

Child Protection Policy

Introduction

"Given the foundational role of schools in the lives of almost every child, they have a unique responsibility to keep children safe. This is not only to fulfil their child protection responsibilities but also because being safe and supported at school is essential for effective learning." *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Volume 13-Final Report Schools page 132*

The protection and care of children is a whole-of-community and society responsibility. All children have a right to be safe and schools including school staff and governing body members have a 'duty of care' to all students at the school. We believe that a child safe environment is vital to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and must remain of paramount consideration in all that we do and the decisions that we make.

Child Side Playgroup and School (CSS) is committed to being a child safe organisation through the prevention, identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect. This includes the provision of support to children who have been abused or are affected by abuse or neglect.

Scope and Application

This policy applies to all school staff (paid/unpaid), parents, children, volunteers, practicum teachers, work placement students and visitors of Child Side Playgroup and School (CSS).

The use of the word child/children in this policy refers to students in the context of the school environment.

The use of the word Educator/Educators in this policy refers to registered teachers in the context of the school environment.

Related Legislation/Guidelines

- Children and Community Services Act 2004 (the Act)
- Children and Community Services Amendment (Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children) Act 2008
- State Records Act 2000
- Records Retention & Disposal Schedule for Non-Government Schools
- Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools (Non-Government School Regulation) – Standard 10
- Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools
- Multi-Agency Protocol for Education Options for Young people Charged with Harmful Sexual Behaviours
- Schools Education Act 1999
- Western Australian Reportable Conduct Scheme established under the Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022
- Criminal Code Act 1913
- The Criminal Code Amendment (Cyber Predators) Act 2006
- Teacher Registration Act 2012
- Teacher Registration Regulations 2012
- Working With Children (Screening) Act 2024

- Working With Children (Screening) Regulations 2025
- National Principals for Child Safe Organisations
- Australian Human Rights Commission – Example Code of Conduct

Related Policies/Guidelines/Documents

- Access to Students Policy
- Attempted Child Abduction and Child Abduction Response Procedure
- Code of Conduct – ECC and MCC (K-6)
- Code of Conduct – YAC (7-10)
- Code of Conduct – School Staff
- Code of Conduct – Governing Council
- Code of Conduct – Parent/Guardian
- General Duty of Care Policy
- Work Health & Safety Policy
- Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy
- Nutrition, Health & Hygiene Policy
- Risk Management Policy and Risk Register
- Volunteers Policy
- Procedures for Engaging Volunteers
- Staff Induction Policy
- Staff Recruitment Policy
- Child Safe Organisation Framework for Child Side School
- Child Side Curriculum Map
- Response and Planning Guidelines for Student with Suicidal Behaviour and Non-Suicidal Injury Policy.
- Child Feedback and Solutions Seeking Policy
- Internet and Electronic Devices Policy
- Records Retention Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Playground Supervision Policy
- Leaving School to Learn and Workplace Placement Policy
- Protective Behaviours Curriculum Implementation Policy
- Use of Childrens Photographs and Video Images Policy
- Concerns, Complaints, Disputes Policy
- Whistleblower Protection Policy
- Critical and Emergency Incidents and Crisis Management Policy
- *Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum Documents*
- Contemporaneous Records Policy

Definitions

Advocacy and support services

Services which act alongside, or on behalf of, victims and survivors of child sexual abuse to support their rights and interests while providing tangible and practical support.

Believes on reasonable grounds.

Means that a reasonable person, doing the same work, would have formed the same belief on those grounds. Grounds for forming a belief are matters of which you have become aware, and any opinions in relation to those matters.

Bullying and harassment

Bullying* is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in

person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying. However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved.

Harassment* is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture, or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting, or economic status; age; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates, or creates a hostile environment. Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act. It may be directed randomly or towards the same person/s. It may be intentional or unintentional (i.e. words or actions that offend and distress one person may be genuinely regarded by the person doing them as minor or harmless).

*National definitions of bullying and harassment taken from the *Student Wellbeing Hub* and *Bullying No Way!*

Child

The definition of 'a child' is defined in section 3 of the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* as, "a person who is under the age of 18 years. In the absence of positive evidence as to age, a child is a person who is apparently under 18 years of age".

Child Abuse

Four forms of child abuse are covered by WA law and are defined by the Department of Communities:

1. **Physical abuse** occurs when a child is severely and/or persistently hurt or injured by an adult or caregiver.
2. **Sexual abuse** occurs when a child is exposed to, or involved in, sexual activity that is inappropriate to the child's age and developmental level, and includes sexual behaviour in circumstances where:
 - (a) the child is the subject of bribery, coercion, a threat, exploitation or violence;
 - (b) the child has less power than another person involved in the behaviour; or
 - (c) there is a significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.
3. **Emotional abuse** occurs when an adult harms a child's development by repeatedly treating and speaking to a child in ways that damage the child's ability to feel and express their feelings. This includes:
 - (a) psychological abuse (repeatedly treating and speaking to a child in ways that damage the child's perceptions, memory, self-esteem, moral development, and intelligence); and
 - (b) being exposed to an act of family and domestic violence.
4. **Neglect** is when children do not receive adequate food or shelter, medical treatment, supervision, care, or nurturance to such an extent that their development is damaged, or they are injured. Neglect may be acute, episodic, or chronic.

Coercion involves a power imbalance between the alleged abuser and the child which may relate to:

- age and developmental level
- intellectual ability
- knowledge
- experience, and
- gender.

Commencement day

Refers to the day on which a person became a mandatory reporter under the law. Commencement day varies for different mandatory reporter groups.

Complainant

A person who makes a complaint. This could be for example but not limited to a teacher, staff member, student, former student, parent, guardian.

Culturally appropriate

A culturally appropriate protective behaviours and sexual abuse prevention education will reflect cultural values to enable children to engage effectively with the information, attitudes and practices being learned without offending cultural norms and expectations.

Duty of Care

A school authority has a duty to ensure that reasonable care is taken of its students while they are on the school premises, during the hours when the school is opened and during school related offsite activities. Schools and teachers have duty to take or exercise 'reasonable care' to protect all students, including those aged 18 and over, from risks of harm that are 'reasonably foreseeable' whilst they are involved in school activities or are present in the purpose of a school activity. Child protection is a key obligation in regard to a school's duty of care.

