



Children's Health and Safety

Safeguarding Children Requirement | NQS2



Purpose

Commitment to Safeguarding Children

This requirement informs all Goodstarters of their obligations to act ethically towards children and their responsibilities in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children. It is underpinned by the paramountcy principle, which recognises that the safety, rights and best interests of the child must be the primary consideration in all organisational actions, decisions and practices. It sets out the organisation's expectations, practices and approach in relation to state-based Child Safe Standards and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. It also provides guidance on the processes, procedures and practices that aim to keep children safe and well, and to promote and protect their rights.

This policy must be considered when developing, designing and managing Goodstart's procedures, processes and programs to ensure they promote children's rights and include relevant child safety considerations.

Goodstart's Safeguarding Children Requirement is guided by the following principles and values:

- Child abuse is not tolerated and must not happen
- The best interests of the child and their protection from harm is paramount
- Children's rights are understood and respected
- All concerns, whether raised by adults or children, are treated seriously and acted on
- Reporting child abuse, neglect or harm is mandatory and encouraged – it is never obstructed or prevented

KEY	
	This symbol shows the alignment with the relevant National Principle for Child Safe Organisations
	This symbol shows the alignment with the relevant ACT Child Safe Standards
	This symbol shows the alignment with the relevant New South Wales Child Safe Standard
	This symbol shows the alignment with the relevant Tasmanian Child and Youth Safe Standards
	This symbol shows the alignment with the relevant Victorian Child Safe Standards
	This symbol shows the alignment with the relevant WA National Principle for Child Safe Organisations
	This symbol shows the alignment with the relevant Queensland Child Safe Standards

Applicability of this requirement

Situation	Guidance
Child Safe leadership, governance and culture	       □ Goodstart's 'Safety Commitment' and 'Safeguarding Children commitment' and Code of Conduct are the foundation of our child safe culture and for creating culturally safe environments for all Goodstarters. □ All Goodstarters are responsible for championing these core values that inform Goodstart's approach to child safety and wellbeing. □ Maintaining a genuinely child safe environment across all Goodstart centres, programs and events is the responsibility of all employees, students, volunteers and contractors, whether engaged in child-related work or otherwise. □ The Safeguarding Children Framework supports all Goodstarters to look, do, tell; and, prevent, identify and respond to child abuse, neglect and harm.

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	□ The Safety, Health and Wellbeing Governance Framework facilitates the implementation of the Child Safe Standards and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations at all levels of the organisation. □ The Child Protection Advocate Program focuses on advocacy, promoting awareness of safeguarding children and supporting our plan to implement the National Principles and Child Safe Standards. □ Goodstart has robust risk assessment and management processes in place to keep children safe including an organisational risk profile for Child Abuse, Neglect and harm. Quarterly measures are provided to the Audit and Risk Committee and the Board to provide insights about the effectiveness of Risk management strategies. Goodstart has risk assessments that focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risk of child abuse, neglect and harm. Child safe code of conduct □ The Code of Conduct applies to all employees, volunteers, students, agency staff, Board members and contracted service providers. The code applies whenever your actions could affect children, families, colleagues, or Goodstart's reputation – including when you are at a Goodstart centre or workplace, representing Goodstart at events, training or in the community, or in your personal life (including online) if you your behaviour could harm a child, impact your role, put others at risk or reflect poorly on Goodstart. □ The code of conduct establishes a clear set of rules and expectations for behaviour that is in line with Goodstart's child safe culture and values. Clear rules and expectations of how Goodstarters are expected to interact with children helps to prevent child abuse, neglect and harm and encourage reporting. The conduct of Goodstarters holding a working with children check is subject to the NQS2 Managing allegations or suspicions of harm involving a Goodstarter Procedure at all times. □ Any behaviour that is consistent with reportable conduct and or is a breach of the Code of Conduct will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action, up to an including termination of employment.
Taking child participation and empowerment seriously	       □ Goodstart recognises that children are more likely to raise concerns when they feel confident, valued, empowered and listened to. □ Goodstart will consider, support and facilitate the empowerment, participation and inclusion of children's voices, opinions and the rights of all children when developing, delivering and reviewing their policies, processes, protocols, services and arrangements. □ Teachers and educators actively champion healthy friendships by embedding daily, intentional interactions into pedagogy. These nurture friendship skills through consistent role modelling, play based learning opportunities and reflective leadership practices. □ Children's participation in decision making at local levels will be encouraged and facilitated in a variety of age-appropriate ways which may include suggestion boxes for children's input, surveys,

