



At VPL we consider the health, safety and wellbeing of all children and young people to be our highest priority. We are committed to delivering an environment that is caring, nurturing and safe and this is reflected in our policies and practices.

We know that children who are safe are free to grow up happy and healthy; and we take our role in providing a safe environment for each and every child we care for very seriously.

Our Commitment

It is the responsibility of all at VPL, including our staff and volunteers to:

- protect children and young people from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation
- be alert to incidents of child abuse and neglect occurring outside the scope of our operations and services that may have an impact on the children and young people to whom we provide a service
- create and maintain a child safe culture that is understood, endorsed and put into action by all the individuals who work for, volunteer or access our activities and services.

We expect all within our organisation, regardless of their role or level of responsibility, to act to safeguard children from such harm by:

- adopting the practices and behaviour we have set as our standard when carrying out their roles
- reporting any abuse or neglect of which they become aware to our management and/or to external authorities responsible for child protection or to police, regardless of whether that abuse is being perpetrated by personnel within our organisation, or by those outside our organisation including those from the child's family, extended family, their family's extended network or strangers.

Our policies and procedures seek to address risks to child safety and to establish a safeguarding culture and practice. Our safeguarding policies and procedures are: accessible in forms that are easy to understand; have been informed by stakeholder consultation; and are communicated to children, young people and their families and our personnel.

We regularly review our policies, gain endorsement of changes and advise our personnel of changes.

Our policies and procedures in relation to the protection of children and young people guide:

- the screening and recruitment of our personnel
- the behaviour of our personnel towards children and young people

- the induction and training of our personnel about safeguarding children and young people
- our open and effective communication with children and young people and their parents
- our responses to the abuse and neglect of children if it occurs
- our maintenance of a safeguarding culture in the organisation.

We will ask parents/guardian permission in writing before we:

- take a child or young person on an excursion, camp or activity
- arrange overnight stays or camps; and/or
- provide transport for children or young people

We will ask parents/guardians written permission to take pictures of your child or young person.

We will not call, text or email your child or make contact with your child or young person on social media, except on official VPL social media sites.

Our child safe policies and procedures can be viewed on our web site:

<http://www.policelegacyvic.org.au/aboutus/safeguarding-children>

Parents and Guardians Commitment

As a parent you are bound by the Code of Conduct for Legatees. It gives specific advice for parents, as follows:

The enjoyment and safety of children and young people participating in VPL activities is a primary consideration for VPL. Your responsibility is to support these outcomes by:

- encouraging your child's participation in a positive manner
- advising VPL personnel of any additional support that your child may have or develops over the course of the activity or program affecting their safe participation - e.g. asthma, allergies, hearing difficulties
- advising VPL personnel of any changes in contact information in the event of an emergency
- not engaging in behaviour that discriminates against any other person on the basis of gender, race, ability, colour, religion, language, politics or national or ethnic origin
- not engaging in, or threatening to engage in, violent, physical or verbal confrontations with any other person
- engaging with VPL personnel in a positive manner and do not criticise the personnel in the presence of your child. Report any concerns to the VPL Operations Manager or CEO
- ensuring that your child arrives on time for the start of the activity and is picked up on time at the conclusion of the activity
- notify VPL prior to the session if your child is to be picked up by a person unknown to VPL
- not taking photos of other children unless you have consent of their parents/guardians

- not being affected by alcohol, drugs and other behaviour altering substances
- reporting any concerns regarding the safety, wellbeing and welfare of a child or young person to a VPL personnel immediately.