Fear inducing behaviour may include:

- threats of negative consequences or blackmail
- threats of harm to the child, family members or pets if they don't comply.
- confusing the child into feeling responsible, and
- blaming the child.

Grooming

The use of a variety of manipulative and controlling techniques with a vulnerable subject in order to establish trust or normalise sexually harmful behaviour with the overall aim of facilitating exploitation and/or avoiding exposure.

Good faith

For the purpose of standard 10.4(c) a report is made in good faith when it is relevant to the school's standard of conduct and made in the honest belief that the matter should be raised. Good faith may be negated by malice.

Harm

In relation to a child, includes harm to the child's physical, and emotional or psychological development. *Children and Community Services Act 2004*

Mandatory Reporting

Section 124B of the Act requires certain persons in Western Australia to make a mandatory report if the person forms a belief on reasonable grounds in the course of their work on or after their commencement day (whether paid or unpaid) as a 'specified person', that a child:

- has been the subject of sexual abuse that occurred on or after the commencement day; or
- is the subject of ongoing sexual abuse.

The following principles underpin the mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse in WA:

- The best interests of the child must be the paramount consideration.
- Every child has a right to be heard, believed, and protected from sexual abuse.
- Keeping children safe from abuse is the responsibility of individuals, families, communities, and the society as a whole. This is best achieved through a collaborative approach.
- If anyone has a concern regarding the safety of a child, it is their responsibility to notify the relevant authorities.
- Child sexual abuse affects everyone. Early detection is critical to reducing child sexual abuse in our community.

- Child sexual abuse is not condoned by any culture or religion. Cultural practices or traditions cannot be used as an excuse for sexual abuse or sexual exploitation.

In Western Australia, it is mandatory for the following professionals, appointed under section 125A of the Act to report all reasonable beliefs that child sexual abuse has occurred or is occurring, to the Department of Communities.

- Doctors
- Nurses and Midwives
- Teachers (including TAFE Lecturers)
- Police Officers.
- Boarding Supervisors
- Ministers of Religion
- Out-of-home Care Workers
- Assessors appointed under section 125A of the Act.
- Departmental Officers of the Department of Communities
- School Councillor
- Psychologist
- Early Childhood Worker (1st November 2024)
- Youth Justice Worker (1st May 2025)

Multi-Agency Protocol for Education Options for Young People Charged with Harmful Sexual Behaviours.

The Multi-Agency Protocol, developed by the Department of Education for all education sectors in Western Australia, describes the process by which information about young people charged with harmful sexual behaviours is shared and managed by governing bodies and schools in accordance with sections 28A-C of the Act.

School governing body Chairs will receive information and resources from the Department of Education in the event a student is charged with a harmful sexual behaviour. The Protocol has been approved by both AISWA and CEWA.

Regular Volunteer

A regular volunteer is one who attends the school or school-related activity at regular periodic intervals during a school year or one who is frequently called upon to assist in diverse capacities. A regular volunteer is not a member of staff. Members of staff may include people who are not paid.

Reportable conduct

From January 2023, a reportable conduct scheme was established in WA. It requires that certain matters be reported to the Ombudsman WA and investigated by the reporting organisation (e.g. school).

Conduct covered by the scheme is:

- sexual offences.
- sexual misconduct.
- physical assault; and
- other prescribed offences.
- significant neglect of a child; and
- any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child.

The heads of organisations (including schools) covered by the Scheme will be required to:

- notify the Ombudsman of allegations of, or convictions for, child abuse by their employees.
- investigate the allegation; and

- provide a report to the Ombudsman on the outcome of the investigation.

Organisations will also be required to have systems in place to enable them to better protect against, and respond to, reportable conduct.

It is anticipated that most, if not all, matters which a non-government school would need to report to the Ombudsman would also constitute a reportable incident for the purposes of this standard. Schools are reminded that the submission of a report to the Ombudsman does not meet the concurrent requirement to notify the Director General of a reportable incident, and vice versa.

Reportable incident

In line with the *Guide to the registration standards and other requirements for Non-Government Schools*, Standard 7, it is recognised that governing bodies and school leadership have the responsibility for managing all critical and emergency incidents in the best interests of students. There are six reportable incident categories two of which directly relate to child protection/abuse.

- The receipt of a complaint or allegation of child abuse, including but not limited to sexual abuse, committed against a student by:
 - (a) a staff member or another student; or
 - (b) another person on the school premises or during a school-related activity; whether the abuse is alleged to have occurred recently or in the past.
- Issuing a formal warning, a suspension or ceasing the employment of a staff member for a breach of the school's Code of Conduct involving suspected grooming behaviour.

In the case of a mandatory reporting, the identities of those involved, including the mandatory reporter, must not be disclosed.

Sexual Abuse Under the Act

The Children and Community Services Act 2004 defines a child as 'under 18 years of age, and in the absence of positive evidence of age, means a person apparently under 18 years of age'.

Young people aged 18 and over are considered to be adults and are not covered by this legislation. However, schools still owe a duty of care to all students at the school. In these instances, police should be informed of any assault or crime against the young person.

Under section 124A of the Children and Community Services Act 2004, sexual abuse, in relation to a child, includes sexual behaviour in circumstances where: –

- (a) the child is the subject of bribery, coercion, a threat, exploitation, or violence; or
- (b) the child has less power than another person involved in the behaviour; or
- (c) there is a significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.

These behaviours can include grooming, exposure to pornographic material, sexual penetration, inappropriate touching, exposure to other sexual acts and soliciting children for sexual exploitation. Sexual abuse occurs when a child has been exposed or subjected to sexual behaviours that are exploitative and/or inappropriate to his/her age and developmental level. In most cases, coercion and fear is common in child sexual abuse.

Teacher

The definition of teacher in section 124A of the *Children and Community Services Amendment (Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children) Act 2008*, "a person who is registered under the *Teacher Registration Act 2012*".

Policy Statement

Child Side Playgroup and School (CSS) is committed to a child safe and friendly environment for all Children. This commitment is demonstrated through the implementation and annual review of the '*Child Safe Organisation Framework for Child Side School*' (*National Child Safe Organisation Principles*). This document is tabled and discussed as a part of the Governing Council Annual Calendar.