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	facilitated discussions and consultation regarding the physical environment, policies, procedures, and programs. □ At Goodstart, the educational program (curriculum) and educator practice (pedagogy) is informed by the NQF and EYLF 2.0 Principles, Practices and learning outcomes. These strongly align to the National Principles and Child Safe Standards. Teaching and learning practices are further guided by Goodstart resources available on the Learning Hub including the birth to 3 framework and 2-5 Year Guide. □ Teachers and Educators are encouraged to ensure children are informed about their rights and Goodstart's complaints processes, by embedding teaching on child rights within the program and ensuring child friendly posters about the Convention on the Rights of a Child and Goodstart's Look Do Tell model are displayed in each centre and accessible to children. Teachers and Educators are required to implement learning about protective strategies for staying safe and seeking help from a trusted adult when needed within the learning program. □ Teachers and educators will build trusting and respectful relationships with children and maintain appropriate boundaries. Teachers and educators will ensure children's needs are met in a timely, respectful and responsive manner and will establish a culture of consent by asking permission before supporting children with care routines. □ Teachers and Educators will encourage children to participate in decision-making. The outdoor safety inspection, safe places to play package and room/area supervision procedure invite children's insight on the safety of their physical environments. □ Where relevant, teachers and educators embed protective strategies education into everyday teaching, learning and care opportunities to build children's knowledge, confidence and skills.
Involving families and communities	 □ Goodstart Policies and Procedures detail how collaborative partnerships with families and communities are maintained and families are involved in decisions on their child's safety and wellbeing including learning and curriculum, cultural safety, inclusion and support needs. □ Goodstart's enrolment and orientation procedures outline the authorisation requirements for seeking parental consent for relevant activities □ Centres engage and consult with families and communities in making decisions surrounding their children, seek feedback on issues of safety and wellbeing through a variety of communication strategies which may include surveys, StoryPark posts, discussions or meetings, and/or parent information evenings. □ Child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures are made accessible to families and communities both in centres and on our website and are available in a variety of languages to support the sociocultural communities within Goodstart.

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	- Processes are in place to notify families about changes to policy and procedure updates within 14 days (as required under National Regulation 168). - Families are invited to share feedback on services, practices, policies and procedures through informal discussions, formal feedback and complaint mechanisms. Insights, learnings and feedback are utilised to improve services. - The BM9 Stakeholder consultation for the review and Development of Child Safe Policies and Procedures provides guidance about child, family and community consultation in the development and review of Goodstart's child safe policies and practices. - Families are advised of any changes to Centre staff, including students and volunteers. - Goodstart's website and annual reports provide Goodstarters, families and communities with details regarding Goodstart's Governance and operations.
Respecting equity and diversity	 - Goodstart is dedicated to offering inclusive and culturally safe services to children, young people, and their families. - Goodstart understands that some children are more at risk of abuse, neglect or harm than others or find it harder to speak up and be heard. This includes children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children of diverse sexualities and genders and intersex children, and children who have experienced trauma. Goodstart actively supports and responds to children with diverse circumstances. - Policies are in place on accessibility, anti-discrimination, cultural safety, diversity and inclusion. - Training is provided to all Goodstarters on bullying, harassment and discrimination to counter discrimination and exclusion, as well as on creating safe environments that are welcoming for all children. - All Goodstarters maintain culturally safe environments in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of all children and their families are respected and valued. - Resources and training modules relating to Cultural responsiveness are available to all Goodstarters on identifying and responding to children and young people with diverse backgrounds and needs. - Child-friendly and culturally safe information is provided to children about support and complaints processes. Leaders help all staff and volunteers to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
Cultural Safety	 Goodstart is committed to establishing and embedding a culturally safe environments within our organisation, where our environments and relationships support First Nations children to feel free to be

