reduces the consequence if it does occur.
Council Personnel	Council personnel includes employees, contractors, volunteers, students, trainees, apprentices, work placement participants and any other person engaged by or acting on behalf of Council.
Cultural Safety	An environment, relationship or practice in which the identity, experience and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, and other children from diverse backgrounds, are recognised, respected and supported, and where they are not diminished, excluded or made unsafe.
Disclosure	Information provided by a child, young person or another person indicating that harm, abuse, neglect, grooming or another child safety concern may have occurred or may be occurring.
Duty of Care	The obligation to take reasonable steps to prevent foreseeable harm and to respond appropriately where risks to safety and wellbeing are identified.

CHILD SAFETY RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

RESOLUTION NO. OM06/ 08/26 VERSION V1

Term	Definition
Escalation	The process of raising a child safety risk, concern, incident or issue to a higher level of authority, oversight or response because of its seriousness, urgency, complexity, potential impact or reporting requirements.
Grooming	Behaviour intended to establish trust, emotional connection or access to a child or young person, their family, carers or other gatekeepers for the purpose of abuse, exploitation or inappropriate involvement.
Likelihood	The chance or probability of a child safety risk occurring.
Near Miss	An event, situation or circumstance that could have resulted in harm to a child or young person but did not do so on that occasion.
Neglect	A failure to provide for a child or young person's basic physical, emotional, psychological, cultural, educational or safety needs where this exposes them to harm or risk of harm.
Open-Access Environment	A Council environment that is open to the public or able to be accessed without direct Council supervision or controlled entry at all times.
Reportable Conduct	Conduct of a kind that must be notified, managed or responded to under applicable reportable conduct laws, procedures or regulatory requirements.
Residual Risk	The level of risk that remains after existing controls have been considered.
Risk	The effect of uncertainty on objectives. In this framework, risk includes any uncertainty, event, situation or circumstance that may affect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people or Council's ability to provide child safe environments.
Risk Analysis	The process of understanding the nature of a risk, how it may arise, who may be affected, and the effectiveness of existing controls.
Risk Assessment	The overall process of identifying, analysing and evaluating a risk.
Risk Evaluation	The process of determining the significance, priority and required response to a risk after considering the risk analysis and existing controls.
Risk Owner / Risk Plan Owner	The person responsible for ensuring that a child safety risk within their area is identified, assessed, managed, monitored and reviewed, and that required actions are implemented or escalated.
Risk Mitigation	An action taken to remove, reduce, control or better manage a risk. Once implemented, a risk mitigation may become part of the ongoing control environment.
Third Party	Any external person, organisation or entity that delivers services, activities or programs for children, interacts with children, or uses Council facilities or spaces in circumstances where child safety obligations may arise. This may include contractors, subcontractors, hirers,

CHILD SAFETY RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

RESOLUTION NO. OM06/ 08/26 VERSION V1

Term	Definition
	tenants, partner organisations, funded providers, consultants, activity providers or community groups.
Young Person	A person under 18 years of age. Council may use the terms child and young person together in recognition that risks and safeguarding approaches may vary depending on age, development and context.

APPENDIX 1 – RISK TOOLS

The following tools support the consistent identification, assessment and evaluation of child safety risks under this framework.

These tools are intended to assist Council personnel to assess the likelihood and consequence of child safety risks in a structured and consistent way, having regard to the specific Council environment, activity, service, facility or arrangement in which the risk arises.

These tools should be used alongside professional judgement, consultation, escalation requirements and any related Council procedures. They do not replace the obligation to take immediate action where a child or young person is at risk of harm, where criminal conduct is suspected, or where external reporting obligations apply.

In applying these tools, Council must consider the context of the risk, including:

- the age, vulnerability and likely needs of the child or young person
- the nature of the setting, including whether it is staffed, open-access, mixed-use or third-party operated
- the seriousness of the potential harm
- the effectiveness of existing controls
- whether the risk reflects an isolated issue or a broader/systemic concern.