CSS integrates the '*Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum*' within the Child Side Curriculum, with consideration for age and developmental-stages and cultural appropriateness. This curriculum includes prevention, early detection, intervention and, promotes protective behaviours to build practical self-protective skills and strategies for all children. This curriculum also includes e-safety education.

CSS regularly reviews its policies, procedures and practices that aim to ensure Childrens' safety and wellbeing at school and during school-related activities in consultation with its children as appropriate.

CSS school cooperates in the *Multi-Agency Protocol for Education Options for Young People Charged with Harmful Sexual Behaviours* and implements a risk assessment and management plan for any such young person enrolled at the school.

CSS implements a Code of Conduct for all staff (paid and unpaid), including practicum students and volunteers, governing council members, and parents/guardians, which:

- (a) is consistent with the *Example Code of Conduct*, published by the *Australian Human Rights Commission*, and with the *National Child Safe Organisation Principles*;
- (b) requires them to report objectively observable behaviour which breaches or is suspected of breaching the Code, other than those subject to mandatory reporting obligations, to the Principal, a designated senior staff member or the chair of the governing body; and
- (c) assures their protection from victimisation or other adverse consequences if they make such reports in good faith.

CSS, in consultation with its children, develops and regularly reviews Child Code of Conduct and guidelines on how to comply which:

- (a) sets out minimum standards of conduct;
- (b) prohibits bullying, harassment and other forms of peer-to-peer abuse; and
- (c) requires respect for the privacy and human dignity of other children.

All staff, governing council members and regular volunteers participate in learning opportunities at least annually about the law with respect to mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse and the school's policies, procedures and practices that aim to ensure Childrens' safety and wellbeing at school and during school-related activities, including the creation and maintenance of child-safe physical and online environments.

Parents and guardians receive information about the protective behaviours curriculum, the Code of Conduct, the Child Code of Conduct and when, how and whom to tell when they have concerns about grooming, child abuse or other behaviour which is not permitted by either code.

CSS's records of complaints, allegations and findings related to grooming and child abuse, whether involving former or current staff or children:

- (a) contain as much detail as possible,
- (b) are stored securely; and
- (c) are not destroyed without the approval of the Director General or, where their retention becomes impracticable or unduly onerous, are forwarded to the Director General with their permission for retention in accordance with the State Records Act 2000.

CSS implements the *Records Retention & Disposal Schedule for Non-Government Schools*.

CSS responds appropriately to complaints and allegations of grooming, child abuse and breaches of the Codes of Conduct or Child Codes of Conduct in the best interests of children and in accordance with policies and procedures which at least require that:

- (a) the complainant is informed about the services, including advocacy and support services, which may be available; and
- (b) the matter is reported promptly to the responsible government authorities and their direction is sought and complied with as to when, what and by whom information related to the matter and its investigation may be given to the person against whom the complaint or allegation is made, the complainant and their parents/guardian, other affected children and their parents and guardians, and the wider school community.

CSS under the *Standards* is required to identify "designated senior staff members" to whom **reports*** must and or can be made.

Child Side Playgroup and School Designated Staff to whom reports must or can be made

:

- Co-Principal (Administration)
- Co-Principal (Senior Educator)
- Continuity and Cohesion Educator, and or
- Chair of the Governing Council

***Reports** including but not limited to, *Complaints, Concerns and Disputes (grievance)*, *Mandatory Reporting (Sexual Abuse)*, *Non-Mandatory Reporting (Welfare Concerns)*, *Code of Conduct Breaches*, *Duty of Care Concerns*, *Risk Management Concerns*, *All Child Protection and Safety Matters ...*

Policy Review

All policies are reviewed and amended in accordance with the *CSS Policy on Policies* and the *CSS Policy, Guidelines, Procedures and Frameworks Register*.

This policy and associated guidelines and procedures will be reviewed every year*, provided that an earlier review is undertaken as a matter of course whenever a complaint, incident or other information is actioned regardless of any indicators or not, there has been a policy or procedural failure.

*As a requirement of Non-government School Regulation (NGSR) re-registration standards and the school insurance policy renewal process.

Appendices

Appendix 1	Child Side Playgroup and School Protective Behaviours Context
Appendix 2	Child Side School Child Protection Common Practice and Understandings – stated across other school policies.
Appendix 3	Child Side Playgroup and School Notification Procedure and Guidelines – Mandatory Reporting.
Essential reference to Appendix 3	Mandatory Reporting Guide: Western Australia November 2023 – Government of Western Australia, Department of Communities
Appendix 4	Child Side Playgroup and School Notification Procedure and Guidelines – Non- Mandatory Reporting
Essential reference to Appendix 4	Department of Communities – What to Do When You Are Concerned a Child is being Abused and Neglected
Appendix 5	Child Side Playgroup and School Mandatory Reporting Checklist
Supplementary Resources	
	Department of Communities – Recognizing Child Abuse (Pamphlet)
	Department of Communities- Child Development and Trauma Guide
	Mandatory Reporting Information Sheet One: Glossary November 2023
	Framework for understanding and guiding responses to harmful sexual behaviours in children and young people. Australian Centre for Child Protection Western Australia
	Mandatory Reporting Information Sheet Two: Harmful Sexual Behaviours November 2023
	Mandatory Reporting Information Sheet Three: Impacts of Child Sexual Abuse November 2023
	Mandatory Reporting Information Sheet Four: Child Sexual Abuse in the Online Context November 2023
	Mandatory Reporting Information Sheet Five: Responding to Disclosures November 2023
	Mandatory Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse – Frequently Asked Questions November 2023
	Reportable Conduct Scheme – Non-Government School Sector Reporting Obligations December 2023
	Reportable Conduct Scheme – Frequently Asked Questions. December 2023
	Reportable Conduct Scheme – Sheet One: Overview of the Reportable Conduct Scheme December 2023
	Reportable Conduct Scheme – When to Notify the Ombudsman December 2023
	Reportable Conduct Scheme – Sheet Four: Responsibilities of the Head on and Organisation. December 2023
	Reportable Conduct Scheme – Sheet Five: Self-Assessment Guidance. December 2023
	Reportable Conduct Scheme – Sheet Six: Risk Management. December 2023
	Reportable Conduct Scheme – Sheet Seven: Information for Employees December 2023
	Reportable Conduct Scheme – Sheet Eight: Reportable Conduct Investigations. December 2023
	Reportable Conduct Scheme – Sheet Nine: Inclusive Investigation Guidance. December 2023
	Reportable Conduct Scheme – Sheet Ten: Exemptions. December 2023
	Reportable Conduct Scheme – Sheet Eleven: Information for Volunteers and Volunteer Organisations. December 2023

