Aspect Policy

Safeguarding policy

Aspect is committed to promoting an organisational culture that provides a safe, inclusive and secure environment for the people we support. This policy establishes Aspect's commitment to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults receiving services by protecting them from harm, abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination and victimisation.

The policy aims to:

- Promote the safety, wellbeing, dignity and human rights of the people we support.
- Establish a consistent and sustainable, organisation-wide framework for safeguarding.
- Support compliance with legal, regulatory and accreditation requirements, including the NDIS Practice Standards, Disability Standards for Education and the Australian Human Rights Commission's National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
- Foster a culture of prevention, early intervention, reporting and continuous improvement.

This policy applies to:

- All Aspect employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers, work placement students and Board members.
- All Aspect schools, individual and community services, therapy services, employment services and support coordination services.
- Any individual acting on behalf of Aspect.
- All physical, online and community-based environments where Aspect provides services.

This policy applies to all interactions with Aspect students, participants, families, carers, support networks and advocates.

Aspect maintains a Culture of Safety and Wellbeing in which safeguarding is embedded across leadership, governance, service delivery and organisational practice. Aspect adopts a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to safeguarding and places the safety and wellbeing of the people we support at the centre of decision-making.

Aspect is committed to:

- Strong leadership, governance and oversight of safeguarding.
- Listening to and including the voices of the people we support.
- Providing information and education about rights and protections.
- Safe recruitment, screening and induction practices.
- Ongoing training, supervision and support for workers.
- Maintaining safe physical and online environments.
- Continuous review and improvement of safeguarding practices.

- Upholding human rights and respecting diversity.
- Effective complaints management, incident management and mandatory reporting processes.

To meet its safeguarding obligations, Aspect will:

Leadership and Governance

- Maintain governance structures that monitor safeguarding performance and risks.
- Ensure the Board receives regular reporting on safeguarding matters, incidents and quality outcomes.
- Embed safeguarding considerations within strategic planning and risk management processes.

Participation and Inclusion

- Actively involve Aspect students, participants, families, carers and advocates in decisions affecting them.
- Support person-centred planning and supported decision-making.
- Create opportunities for feedback and meaningful consultation.

Information and Education

- Provide accessible information regarding rights, safeguarding and complaint pathways.
- Promote awareness of human rights, personal safety and advocacy supports.
- Ensure information is available in formats suitable to individual communication needs.

Recruitment and Worker Screening

- Undertake appropriate pre-employment checks and worker screening requirements.
- Verify qualifications, references and suitability for working with children and vulnerable people.
- Ensure all personnel complete safeguarding induction requirements.

Training and Supervision

- Provide mandatory safeguarding training.
- Maintain ongoing supervision, coaching and performance monitoring.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding training and capability development.

Safe Service Delivery

- Maintain safe physical and online environments.
- Assess and manage safeguarding risks.
- Implement practices that prevent abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination and victimisation.
- Support individuals to raise concerns without fear of retaliation.

Incident Management and Reporting

- Investigate safeguarding incidents promptly and appropriately.
- Meet all mandatory reporting and reportable incident obligations.

- Notify relevant authorities where required.
- Support people affected by safeguarding concerns or incidents.

Continuous Improvement

- Monitor safeguarding outcomes through audits, reviews, complaints, incidents and stakeholder feedback.
- Review safeguarding practices regularly and implement improvements where required.

Breach and consequences

Failure to comply with this policy may:

- Place Aspect students, participants, families and communities at risk of harm.
- Result in breaches of legislation, regulatory requirements or accreditation standards.
- Trigger internal investigations and escalation processes.
- Result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or engagement.
- Lead to mandatory reporting, regulatory action, civil proceedings or criminal prosecution where applicable

All safeguarding concerns, allegations and suspected incidents must be reported and managed in accordance with Aspect's Incident Management and Complaints Management frameworks.

Definitions

Provide definitions for key terms used in the policy to ensure clarity.

Term	Definition
Safeguarding	Measures taken to protect the health, wellbeing and human rights of individuals, allowing people to live free from harm, risk of harm and neglect.
Culture of Safety and Wellbeing	An organisational culture that takes a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to safeguarding the people we support.
Safeguarding Incident	Any incident that places a student or participant at risk of harm or involves an allegation of harm or risk of harm.
Harm	Includes violence, assault, coercion, abuse, neglect, discrimination, harassment, victimisation and exploitation; whether physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, financial, legal, social, human rights-related or systemic.
Vulnerable adults	A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to protect themselves from abuse, neglect, exploitation, harm, or discrimination

Term	Definition
	due to factors such as age, disability, illness, mental health conditions, cognitive impairment, physical frailty, communication difficulties, social isolation, dependency on others, or other circumstances that reduce their ability to safeguard their own wellbeing and interests.
Participant	A person receiving services or supports from Aspect.
Aspect student	A child or young person enrolled in an Aspect school.
Work placement student	A student from an external educational institution who is placed with Aspect for work experience, vocational training, professional practice, clinical placement, or similar workplace learning activities as part of their studies. A work placement student is distinct from a student enrolled in an Aspect school.