



Whittlesea Community Connections – Cultural Safety Position Statement

Whittlesea Community Connections (WCC) is committed to providing culturally safe, inclusive and welcoming environments for all people who engage with our services — including clients, community members, volunteers, partners and visitors. Cultural safety is a non-negotiable expectation across all programs, activities and service settings.

We recognise that people's identities, cultures, histories and lived experiences shape how they access support, participate in community life and feel safe within services. WCC actively works to ensure that every person is respected, heard and empowered, and that our environments do not diminish, challenge or harm their cultural identity or wellbeing.

Our Commitment to Cultural Safety

- **Culturally safe environments** — We create spaces where people feel safe to express their cultural identity, free from discrimination, racism, bias or exclusion.
- **Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples** — We prioritise cultural safety for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children, young people, families and community members, acknowledging the ongoing impacts of colonisation and valuing self-determination, cultural knowledge and community leadership.
- **Inclusion of diverse communities** — We promote cultural safety for people who are culturally and linguistically diverse, newly arrived, refugee or asylum seeker, living with disability, neurodivergent, LGBTQIA+, and those experiencing other forms of marginalisation. We recognise that organisational priority groups evolve over time, and we commit to regularly reviewing and updating our focus areas to ensure our practice reflects emerging community needs, intersectional experiences and local demographic change.
- **Child and youth cultural safety** — We uphold the Victorian Child Safe Standards and ensure that children and young people's cultural identities are respected, protected and celebrated across all WCC programs.
- **Responsive and accountable practice** — We maintain robust systems to prevent, identify and respond to cultural harm, discrimination or abuse. Concerns or allegations are addressed promptly, respectfully and in line with our policies, guidelines and legislative requirements. Our approach is informed by recognised frameworks including the MARAM Framework, Rainbow Tick principles and Child Safe Standards, ensuring our systems are aligned with best practice in safety, inclusion and risk management.
- **Empowerment, voice and partnership** — We listen to and amplify the voices of clients, community members and young people, ensuring their perspectives shape our services, programs and organisational decisions. We use evaluation, co-design and partnership as mechanisms for empowerment — creating structured opportunities for communities to influence priorities, identify barriers, and lead change.
- **Continuous learning** — Our staff and volunteers undertake ongoing training in cultural safety, anti-racism, inclusive practice, child safety, MARAM responsibilities and Rainbow Tick principles to strengthen our capability and accountability.

Our Expectation Across All Services

Everyone who interacts with WCC — whether seeking support, participating in programs, collaborating as a partner, or volunteering — has the right to feel culturally safe, respected and valued. We expect all staff, volunteers and partners to uphold this commitment and contribute to environments where cultural identity is recognised as a source of strength.