Version Management

VERSION	DATE REVIEWED	DATE RATIFIED	CHANGES MADE	AUTHOR OF CHANGES	NEXT REVIEW DATE
1	June 2011	14/9/2011	Mandatory reporting separated to another policy	KM	
2	Dec 2014	10/12/2014	Minor name changes- educator	KM	
3	April 2015	15/6/2015	Mandatory reporting incorporated in Child Protection Policy-response to DES requirement. All changes to policy in line with latest guidelines.	KM	
4	April 2018	12/4/2018	Update policy to standard CCS format	LF	
5	Oct 2018	28/11/2018	Referred to Child Safe and Friendly Organisation Framework and 'Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum'	KM	
6	Mach 2021	02/06/2021	Additions required under standard 10 of the Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools	LF	Term 2 - 2022
7	May 2022	22/07/2022	Added the word Volunteers to the Scope and Application. No other changes made	LF	Term 2 - 2022
8	Nov 2022	07/12/2022	Added new mandatory reporters in WA to list, expanded national principals for child safe organisations from 9 to 10, included child and young adolescents CoC's in related policy list.	KM	Term 4 2023
9	April 2024	08/05/2024	Comprehensive review and update in line with the new and current Legislation and Regulatory requirements including Reportable Conduct. Addition of essential reference material from the Department of Communities	JM	Term 2 2025

Child Side Playgroup and School Protective Behaviours Context

CSS is committed to a child safe and friendly environment. This commitment is implemented through the '*Child Safe Organisation Framework for Child Side School*', with ten focus areas:

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture.
2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
9. Implementation of the *National Child Safe Principles* is regularly reviewed and improved.
10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

Our commitment also includes prevention, early detection, intervention and promoting protective behaviours for all students through the curriculum, *CSS Curriculum Map*. The CSS chosen Curriculum '*Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum*' provides an age-appropriate personal safety component enabling students to recognise and report abuse, understand power in relationships, and develop protective strategies, including seeking help. It has relevant and specific resources and provides educators across the whole school with a consistent and cohesive approach to protective behaviours. The curriculum has four focus areas:

1. The Right to Be Safe.
2. Relationships.
3. Recognising and Reporting Abuse.
4. Protective Strategies.

The '*Child Safe Organisation Framework for Child Side School*' is reviewed at PON and formally, annually, and tabled at a Governing Council (GC) meeting as a part of the *GC Annual Calendar :Governing Council Business*.

Other policies and procedures are in place to ensure the provision of a safe environment in which children are able to learn and work, including procedures ensuring that staff and volunteers are adequately screened, trained, and supervised.

Child Side Playgroup and School Child Protection Common Practice and Understandings (stated across other school policies and maintained in procedures).

Clear and Transparent Context for Child Protection

Child Side School has a responsibility for the safety and welfare of all children. A child protection intent statement is displayed on all significant Child Side School documentation, correspondence, and publications, including school signage.

CHILD SIDE PLAYGROUP AND SCHOOL
FOLLOWS CHILD PROTECTION AND
PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOUR PROCESSES.

Child/Children left at School.

Procedure and considerations outlined in the 'CSS General Duty of Care Policy' and 'Code of Conduct Guidelines – School Staff.'

Children Travelling in Staff Cars

Procedure and considerations outlined in the 'CSS General Duty of Care Policy' CSS Transportation Policy' and 'Code of Conduct Guidelines – School Staff.'

Visitors on the School Site

All staff should be conscious of any visitor seen in and around the school site and satisfy themselves that any visitor is displaying a CSS visitor lanyard and is conducting themselves appropriately.

Children, as a part of the embedded child safe approach are encouraged to be aware of who is in and around the school site and understand that all visitors wear visitor lanyards.

Both School entry gates have signs requesting that all visitors report to the office before working on the school site.

All visitors to the school (volunteers, work experience students, relief educators, practicum teachers, service providers, trades, invited guests, therapists, School Nurse, School Psychologist,) are required to sign in at the office upon entering the school site and before starting work. **A Child Side School visitor lanyard will be issued and is required to be worn for the duration of their time on site.** All visitors are required to sign out and relinquish their lanyard at the conclusion of their visit and should leave the school site without delay.

Therapists, School Nurse, School Psychologist should only work with children where they can be seen by other staff members or in the re-set room (if privacy is required) where a window provides visual access of the room.

All deliveries should be directed to the office where they will be managed by office staff.

Codes of Conduct

Child Side School has well established Code of Conduct policies which reflect the Australian Human Rights Commission and is consistent with the National Child Safe Organisation Principles.

Adult Code of Conduct Policies are developed to meet legislative requirements and reflect the purpose and ethos of CSS. They are reviewed regularly by the governing council and staff. All families are reminded of the Codes at least annually. All Codes are available to staff via the

school share drive and Parents/Guardians via the school website and parent information packs. School staff and Governing Council Members receive professional learning via induction in relation to Code of Conduct and are required to sign Code of Conduct agreements.

Child Code of Conduct Policies are integrated across the curriculum and referred to within the context of everyday school activity. Educators play an integral role in modelling and facilitating the intent and appropriate actions of the Codes. Codes are developed through regular consultation and review (formally and informally) with the children during the everyday activity of their work.

Duty of Care

Child Side School implements clear policies and protocol relating to duty of care including but not limited to *General Duty of Care Policy, Playground Supervision Policy, Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Behaviour Policy, Incursions Policy, Excursions Policy, Nutrition, Health and Hygiene Policy, Internet and Electronic Devices Policy, Literature and Television Viewing Policy, Work Health and Safety Policy, Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Register, Sun Protection Policy, Sickness and Accidents Policy, Critical and Emergency Incidents and Crisis Management Policy, Asthma Care Policy, Transport Policy, Access to Students Policy, Volunteers Policy, Contemporaneous Records*. All policies are available to staff via the school share drive and Parents/Guardians via the school website.