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	themselves, their sense of self and identity is nurtured and encouraged and their Aboriginality is respected. Racism will not be tolerated. All instances of racism must be reported for consideration and management. Cultural awareness and responsiveness are important foundations to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people experience safety within Goodstart. ☐ Reconciliation is woven through everything that we do, and our 10 Year Reconciliation journey continues to build understanding of our shared history, to combat racism and to ensure that Australia's future generations grow up with connection to and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, people and history. Goodstart's commitment to reconciliation is visible across more than 654 communities with 100% of Goodstart centres on their reconciliation journey with Narragunnawali with a draft or published centre RAP. ☐ Goodstart as an organisation, and at centres, recognises, participates and celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander achievements, cultures and events throughout the year including Annual NAIDOC week, National Reconciliation Week. Environments aim to reflect the lives and identities of the children, families and staff within the organisation, or centre through artwork, positive images, photos, role models and resources. ☐ Goodstart's First Nations Employment strategy aims to increase the representation of First Nations educators and teachers to enhance our early learning programs and centres. ☐ Staff are supported to enhance their cultural responsiveness and awareness of strategies to support cultural safety through a variety of multi modal resources including webinars, videos, webinars, fact sheets, information sheets available on the learning hub and reconciliation intranet page. ☐ At Goodstart the educational program (curriculum) and educator practice (pedagogy) is informed by the National Quality Framework (NQF) and Early Years Learning Framework including valuing and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities and connections to community and country.
Ensuring that staff are suitable and supported	       ☐ Goodstart maintains rigorous and consistent child safe recruitment, screening and selection processes in line with Goodstart's recruitment policies and procedures. ☐ Goodstart Talent Acquisition Team undertake child safe recruitment training on an annual basis and engage a train the trainer model to ensure continuous awareness and knowledge of child safe recruitment practices. ☐ All Goodstarters must have a current Working with Children Check (WWCC)(or equivalent) at all times, to make sure they are eligible to work with children. If, in the course of their employment they are not able to maintain their WWCC, the matter will be reported to the Safeguarding Team for advice. If an employee becomes disqualified during the course of their employment with Goodstart, the employee's manager and the People Team must immediately