APPENDIX 1.1 – CONSEQUENCE / IMPACT SCALE

Level	Descriptor	Child Safety Impact	Examples
Extreme	Severe / critical impact	Actual or highly likely severe harm to a child or young person, including serious physical or psychological harm, sexual abuse, grooming, exploitation, or a serious failure to protect. May involve multiple children, a systemic failure, or a situation requiring immediate emergency response, executive escalation and external reporting.	Serious sexual abuse allegation involving a worker, contractor or volunteer; a child suffers serious injury in a Council setting where major safety controls failed; multiple children exposed to significant harm in a Council-run or Council-facilitated activity; serious grooming behaviour identified across more than one service, facility or program; a major systemic failure in a high-risk setting such as childcare, a school holiday program or a pool environment.
High	Major impact	Significant risk of serious harm to a child or young person, or a serious child safety incident, allegation, disclosure, grooming concern, major supervision failure, or major control breakdown. May affect more than one child, involve a high-risk environment, or indicate a broader issue requiring urgent management and escalation.	Child left unsupervised in a high-risk setting such as a pool, splash park, excursion or community event; serious allegation of inappropriate behaviour by Council personnel or a third-party provider; repeated unsafe access by unauthorised adults to child-related spaces; major failure by a contractor delivering child-related activities to comply with child safety requirements; serious blind-spot or visibility issue in a library, civic facility or recreation setting creating heightened grooming or harm risk.
Moderate	Moderate impact	A child safety risk or incident that could result in harm to a child or young person if not addressed, including unsafe supervision arrangements, unsafe environments, inappropriate behaviour, limited visibility, contractor non-compliance, or repeated low-level concerns. Usually requires prompt management action and review of controls.	Repeated concerns about children attending a library or recreation facility without clear local supervision guidance; gaps in supervision or sign-in/out processes for a holiday program or playgroup; contractor or hirer using Council facilities without clear child safety expectations being communicated; inappropriate boundary behaviour or concerning conduct that does not yet appear to meet a higher threshold; poor visibility, access control or monitoring in toilets, change rooms, halls or open community facilities.
Low	Minor impact	A low-level child safety risk, concern, near miss or control gap that has limited immediate impact but still requires action to prevent escalation. May include unclear responsibilities, minor environmental issues, isolated boundary concerns, or gaps in signage, communication or supervision expectations.	Missing or unclear signage about supervision expectations in parks, playgrounds, libraries or splash parks; minor gaps in local guidance for contractors, hirers or community users of facilities; isolated near miss involving child access to a restricted area; unclear staff or volunteer understanding of reporting pathways; minor documentation or communication gap that could contribute to risk if not addressed.
Negligible	Minimal impact	A very low-level issue with little or no immediate impact on child safety, but which should still be noted and corrected if relevant. May include minor process or documentation gaps that do not of themselves expose a child to harm but could contribute to risk if left unaddressed.	Minor formatting or administrative issue in a risk record; outdated reference in local guidance that does not affect immediate safety; small documentation gap in contractor or activity records; low-level issue identified and corrected before it creates any practical child safety exposure.

APPENDIX 1.2 – LIKELIHOOD SCALE

Likelihood	Descriptor	Definition	Examples
Almost Certain	Expected to occur in most circumstances	The child safety risk is very likely to occur, is already occurring, or there is a strong pattern of repeated concerns, incidents, unsafe conditions or control failures.	Repeated unsupervised child attendance in a known high-risk setting without clear controls; ongoing contractor non-compliance despite previous concerns; repeated unsafe access to child-related spaces; persistent lack of supervision clarity in a setting regularly used by children.
Likely	Will probably occur at some point	The child safety risk is more likely than not to occur if current conditions continue. There may already be warning signs, known weaknesses, previous near misses or recurring low-level concerns.	Known blind spots in a library, pool or recreation facility with no additional controls; repeated community use of a hall by child-related groups without clear child safety requirements; ongoing use of external providers without clear induction or child safety expectations.
Possible	Could occur at some point	The child safety risk could occur in the current circumstances, particularly if controls are inconsistent, informal, unclear or not always followed.	A school holiday activity using casual staff or contractors with variable supervision arrangements; an open-access setting where children attend independently and responsibilities are not clearly communicated; public access to areas near child-focused activities creating foreseeable but not yet repeated risk.
Unlikely	Not expected, but still possible	The child safety risk is not expected to occur in normal circumstances, but it remains possible if conditions change or controls fail.	A generally well-managed program or facility where there is still some exposure to public access, third-party use or occasional staffing gaps; a contractor-operated activity with clear requirements in place but limited monitoring.
Rare	May occur only in exceptional circumstances	The child safety risk would only be expected to occur in unusual or exceptional circumstances because strong controls are in place and the setting is low exposure.	A tightly controlled child-related activity with strong supervision, clear access restrictions, screened personnel and well-understood procedures; a low-exposure environment where children are only occasionally present and risks are already well managed.