Photographing and Videoing Children

Child Side School implements clear policies and protocol relating to the *Use of Children's Photographs and Video Images Policy* and a *Social Media Policy*. Parents and Guardians are required annually to submit a Parent consent form, *Photographs/Videos and Documentation Consent* and on occasion, specific activity consent forms for special projects. A confidential register is maintained by the Co-Principal (Administration) listing the children who are not to be photographed and or videoed. This policy is available to staff via the school share drive and Parents/Guardians via the school website.

Internet and Electronic Devices Security

Child Side School has a clear policy *Internet and Electronic Devices Policy* which includes statements and procedures regarding, e-safety, cyberbullying, the use of mobile phones and system security measures. This policy is available to staff via the school share drive and Parents/Guardians via the school website.

The use of Social Media by Staff

Child Side School has an explicit policy which provides clear guidelines for Staff use of social media. This policy is relevant to all staff (paid and unpaid), and volunteers. This policy is available to all staff via the school share drive and Parents/Guardians via the school website.

Staff and Volunteer Screening, Training and Supervision

Child Side School implements robust policy related to staff and volunteer screening, training and supervision, *Staff Recruitment Policy, Staff Induction Policy, Volunteers Policy, and Procedure for Engaging Volunteers, Code of Conduct – School Staff*. These policies are made available to staff and volunteers as a part of their induction, ongoing training and or peer support processes.

Mandatory Reporting/ Child Protection Training

All staff, regular volunteers and the Governing Council members receive annual professional learning in relation to Mandatory Reporting and Child Protection and the *Keeping Children Safe Curriculum*. Professional learning forums include on-site with AISWA professionals and training via the Department of Communities on-line portals.

All staff, regular volunteers and Governing Council members receive regular professional learning in relation to school policy and procedures, particularly when there have been changes to legislation, policy direction and/or because of policy review.

Contemporaneous Records

Child Side School ensures that it meets legislative requirements for contemporaneous records in the Early Childhood Cluster (ECC) with the *CSS Contemporaneous Records Policy*. These records support the school in fulfilling its legal obligations but also contributes to providing a safe learning place for children in the early years.

Record Retention

The Royal Commission into *Institutional Responses to Child Abuse* significantly impacted record retention policies. It recommended retaining specific records for much longer than previously considered appropriate. Child Side School has a responsibility to manage the creation, collection, storage, sharing, and disposal of student records effectively. The *CSS Record Retention Policy* ensures compliance with current legislation and best practices for data privacy.

Child Side Playgroup and School Notification Procedure and Guidelines – Mandatory Reporting.

This procedure and guidelines should be read in conjunction with "The Mandatory Reporting Guide: Western Australia" (electronic copy) and other appendix provided with this policy.

Mandatory Reporting is relevant if you have a concern or have formed a belief about the **sexual abuse** of a child.

Who Should Make a Mandatory Report?

Under section 124B of the Children and Community Services Act 2004, the following people are mandatory reporters:

- Doctors
- Nurses and Midwives
- Teachers (including TAFE Lecturers)
- Police Officers.
- Boarding Supervisors
- Ministers of Religion
- Out-of-home Care Workers
- Assessors appointed under section 125A of the Act.
- Departmental Officers of the Department of Communities
- School Councillor
- Psychologist
- Early Childhood Worker (1st November 2024)
- Youth Justice Worker (1st May 2025)

If you are NOT a designated mandatory reporter and have concerns or have formed a belief about the **sexual abuse** of a child, you should report as soon as practical to either, a Co-Principal, a Continuity and Cohesion Educator, and or notify the Governing Council Chair.

Why Should A Mandatory Report Be Made?

Protecting children is everyone's business. Children and young people rely on responsible adults to be the voice they don't have and to help keep them safe.

A report should be made if:

1. A child talks to you (makes a disclosure) about worries or feeling unsafe, or
2. You have a concern about a child as a result of observed behaviours which cause you concern about their welfare, or
3. Your receive or hear information from another community member about a child which raises concerns about the welfare of that child.

Mandatory Reporting is relevant if you have a concern or have **formed a belief*** about the **sexual abuse** of a child. If your concerns are not about sexual abuse, but about other forms of abuse or neglect, please refer to the *Child Side Playgroup and School Non-mandatory Reporting Procedure and Guidelines*.

Under the Children and Community Services Act 2004, all mandatory reporters are required to report all reasonable beliefs, that a child has been or is being sexually abused.

If you are NOT a designated mandatory reporter and have concerns or have formed a belief about the **sexual abuse** of a child, you should report as soon as practical to either a Co-Principal, a Continuity and Cohesion Educator, and or notify the Governing Council Chair

Before making a report, a mandatory reporter should consult 'The Mandatory Reporting Guide: Western Australia' (the electronic version) which forms part of this policy, to assess or confirm whether you believe that a child has been or is being sexually abused.

***Formed a belief on reasonable grounds**, means that a reasonable person, doing the same work, would have formed the same belief on those grounds. Grounds for forming a belief are matters of which you have become aware, and any opinions in relation to those matters.

Reasonable grounds may include:

- your own observations of a child's behaviour,
- your own observations of the behaviour of an adult interacting with the child,
- when a child tells you they, or another child, has been harmed,
- when you hear about it from someone who is in a position to provide reliable information, perhaps a relative or friend, neighbour or sibling of a child who is at risk.

If you are a mandatory reporter and you have not yet formed a belief that a child has been or is being sexually abused but are sufficiently concerned, **you can seek advice from a Co-Principals, a Continuity and Cohesion Educator, the Governing Council Chair or School Support staff (school psychologist or school nurse) in relation to a specific child/ren. If either of those parties are mandated reporters and then personally form a belief, they are then obliged to make a report to the Mandatory Reporting Service unless agreed that you do the report together.**

Alternatively, you can contact the Department of Communities Central Intake Team on **1800 273 889**. An experienced child protection worker will talk to you about your concerns. Unless there is an imminent risk to a child's safety, do not ask the child a lot of questions yourself. The appropriate people will take action to investigate.

It should be noted that, once a belief has been formed, all information regarding the matter is considered confidential and should be managed with discretion and only be discussed with those in the school who are required to know.

