

Ventura Group: A Child Safe Organisation

Statement of Commitment to the Child Safe Standards embodied in the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act (2005)

1. Compliance with the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act (2005)

Ventura is committed to being a child safe organisation. This means Ventura abides by the Child Safe Standards embodied in the guidelines provided by the Commission for Children and Young People in Victoria.

Ventura has undertaken a Child Safety Review using a checklist adapted from the Commission's guidelines to establish child safety measures and identify areas for improvement. As a result of this review, the business has adopted the policies and procedures set out in this statement under the leadership of Andrew Cornwall, Ventura's Managing Director.

2. Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

At Ventura, our commitment to child safety is about more than understanding what is required by compliance with the Act. Ventura appreciates that schools, parents and guardians entrust Ventura with the safety of their children. We cherish this position of trust, which is why we have a zero tolerance for any form of child abuse or discrimination.

Ventura takes deliberate steps to protect children from physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and cultural abuse, and neglect. Our employees understand the need to protect the safety of children and have particular regard to the safety of children from cultural or linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children with a disability.

Adherence to the Child Safe Standards and processes in this business will be reviewed regularly as part of the annual internal audit.

3. Code of Conduct

All interactions with children will meet the highest ethical behavioural standards, and be visible and transparent at all times:

- Ventura employees will not exchange personal contact details, such as phone numbers, social networking sites or email addresses, with children.
- Ventura employees will not communicate with children online.
- Ventura employees will not develop 'special' relationships with specific children.
- Ventura employees will not show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention.

Ventura employees will respect the privacy of children and their families, and will only disclose information or concerns to their Manager, School Principal, or police.

Ventura abides by the Department of Education and Training (DET) guidelines for the transport of school children. Accordingly, children on Public Transport Victoria (PTV) and DET Special school buses are carried under DET Conditions of Travel signed by the student and their parent or guardian. These specify appropriate safe behaviour on school buses, designate responsibility for student behaviour to drivers and bus captains, and give drivers authority to report any misbehaviour including but not limited to bullying, teasing and aggression to the school principal.

Where children are transported by chartered bus (but not on private charter school services) the chartering school or organisation will provide an appropriate number of supervising teachers or staff on each bus to ensure safe student conduct and behaviour.

Ventura takes children to and from school under DET or private school conditions of contract, or in school-supervised charter. There are no unsupervised non-school participatory activities involving children other than transporting them to or from school conducted by Ventura employees.

All current employees and any new employees prior to employment are informed of this code and the requirements to comply with it. Any concerns about or complaints of breaches of this code should be made to Andrew Cornwall, Managing Director for prompt investigation.

4. Accreditation, Supervision and Training

Ventura ensures that all bus drivers have Driver Accreditation. All school bus drivers and school bus supervisors with direct and unsupervised contact with children hold and maintain a current Working with Children Check card (WWCC). Drivers and school bus supervisors must have a WWCC card prior to employment, and the WWCC card validity is reconfirmed at least annually.

Details from the *Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation 2015* and the mandatory legislative reporting requirements are maintained in the Ventura Management Information System.

5. Act and Protect

Under the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act, Ventura employees must respond to and report suspected child abuse. Ventura employees will act where they have concerns of children's wellbeing:

- In the first instance, Ventura's employees will report concerns about children's wellbeing, including from their interaction with each other, to their Depot Manager. The Ventura employee will record the reason and report the information promptly and confidentially. The Manager will report the concerns to the relevant person. For school services, this is the Principal.

- Incidents that warrant police attention will be reported immediately to the police. The Ventura employee will also advise their Manager (and if a school bus service, the Principal).
- All cases where a child discloses abuse, must be recorded using the child's words and be reported by the Ventura employee to the police.

6. Identification and Elimination

Ventura maintains a record of child safety risks within its Risk Management Plan. These risks and appropriate resolutions are documented in Ventura's Risk Register, which is reviewed annually and on an ad hoc basis in response to any changes.

As outlined in Section 4, Ventura checks the validity of employees' WWCC cards on an annual basis. Drivers, regardless of whether they are a school bus driver, must have a WWCC card prior to commencing employment.

Ventura will not carry fare-paying non-school passengers on a school bus without prior approval by the relevant school principal.

7. Participation and Empowerment

Ventura supports strategies that promote the participation and empowerment of children. And we trust that all schools will continue to encourage children to tell their teacher, their Principal or their bus driver of any concerns about safety or behaviour on the bus.

Ventura relies upon the continued support of schools, parents and guardians to ensure that all children have regard for safety on the bus and respect their fellow bus passengers.

Yours faithfully,



Andrew Cornwall
Managing Director