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	remove that employee. The employee may be suspended from duty with pay pending the outcome of an investigation. □ Please refer to Goodstart's Suitability to Work with Children Requirement and Procedure for guidance on working with children or vulnerable persons check. □ All staff, students, volunteers and contractors working with children will be provided appropriate training and induction along with information and resources, so they understand: ○ Goodstart's commitment to child safety and wellbeing ○ the organisation's child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices including the Code of Conduct. ○ the nature and indicators of child abuse, neglect and harm including grooming so that they can identify abuse, harm and concerning behaviour ○ Provide knowledge about how to respond to disclosures of abuse appropriately ○ their mandatory reporting responsibilities and the processes that all Goodstarters must follow if there is an incident, allegation or concern for a child's safety or wellbeing. □ Goodstart provides a comprehensive and transparent Management for Performance framework that ensures that staff supervision and people management practices include regular checks whether staff are following Code of Conduct and Child Safe Policies and for managing staff whose behaviour raises child safety concerns. Goodstart has service agreements with third party contractors that provide services to Goodstart, including for maintenance and cleaning services, and extra-curricular activities. When engaging third party providers to provide entertainment or services to children, Centre Directors are responsible for ensuring child safe practices including WWCC requirements, induction, supervision requirements and training requirements. Reporting incidents or suspicions of child abuse, neglect or harm □ All Goodstarters have a responsibility to champion and model a culture that promotes and protects that safety and wellbeing of children in everything we do. □ All Goodstarters have a responsibility to <u>Look, Do, and Tell</u> to prevent, identify and respond to child abuse, neglect and harm. □ Staff students, and volunteers are advised of the existence and application of the current child protection law and their obligations to report all allegations and suspicions of child abuse neglect and harm. □ Robust procedures are in place to guide Goodstarters on their responsibilities to report any incidents, suspicions of child abuse, neglect or harm caused by another child, by someone external to Goodstart, child self harm or involving staff, volunteers, students or contractors. □ Goodstart mandates that all staff and volunteers including board directors, consultant, contractors and students have an obligation under our policies and procedures to report any reasonable suspicion of abuse, neglect or harm, regardless of jurisdictional requirements. □ All Goodstart staff, including state operations teams and Centre Support staff must understand their reporting obligations. When an
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	incident of child abuse, neglect or harm is identified or disclosed to them by any person, they are responsible for checking that the incident has been reported in line with Goodstart policies and procedures and required timeframes. If the incident is unreported, they have the responsibility to report it themselves. □ In most Australian states and territories, it is a criminal offence to fail to report child sexual abuse, and in some jurisdictions, it is also a criminal offence for individuals in positions of authority to fail to protect a child from the risk of sexual abuse. □ Goodstart has a zero tolerance for failure to report. Failure to report an incident, circumstance, allegation, disclosure or suspicion which relates to abuse, neglect or harm of a child is viewed by Goodstart as serious misconduct and as a result, may lead to disciplinary action.
Promoting Child focused complaints management	 □ Goodstart understands that feedback from children comes in a variety of forms, including complaints. □ Information outlining how a child, parent, carer or community member can make a report or complaint is provided in all Goodstart centres and is publicly available on Goodstart's website. □ All Goodstarters must comply with legal requirements and adopted procedures and report known, suspected or alleged child abuse, neglect or harm of a child, misconduct or inappropriate behaviour. Requirements and processes are outlined in the NQS2 Managing allegations or suspicions of harm involving a Goodstarter Procedure, NQS2 Protection children from child abuse, neglect or harm Procedure and the NQS2 Managing Children's Sexual Behaviour Procedure. □ All Goodstarters, including the Board, CEO, students and contractors will assist, to their fullest capacity, with any investigation carried out by a regulatory authority, statutory agency or with any internal investigative process in relation to allegations of child abuse, neglect or harm. □ Goodstart's robust Investigation Procedures including Safeguarding Children Investigation Panel and Child Interview Protocol support Goodstart's investigation process to ensure an immediate, appropriate and consistent response to allegations of child abuse, neglect and harm and that brings the child's experience forward. □ Goodstart's response to any report, complaint, incident or allegation will be child focused, prioritising the safety, interests and wellbeing of the child or children involved. □ Goodstart will: ○ Ensure that processes for responding to alleged abuse and misconduct are fair and focus on the safety and wellbeing of the child/ren. ○ In the event that employee poses a serious risk of abusing a child, remove, or reduce the risk to the child ○ Where there is an allegation against a Goodstarter, notify the relevant authorities and conduct an investigation ○ Provide support or make referrals for support to alleged victims, their families and affected employees by helping everyone