Following a disclosure, it is recommended mandatory reporters consult with a Co-principal or Continuity and Cohesion Educator to seek guidance in relation to who needs to be informed, where to file the documentation of the report and next steps to support the child and/or minimise the likelihood of the abuse continuing.

When Should A Mandatory Report Be Made?

At Child Side School we believe that all children have a right to be protected from harm and our school has a 'duty of care' to protect children when they are on school premises and, also to intervene when we believe the welfare of a child is at risk outside the school.

If you believe a child is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, call the WA Police Force on 000.

Under the Children and Community Services Act 2004, **a mandatory report must be made as soon as practicable after the reporter forms their belief.** This is important, as the earlier a report is received, the earlier steps can be taken to protect a child, where this is necessary.

How and Where Should a Mandatory Report Be Made?

Once a mandatory reporter forms a belief, on reasonable grounds, that a child has been or is being sexually abused, **they must make a report in good faith** to the Department of Communities Mandatory Reporting Service. **Once a belief has been formed, all information regarding the matter is considered confidential and should be managed with discretion and only be discussed with those in the school who are required to know.**

A mandatory report can be made in writing or orally. If an oral report is made, it must be followed by a written report as soon as practicable after making the oral report (ideally within 24 hours).

The preferred primary reporting method is online via the “MR Web Portal” *. This link can also be accessed directly via the electronic version of the *'The Mandatory Reporting Guide: Western Australia'* which forms part of this policy. When making a mandatory report via the MR Web Portal, the user will be guided through the system to assist with providing the required information to the Mandatory Reporting Service.

***MR Web Portal Source** (hyperlink)
[Mandatory Reporting \(communities.wa.gov.au\)](https://communities.wa.gov.au)

A blank mandatory reporting form can be requested from the Mandatory Reporting Service to be sent via fax or email if you cannot access the MR Web Portal. Completed forms can be emailed to mrs@communities.wa.gov.au or faxed to (08) 6414 7316.

The Mandatory Reporting Service can be contacted 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by phone on **1800 708 704** where mandatory reporters can:

- report immediate concerns for the safety of a child,
- discuss with a specialist in child protection any grounds on which you have formed a belief that a child has been or is currently being sexually abused, and/or
- seek advice on reporting procedures.

What Should Be Reported?

For the Mandatory Reporting Service to assess the child's safety and determine the most appropriate response, it is important that the mandatory reporter provides as much information as possible. Before making a report, a mandatory reporter should consult *'The Mandatory Reporting Guide: Western Australia'* (the electronic version) which forms part of this policy, to assist them gather information and manage information received from the child (if there has been a disclosure)

It is expected that reporters maintain diarised notes with as much detail as possible and includes dates, times, observations, notable incidents, quotes from discussions (direct or overhead) and or engagements which can assist with forming a belief and in reporting. This may also be called upon and used if evidence is required at a later time. **All information gathered as a result of an investigation is required under legislation to be maintained by the school permanently.**

A mandatory reporter should not at any time attempt to “investigate” a disclosure or attempt to interrogate a child in order to gather new information.

Mandatory reporters must specify the grounds on which they formed the belief that a child has been, or is being, sexually abused.

A mandatory reporter does not have to be able to prove that harm has occurred.

Information that must be included:

- the reporter's name and contact details
- the name of the child, or, if this cannot be obtained after reasonable inquiries, a description of the child, and
- the grounds on which the reporter believes that the child has been the subject of sexual abuse or is the subject of ongoing sexual abuse.

The following information must also be provided to the extent that it is known:

- the child's date of birth
- where the child lives
- the names of the child's parents or other appropriate persons (e.g., adult relative or person who the child usually lives with), and
- the name of the person alleged responsible, their contact details and their relationship to the child.

Other important information

The following may be useful for The Department of Communities and WA Police Force in undertaking an assessment and/or investigation; therefore, please provide as much detail as possible in the following areas:

- the child's current whereabouts
- all telephone numbers linked to the child, caregivers and/or the child's current address
- the child's school, day care centre or kindergarten
- the child's cultural background
- whether the child has a disability or additional needs
- whether the child or family needs an interpreter
- the child's family arrangements, such as siblings and carers
- whether the person alleged to be responsible for the sexual abuse has threatened to further harm the child
- whether the child and the child's family/carers are aware of the report
- the context of the disclosure
- if the child has disclosed abuse, what they said happened and who they disclosed to and when
- a description of any behaviours/interactions with the child that are of concern, including frequency and severity of behaviours
- whether the child has any injury, or medical needs.

PLEASE NOTE: If the adult responsible for the alleged sexual abuse is a staff member (employed or volunteer) of Child Side Playgroup and School, **the mandatory reporter must report this in confidence** to a Co-Principal, a Continuity and Cohesion Educator, and or notify the Governing Council Chair so that they may appropriately manage the risk at school. The recipient of this information must not reveal the identity of the mandatory reporter.

After a Mandatory Report has been made

After receiving a mandatory report, the Mandatory Reporting Service sends a copy of the report to the Western Australia Police. The Mandatory Reporting Service then conducts an initial assessment to decide on the next steps in relation to the child, including determining if any immediate action is required to protect the child's safety.

You may be contacted by WA Police and/or the Department of Communities for further information after submitting a mandatory report.

After a report is lodged, the sender will receive a receipt number. This number is proof that a report has been made, so it is important that the response is retained and securely stored.

Once a report has been made in writing to the Department of Communities, **the following information must be provided in confidence** to either a Co-Principal, a Continuity and Cohesion

Educator, and or notify the Governing Council Chair in order to appropriately manage the risk at the school:

- The Mandatory Report lodgement number provided by the Department of Communities upon the receipt of the report,
- The date the report was lodged,
- The name of the child named in the report,
- Any other relevant information.

The recipient of this information must not reveal the identity of the mandatory reporter.

PLEASE NOTE: If the adult responsible for the alleged sexual abuse is a staff member (employed or volunteer) of Child Side Playgroup and School, **the mandatory reporter must report this in confidence** to a Co-Principal, a Continuity and Cohesion Educator, and or notify the Governing Council Chair so that they may appropriately manage the risk at school.

The recipient of this information must not reveal the identity of the mandatory reporter.

