

# National Catholic Safeguarding Standards

## NCSS Ed.2 ALIGNMENT WITH VICTORIAN CHILD SAFE STANDARD 1

The Victorian Child Safe Standards, legislated in July 2016, have now been in effect for five years. As a result of their review, a number of changes to the Victorian standards came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 to further improve safety for children and young people. These changes increase the total number of standards in Victoria from 7 to 11.

Along with alignment with the current 10 National Principles and Child Safe Standards identified by the Royal Commission, the most significant change sees the addition of a new standard (Standard 1) focusing on culturally safe environments for Aboriginal children and young people.

The new Victorian standard 1 is specifically related to addressing the safeguarding needs of Aboriginal children. Whilst the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards do not have a direct equivalent at the standard level, current indicators across the NCSS can be directly applied to address these requirements. The new Victorian Standard 1 has five indicators organisations need to meet to comply with the requirements of this standard. NCSS indicators from several different NCSS criteria can be implemented to ensure that the requirements of the new Victorian Standard are being met. The table below outlines how the NCSS align with the new Victorian Child Safe Standard 1 to meet these requirements.

Victoria Child Safe Standard 1	<i>Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.</i>	
	NCSS Criteria	Description of alignment
<p><b>1.1 A child’s ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported.</b></p>	<p><b>4.3</b> The diverse needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, those living with a disability, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children and adults who are unable to live at home, and those of diverse sexuality, are acknowledged.</p> <p><b>2.1</b> Children and adults at risk engaged in an entity’s ministry and/or services are informed about their rights, including safety, decision making, participation and how a complaint will be managed.</p>	<p>An entity must ensure that their policies, procedures and practice acknowledge and support the cultural and specific needs of Aboriginal children and young people as outlined in NCSS 4.3.</p> <p>As outlined in <a href="#">VACCA/SNAICC guidelines</a>, “the cultural rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are recognised by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have the right to learn about and practice their culture, language and religion with their family and communities.”<sup>1</sup></p> <p>All entities must ensure that their organisation supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to feel proud of their culture, they feel safe to speak up and be heard and their views are listened to and acted upon.</p>

<sup>1</sup> © Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Keeping Our Kids Safe: Cultural Safety and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Victoria Child Safe Standard 1</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.</i></p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NCSS Criteria</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Description of alignment</b></p>
<p><b>1.2 Strategies are embedded within the organisation which equip all members to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and young people.</b></p>	<p><b>7.5</b> Personnel receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and adults</p>	<p>In order to fully engage effectively with Aboriginal children and young people, all staff and volunteers should understand the importance of Aboriginal culture and cultural safety and their value in the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children.</p> <p>SNAICC defines cultural safety as:          “The child being provided with a safe, nurturing and positive environment where they are comfortable with being themselves, expressing their culture...their spiritual and belief systems, and they are supported by the carer... (who) respects their Aboriginality and therefore encourages their sense of self and identity.”<sup>2</sup></p> <p>The entity must ensure that cultural safety is not limited to the exclusion of racism and discrimination but instead fully embraces, promotes and celebrates Aboriginal culture.</p>
<p><b>1.3 Measures are adopted by the organisation to ensure racism within the organisation is identified, confronted and not tolerated. Any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences.</b></p>	<p><b>4.3</b> The diverse needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, those living with a disability, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children and adults who are unable to live at home, and those of diverse sexuality, are acknowledged.</p> <p><b>7.5</b> Personnel receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and adults.</p> <p><b>1.4</b> The entity’s Code of Conduct sets clear behavioural standards towards children and adults.</p> <p><b>6.3</b> Complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly.</p>	<p>Each entity engaging with Aboriginal children and young people must acknowledge the need for them to feel safe and supported without the threat of racism and discrimination.</p> <p>All staff and volunteers should undertake training that develops an understanding of how to create an environment where Aboriginal culture is embraced and supported.</p> <p>The entity must ensure that the Code of Conduct specifically acknowledges the non-acceptance of racism throughout the organisation.</p> <p>The entity must ensure that any complaints, including those specifically related to racism, are treated seriously and managed effectively (NCSS reference 6.3).</p>

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	<b>NCSS Criteria</b>	<b>Description of alignment</b>
<p><b>1.4 The organisation actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion within it by Aboriginal children and young people.</b></p>	<p><b>4.3</b> The diverse needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, those living with a disability, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children and adults who are unable to live at home, and those of diverse sexuality, are acknowledged.</p> <p><b>7.5</b> Personnel receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and adults.</p>	<p>The entity should encourage, support and engage with Aboriginal children and young people in an environment that genuinely supports their needs and promotes inclusion. Collaboration with Aboriginal communities, consultation with Aboriginal families and young people, and engaging Aboriginal staff and volunteers will help to ensure this engagement is meaningful.</p> <p>All staff and volunteers should undertake training that develops an understanding of how to create an environment where Aboriginal culture is embraced and supported.</p>
<p><b>1.5 All of the organisation’s policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, young people and their families.</b></p>	<p><b>4.2</b> Children and adults have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that promote inclusion, are culturally safe and accessible.</p> <p><b>4.3</b> The diverse needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, those living with a disability, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children and adults who are unable to live at home, and those of diverse sexuality, are acknowledged.</p>	<p>An entity must ensure that cultural safety and understanding is embedded throughout every aspect of its functions so Aboriginal children and young people can feel included, understood and valued.</p> <p>Aboriginal culture must be positively recognised and celebrated throughout an organisation so children and young people can maintain connections and strengthen their culture and identity.</p>