APPENDIX 1.3 – RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

Example 1

Risk Assessment Matrix

Appendix 1.3 visual

		IMPACT				
		Negligible	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
LIKELIHOOD	Almost Certain	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Likely	Medium	Medium	High	High	Extreme
	Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

Legend:

Low

Medium

High

Extreme

Use this matrix with the Impact Scale and Likelihood Scale to determine the overall level of child safety risk after considering the effectiveness of existing controls.

Example 2

Impact \ Likelihood	Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain
Minor	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
Moderate	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Major	Low	Medium	High	High	Extreme
Severe	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme

Council will use a matrix to determine the overall level of child safety risk after considering the impact of the risk and the likelihood of the risk occurring, taking into account the effectiveness of existing controls.

The matrix is intended to support consistent decision-making about:

- the priority of the risk
- whether additional controls or mitigation actions are required
- whether escalation is required
- the level of monitoring and review needed.

A higher rating does not remove the need for judgement or immediate action. Where a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm, or where abuse, grooming, serious control failure or criminal conduct is suspected, Council personnel must act immediately in accordance with this framework and related reporting procedure

APPENDIX 1.4 – APPLYING THE RISK TOOLS

The risk tools in this appendix are intended to support a consistent and practical approach to assessing child safety risks across council services, facilities, activities, events and third-party arrangements.

These tools should be used when:

- Identifying and assessing child safety risks in council environments
- Planning new services, programs, events, partnerships or facility uses
- Reviewing existing services, facilities or activities
- Considering incidents, complaints, disclosures, concerns or near misses
- Assessing risks arising from contractors, hirers, tenants, partners or other third parties
- Reviewing changes to staffing, supervision, environmental design, access arrangements or service delivery.

When using the risk tools, council should:

- Clearly describe the risk being assessed
- Identify who may be affected and in what setting
- Consider the ages, needs and likely vulnerabilities of the children and young people involved
- Consider the nature of the environment, including whether it is staffed, open-access, mixed-use or third-party operated
- Identify the controls already in place
- Assess the likely impact if the risk event occurs
- Assess the likelihood of the risk occurring in the current circumstances
- Use the matrix to determine the overall level of risk
- Decide whether further mitigation, escalation, monitoring or review is required.

The risk tools are intended to support decision-making, not replace professional judgement. Council personnel must always act promptly where:

- A child or young person is in immediate danger
- Abuse, grooming, neglect or exploitation is suspected
- Criminal conduct is suspected
- A serious incident, disclosure, complaint or control failure has occurred
- External reporting or urgent escalation may be required.

Where there is uncertainty about how to assess a risk, council personnel should seek advice from the relevant manager, designated child safety lead, risk plan owner, or other appropriate role.

Risk assessments should be documented, reviewed and updated when:

- Circumstances change
- New information becomes available

- Controls are introduced, changed or found to be ineffective
- Incidents, complaints, disclosures, concerns or near misses occur
- New services, activities, contractors or partnerships commence
- Review identifies a recurring issue, systemic concern or need for improvement.

These tools should be applied in a way that reflects the practical realities of council environments, including open public spaces, community facilities, child-related services, youth activities, public events and third-party use of council spaces.