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	involved to understand their rights and the process that will be followed in response to allegations of reportable conduct, and assistance in accessing counselling or other support as required. - o Undertake timely reviews of this policy, organisational procedures and/or relevant child abuse, neglect and harm risk management plans following an incident. Confidentiality and record management □ Confidentiality will be maintained for all records and information relating to safeguarding and child protection matters. Safeguarding and safety records will be maintained in secure electronic files and access will be strictly controlled. □ Goodstarters must create and keep accurate records relevant to child safety and wellbeing including recording incidents, responses and decision affecting children. Records must be created and maintained in accordance with policies and procedures. □ Policies on reporting to external regulatory authorities, record keeping and information sharing, and systems to ensure the organisation meets its reporting requirements and employment law and privacy obligations are in place. □ Complaint handling and investigation procedures detail show families will be kept informed and provide guidance on how to do this while complying with confidentiality and privacy obligations.
Staff knowledge, skills and awareness	 □ All Goodstarters, are required to complete mandatory training upon commencement and annually thereafter. Students, volunteers and contractors who work with children are required to complete mandatory training before their first visit and annually thereafter. The Safeguarding Children: Together we Prevent, Identify and Respond to Child Abuse, Neglect and Harm modules includes training on recognising signs of abuse, neglect and/or harm, responding to disclosures, understanding and responding to harmful behaviours by a child towards another child as well as external reporting obligations. Agency staff may complete safeguarding training with their agency in lieu of Goodstart training requirements. □ Relevant workforce areas will receive more specialised safeguarding training relevant to their role and responsibilities. This includes training about Goodstart's Feel Safe, Be Safe Protective Strategies Kit to ensure that teaching children protective behaviours is embedded in everyday teaching and learning at every centre, child safety risk management, identifying and responding to risk of significant harm and responding to allegations of serious misconduct and reportable conduct. All employees must undertake training that has been identified as required for their role. □ All Centre Directors must have read and understood the Safeguarding Children Responsibilities for Nominated Supervisors. □ All persons with management or control, nominated supervisors, persons in day-to-day charge, staff (including cooks and admin), students and volunteers must complete the National Child Safety Training in line with legislative requirements under the amended Education and Care Services National Law (effective 27 February

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	2026), with records maintained to demonstrate Regulation 84 compliance. □ Under the National Law (s162A), each Nominated Supervisor, Person in Day-to-Day Charge, staff member and volunteer of the service must successfully complete any Child Protection Training required by or under the law of their state or territory, and their completion certificate must be uploaded to People Central (use this quick guide to uploading certificates into People Central). Any person employed, engaged or appointed into one of these roles must complete the required training within 14 days of commencing, or before working with children, whichever comes first: ○ ACT - each Nominated Supervisor, Person in Day-to-Day Charge, staff member and volunteer of the service (including students on vocational placement) must successfully complete 'Keeping Children and Young People Safe', every two years. ○ NSW who act in the role of a responsible person (nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge) must first have completed CHCPRT025 or one of the child protection courses approved by the NSW or Qld Regulatory Authority. A list of approved child protection courses can be found on the 'Safeguarding Children Resources and Training intranet page.. ○ QLD – from 27 August 2026, Child Protection Training requirements (under s162A) will be replaced by the National Child Safety Training (under s162B). Nominated Supervisors or Persons in Day-to-Day Charge (PIDTDC) must have completed either CHCPRT025 (or equivalent) or National Child Safety Training before working in the capacity of a responsible person. ○ VIC - staff and volunteers (including students on vocational placement) working directly with children are required to complete EC Protect training. □ Under the National Law (s162B), all Goodstarters must complete National Child Safety Foundation Training via the Government's Geccco platform, and their completion certificate must be uploaded to People Central (use this quick guide to uploading certificates into People Central). All centre-based Goodstarters must complete the required training before commencement. All CSO based Goodstarters must complete the training within 14 days of commencing, or before working with children, whichever comes first. □ All employees, students and volunteers- regardless of direct contact with children - must be aware of current child protection laws and understand their obligations to report allegations and suspicions of child abuse, neglect and harm in their jurisdiction (Regulation 84 of the Education and Care National Law (2010)). □ All centre staff and volunteers must be aware of the existence and application of Goodstart's policies and procedures relating to child protection and where these policies and procedures have a higher expectation of staff and volunteers than required by the mandatory reporting legislation in their state or territory. □ Additional training and resources are available on the learning hub for all Goodstarters on children's rights, child development, responding to children's sexual behaviour, child safety and wellbeing, record keeping, risk assessment and management, creating culturally safe environments, recognising indicators of child
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	harm, responding to child safety issues. Staff may also be required to complete other training as directed by their manager or supervisor.
Safe physical and online environments	       ☐ Centre risk assessment and management processes will identify, and address child safe risk factors associated with the unique online and physical environments in which our services are provided, these plans are communicated to staff and volunteers. Goodstart services are required to undertake risk assessments and manage child safe risks including: ☐ Indoor and outdoor environments ☐ Centre based Safeguarding Children Risk Assessment reviewed at least annually and whenever a new safeguarding risk is identified) ☐ Managing visitors to the centre ☐ Planning centre activities including excursions, extracurricular activities, or transporting children ☐ Sleep and rest activities (reviewed at least annually) ☐ During and following investigations into child abuse, neglect and harm ☐ Information is provided to children, young people and families about physical and online safety and appropriate conduct in physical and online environments. ☐ Situational crime prevention techniques, including 'natural surveillance' are implemented to minimise child harm risks through design features such as enabling environments, lighting, windows enabling line of sight for effective supervision of children and adults, strategic landscaping and tools like convex mirrors. ☐ Policies, Procedures and Guidelines are in place to guide Goodstarters in engaging, supervising and managing students, volunteers, visitors and contractors. Additionally, students, volunteers and contractors who are working with children must read and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct which includes expectations of child safe practices. ☐ Students, volunteers and contractors working with children must also complete the Safeguarding Children: Together we Prevent, Identify and Respond to Child Abuse, Neglect and Harm modules which includes training on recognising signs of abuse, neglect and/or harm, responding to disclosures, understanding and responding to harmful behaviours by a child towards another child as well as reporting obligations. ☐ Goodstart promotes a child safe culture when it comes to taking, sharing and storing images or videos of children. Policies and Procedures are in place to set expectations and provide guidance to ensure that the online environment is used in accordance with policies and procedures including the Code of Conduct, and BM9 Digital Safety (Model Code) Requirement. ☐ The child safe environment requirement details clear guidelines to support all centres to provide a child safe environment for children. ☐ Only Goodstart-issued electronic devices should be used when taking images or videos of children while providing education and