Once you have reported to either a Co-Principal, a Continuity and Cohesion Educator and or the Governing Council Chair about your report, they, as a part of managing the risk at the school will continue to support you through the remainder of the process.

Decisions will need to be made about communicating with parents. Non-offending parents will likely need to be informed of the disclosure. You **MUST seek direction and advice** with the Department of Communities and/or WA Police Force **prior to making any notifications** to ensure you are not jeopardising any investigation. It must be clearly communicated to children that their parents will need to be informed; however, **the timing of informing parents and the decision of who informs the parents needs to be made in consultation with Communities and/or WA Police Force.**

- If, following a report, a family approaches the school to receive support for their child or the school in their duty of care of the child wishes to meet with the parents/carers, or has been recommended to do so by the Department of Communities, it is recommended that any meeting be conducted with a minimum of two school members present (either a Co-Principal, Continuity and Cohesion Educator and or the Governing Council Chair) to provide support.
- The school may consider support from the school psychologist or outside agencies such as the AISWA or appropriate services the child may already be utilising.

Note: It is important to remember that the focus of any meeting in this instance should be the welfare of the child.

- A Co- principal should arrange ongoing support for the reporter, the child and anyone else affected. The need for ongoing support is often necessary as the reporter will continue in their role with the child and the Department of Communities role may continue for an extended period of time.
- It is acknowledged and understood that being in a situation that requires you to make a mandatory report can be stressful and upsetting. Remember to look after yourself and be mindful of any impacts reporting may have on your own health, wellbeing, and safety.

Depending upon the circumstances, and the directions received from the Department of Communities, the following actions may also be carried out:

Contact Crisis Care: who provide Western Australia's after-hours response to reported concerns for a child's safety and wellbeing and information and referrals for people experiencing crisis.

Contact Other Agencies: If necessary and as directed by the department of Communities, including but not limited to School psychologist, school nurse, WA Police, Kids Helpline, Youth Beyond Blue, Women's Domestic Helpline, Men's Domestic Helpline, AISWA

Lodge a Reportable Conduct Report (if the welfare concern involves a Child Side Staff member – employed or volunteer) which is required to be completed and reported to the WA Ombudsman. This report will be investigated (in relation to the conduct of the person, not the potential criminality of an allegation) and managed at the school level (possibly in conjunction with other agencies) and in relation to school policy and procedure.

Lodge a Reportable Incident Report (if the welfare concern involves a Child Side Staff member – employed or volunteer) is also required to be lodged with the Director General of the Education Department of WA.

Issue Formal Warning or suspension or cessation of employment of a staff member for a breach of code of conduct. (if the welfare concern involves a Child Side Educator employed or volunteer)

Contact the Teacher Registration Board (TRBWA) (if the welfare concern involves a Child Side Educator employed or volunteer)

Manage Information within and external to the School Community.

Manage Actions as provided through feedback from the Department of Communities.

Provide support to the Reporter during and after the process as required and necessary.

Storage and Retention of Child Protection Related Documentation

The *CSS Retention of Records Policy* outlines the processes and procedures for the retention and storage of Child Protection related Documentation.

- The Co-principal (Administration) is responsible for the storage and retention of all Child Protection related documentation.
- All documentation related to Child Protection matters is maintained in a lockable cabinet in the main office building. Only the identified staff have key access to this cabinet.
- Both Co-principals and the Continuity and Cohesion Educators have key access to all Child Protection confidential information.
- The Governing Council Chair can request access to this information via a Co-principal or a Continuity and Cohesion Educator.
- **All documentation associated with Child Protection matters are considered confidential** and should not be shared, copied, or distributed unless directed by a Co-principal or a Continuity and Cohesion Educator.
- **All documentation created by a reporter** about a Child Protection matter **must be relinquished** to a Co-principal or a Continuity and Cohesion Educator for storage and retention.
- **At no time is it appropriate for ANY Child Protection related documentation to be destroyed. Relocation of Child Protection documentation should not take place without the express approval of both the Governing Council Chair and a Co-principal.**

Confidentiality and Legal Protection

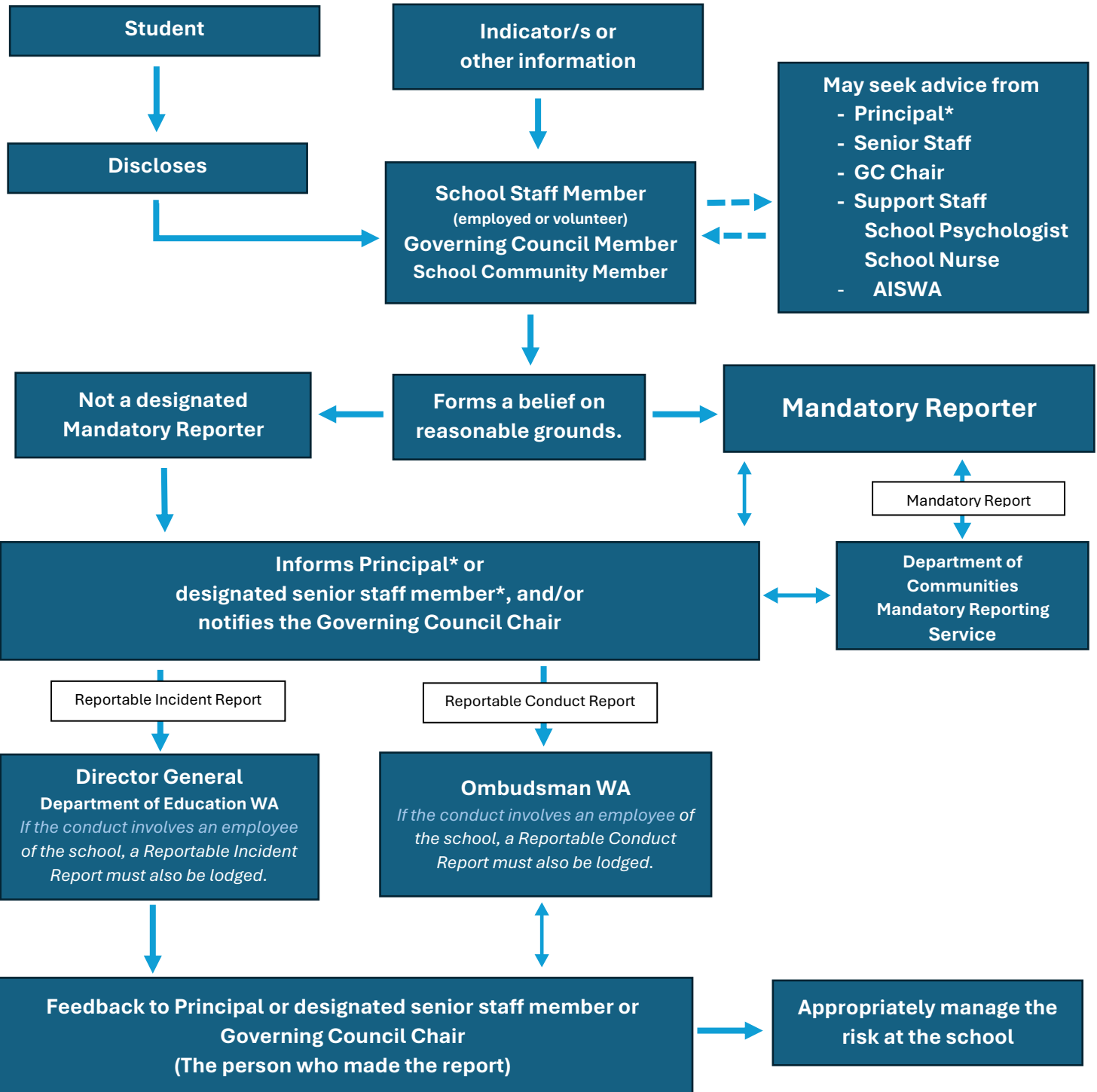
The identity of the reporter is required to be kept confidential, except in limited and very specific circumstances. Section 124F (2) protects a reporter's identity from being disclosed. This includes information where a reporter's identity could be deduced. (s124A) Disclosure of a reporter's identity carries a maximum fine of \$24,000 and 2 years imprisonment.