APPENDIX 2 – COUNCIL CHILD SAFETY RISK CONTEXTS AND EXAMPLES

Council setting / activity	Examples of child safety risks	Possible controls / considerations
Libraries	Children attending independently without clear supervision expectations; exposure to members of the public; grooming opportunities in low-visibility areas; contractors or external providers running activities without clear child safety requirements; library spaces being treated informally as supervised care.	Clear local guidance on unattended children and supervision expectations; signage for parents/carers and community; staff guidance on responding to unattended children and concerns; visibility of reporting pathways; contractor and activity provider requirements; review of blind spots, toilets, after-hours use and access arrangements.
Swimming pools and splash parks	Physical safety risks; inadequate supervision; unclear age expectations for independent attendance; children attending with older siblings rather than adults; open public access; contractor-run swimming lessons or pool operations; grooming opportunities in change rooms or less visible areas.	Clear supervision and entry expectations; signage; contractor compliance requirements; safe access and visibility controls; change room monitoring arrangements where appropriate; escalation pathways for unattended or unsafe situations; review of age-based local rules and public messaging.
Civic centres, halls and multipurpose community spaces	Open access areas; public toilets or breezeways; community hire with no direct council supervision; third-party use by child-related groups; contractors and casual activity providers; poor visibility or restricted areas; uncertainty about who is responsible for child safety.	Conditions of hire; child safety expectations for users and hirers; contractor and external provider requirements; signage and behaviour expectations; safe access controls; guidance for staff where facilities are open, hired or community used; escalation pathways when concerns arise.
School holiday programs	Mixed staffing and contractor use; one-to-one interactions; off-site activities; sign-in/out failures; age-mixed activities; children moving between activities; inadequate screening or induction of casual providers; high child volume increasing supervision risk.	Risk assessments for each program; sign-in/out procedures; supervision plans; contractor and external provider requirements; activity-specific safety controls; clear escalation and incident response; staffing and visibility arrangements; child-safe conduct expectations.
Community events	Large crowds; children separated from carers; entertainers, stallholders and activity providers interacting with children; open public access; temporary infrastructure; unclear supervision	Event risk assessment; lost child procedures; contractor and stallholder expectations; signage and public messaging; visibility of

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Council setting / activity	Examples of child safety risks	Possible controls / considerations
	boundaries; grooming opportunities in busy or poorly visible settings.	staff/contact points; behavioural expectations; escalation pathways; defined responsibilities for child-related activities.
Traineeships, apprenticeships, work experience and employment of workers under 18	Grooming or exploitation of young workers; unsafe power dynamics; poor supervision; unclear professional boundaries; underage workers in isolated or adult-dominated settings; inadequate induction or support.	Child-safe recruitment and induction; supervision arrangements; clear professional boundaries; reporting pathways for young workers; manager oversight; role-appropriate screening and risk review; attention to placement setting and vulnerability of young workers.
Country university centres, learning centres and education-linked facilities	Unsupervised attendance by children or young people; shared facilities; public access; unclear boundaries between educational use and general community use; limited staffing; after-hours access.	Local guidance on supervision expectations; signage; access and visibility review; clarification of council role versus school/education provider role; contractor and partner expectations; reporting pathways and response guidance.
Sports and recreation facilities, skate parks, bike areas and sports sheds	Open-access use; children left unsupervised; mixed-age environments; poor visibility; community assumptions that staff will supervise; contractor-run activities; injury risks and grooming opportunities in low-oversight settings.	Clear public messaging that supervision remains with parent/carer where applicable; signage; environmental review for blind spots and access issues; controls for contractor-led activities; reporting pathways; facility-specific risk reviews.
Parks, playgrounds and public open spaces	Open public access; no direct supervision; children interacting with unknown adults; isolated or poorly visible areas; physical hazards; unclear expectations about council versus parent responsibility.	Supervision signage; behaviour expectation signage; environmental design and maintenance; visibility review; public reporting mechanisms; escalation and response guidance for council personnel when concerns are observed.
Visitor centres, museums and drop-in centres	Public-facing settings with mixed-age attendance; informal interactions with children; contractors or volunteers engaging with children; reduced clarity about child-related responsibilities where facilities are primarily tourism or community focused.	Staff and volunteer guidance; visibility of reporting pathways; behavioural expectations; role clarity where children attend or participate; contractor and volunteer requirements; risk review for child-facing activities or informal youth use.