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	care, including when children are transported by, or on transport arranged by Goodstart. Personal electronic devices that can take, store or transmit images or videos (such as tablets, phones, digital cameras, smart watches) and personal storage and file transfer media (such as SD cards, USB drives, hard drives, and cloud storage) should not be in the possession of any person while providing education and care and working directly with children, including when children are transported by, or on transport arranged by Goodstart. Any exceptions to this should be for limited, essential purposes (defined in the BM9 Digital Safety (Model Code) Requirement) that are authorised in writing by the Centre Director or Line Manager, and where that access does not impede the active supervision of children.
Review of child safe policies and practices	       ☐ The Stakeholder Consultation for the Review and Development of Child Safe Policies and Procedure sets out the requirements to ensure that Goodstart's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures, are reviewed and updated on a regular basis in consultation with relevant stakeholders. This ensures that content is relevant and compliant with all local, state and federal regulatory requirements. ☐ Processes in place to notify families about changes to policy and procedure updates within 14 days (as required under National Regulation 168) and opportunities are provided for families to provide feedback through this process. ☐ Complaints, incidents, and concerns are recorded and regularly analysed in order to identify causes or systemic weaknesses and implement improvements, through centre scorecards, area dashboards, operations dashboards and high-level KPI measures for safeguarding children to track performance over time. ☐ Opportunities are regularly provided for the Safeguarding Children Steering Committee and Child Protection Advocates to regularly review child safe practices.
Documenting policies and procedures	       ☐ Policies and procedures are in place that demonstrate how the organisation ensures child safety and wellbeing (such as a Code of Conduct, Risk assessment and management processes, and policies on record keeping, information sharing and external reporting). ☐ Mandatory training is provided for the child safe policies and procedures. ☐ Child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures are made accessible to families and communities both in centres and on our website. Processes are in place to notify families about changes to policy and procedure updates within 14 days (as required under National Regulation 168), and opportunities are provided for families to provide feedback through this process.

Responsibilities

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This requirement is to be implemented by: All Goodstarters, who work in a paid or unpaid capacity. This includes board members, executive leadership, staff, volunteers, students, trainees, contractors and consultants.

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