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Council setting / activity	Examples of child safety risks	Possible controls / considerations
Youth services, youth officers and youth activities	Direct engagement with young people; boundary issues; one-to-one contact; transport or outreach risks; digital communication risks; after-hours activities; reliance on casual staff, grants or contractors.	Clear conduct expectations; supervision and escalation pathways; guidance on digital communication and professional boundaries; activity risk assessment; contractor requirements; recordkeeping; support and oversight for youth-facing roles.
Health, disability and community support settings	Children present in mixed-age settings; third-party provider involvement; complex vulnerabilities; transport or outreach risks; privacy and information sharing issues; informal supervision expectations.	Role clarity; provider and partner requirements; screening and training where relevant; privacy and information handling controls; escalation pathways; culturally safe and accessible responses; review of mixed-age and outreach settings.
Digital and online environments	Direct messaging, image sharing, privacy breaches, inappropriate online contact, unclear moderation, children accessing council programs or communications digitally, use of personal devices or accounts.	Digital communication rules; approved platforms; privacy safeguards; moderation and escalation arrangements; staff guidance; contractor and provider requirements; child-friendly reporting options where relevant.
Contractor, hirer, tenant, partner and third-party arrangements	External persons delivering activities to children without clear child safety expectations; inconsistent screening or induction; unclear reporting responsibilities; reliance on third parties without oversight; child-related activities occurring in council spaces without adequate controls.	Child safety requirements in contracts, hire agreements and partnership documents; compliance checks; induction or briefing requirements; clear escalation and reporting obligations; role clarification; monitoring and follow-up; action where requirements are not met.

APPENDIX 3 – RELATED TOOLS, RESOURCES AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The following tools, resources and supporting documents may assist council to implement this child safety risk management framework in a practical and consistent way. Councils may already have some of these documents or tools in place, or may choose to develop, adapt or localise them to reflect their services, facilities, activities and operating context. This framework should be read and applied alongside relevant child safe governance documents, operational procedures and implementation resources.

Resource / document	Purpose
Child safety risk assessment template	To support consistent assessment of child safety risks across services, facilities, programs, events, hires and third-party activities.
Child safety risk register template	To record identified child safety risks, existing controls, mitigation actions, responsible officers and review dates.
External reporting pathways / contact register	To provide current service-specific external reporting pathways, key contacts, and guidance on when external reporting or notification may be required.
Contractor / hirer / third-party child safety requirements resource	To communicate child safety expectations and compliance requirements for contractors, hirers, tenants, partner organisations and other third parties.
Conditions of hire / facility use child safety clauses	To support safer use of council halls, civic centres, multipurpose spaces and other facilities used by community groups or external providers.
Library supervision / unattended children guidance	To clarify local supervision expectations, unattended children guidance, staff response, signage and activity provider requirements in library settings.
Open-access environment guidance	To support child safety risk management in parks, playgrounds, splash parks, recreation spaces, public facilities and other mixed-use or unsupervised settings.
Signage and poster suite	To communicate supervision expectations, expected behaviour standards, reporting pathways and other child safety messages in council facilities and public-facing settings.
Escalation and reporting flowchart	To provide a practical visual guide to internal escalation, emergency response, police reporting and other external reporting pathways where required.
Child safety induction / briefing for contractors and external providers	To support consistent communication of child safety responsibilities to external providers, entertainers, activity operators and other non-council personnel.

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Resource / document	Purpose
Role-specific child safety guidance or quick reference tools	To support workers in roles such as youth services, libraries, pools, customer-facing services and other child-connected settings.
Lost child / separated child response guidance	To support practical response in public facilities, community events, pools, libraries and other settings where children may become separated from parents or carers.
Local implementation / customisation guidance	To support each council to adapt the shared framework to its local services, governance arrangements, facilities, staffing and community context.
Related child safe governance documents	To ensure this framework is read together with relevant policies and procedures, such as the child safety policy, child safety code of conduct, child safety complaints and reporting procedure, reportable conduct procedure, and supervision and duty of care documents.

Council should determine which supporting tools and resources are required based on its services, facilities, risk profile, workforce structure and operating environment, and should review these periodically as part of ongoing child safety risk management and continuous improvement.