There are exceptions where disclosure of a reporter's identity is permitted. In such cases, consideration will be given to ensuring the reporter's safety has been considered.

A mandated reporter is also protected from liability. If a report is made in good faith, they will not incur any civil or criminal liability by making a report.

Child Side Playgroup and School Notification Procedure – Mandatory Reporting

- Child Sexual Abuse (mandatory report)



* Principal = Co Principal (Administration) or Co Principal (Senior Educator)
 * Designated senior staff member = Continuity and Cohesion Educators

Child Side Playgroup and School Notification Procedure and Guidelines – Non-mandatory Reporting.

This procedure and guidelines should be read in conjunction with "Recognising Child Abuse" from the Western Australia Department of Communities (electronic copy) and other appendix provided with this policy.

Non-Mandatory Reporting is relevant if you have a concern or have formed a belief about **the welfare*** of a child.

***welfare** - There are four main types of child abuse:

- Physical
- Sexual → requires a Mandatory Report
- Emotional – including psychological abuse and exposure to family and domestic violence
- Neglect.

If your welfare concern is in relation to **sexual abuse**, any report made **MUST be a mandatory report**. Please refer to the *Child Side Playgroup and School Mandatory Reporting Procedure and Guidelines*.

If your welfare concern is in relation to **physical abuse, emotional abuse or neglect**, any report made **should be a non-mandatory report**.

Who Should Make a Report?

Any person from the Child Side Playgroup and School Community Staff (paid/not paid), parent/guardian, volunteer, School support staff (psychologist, nurse), Governing Council member, School visitor (living book, incursion/excursion visitor, invited skilled adult, LTI mentors ...) can make **a non-mandatory report** if they have a concern or have formed a belief about **the welfare** of a child.

Why Should A Report Be Made?

Protecting children is everyone's business. Children and young people rely on responsible adults to be the voice they don't have and to help keep them safe.

A report should be made if:

1. A child talks to you (makes a disclosure) about worries or feeling unsafe, or
2. You have a concern about a child as a result of observed behaviours which cause you concern about their welfare, or
3. You receive or hear information from another community member about a child which raises concerns about the welfare of that child.

It should be noted that, once a belief has been formed, all information regarding the matter is considered confidential and should be managed with discretion and only be discussed with those in the school who are required to know.

When Should A Report Be Made?

At Child Side School we believe that all children have a right to be protected from harm and our school has a 'duty of care' to protect children when they are on school premises and, also to intervene when we believe the welfare of a child is at risk outside the school.

If you believe a child is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, call the WA Police Force on 000.

A report should be made as soon as practicable after the reporter forms their belief. This is important as, the earlier a report is received, the earlier steps can be taken to protect a child, where this is necessary.

How and Where Should a Report Be Made?

Children can't protect themselves. They rely on responsible adults to be the voice they don't have. **If you are worried about the wellbeing or safety of a child and you are not sure if this is something you need to report, you should seek advice** from the Co-Principals, Senior Staff, the Governing Council Chair or School Support staff (school psychologist or school nurse).

Alternatively, you can contact the Department of Communities Central Intake Team on 1800 273 889. An experienced child protection worker will speak with you about your concerns. Unless there is an imminent risk to a child's safety, do not ask the child a lot of questions yourself. The appropriate people will take action to investigate.

Once you have formed a reasonable belief that a child's welfare or safety is at risk, **you must in good faith inform** either:

- A Co-Principal,
- A Continuity and Cohesion Educator, and or
- The Governing Council Chair,

who will make a report (a professional referral) on your behalf.

The recipient of this information must not reveal the identity of the reporter.

Once a belief has been formed, all information regarding the matter is considered confidential and should be managed with discretion and only be discussed with those in the school who are required to know.

PLEASE NOTE: If the adult responsible for the alleged welfare concerns is a staff member (employed or volunteer) of Child Side Playgroup and School, **the reporter must report this in confidence** when reporting their concerns to a Co-Principal, a Continuity and Cohesion Educator and or the Governing Council Chair so that they may appropriately manage the risk at school.

The recipient of your information **will make a professional referral** * using the *Child Protection Concern Referral Form*; an online form with the Department of Communities using the information you have provided and will work with you to represent your concerns in confidence.

This individual is also responsible for managing the risk at the school if and as appropriate.

***Referral Source** (hyperlink)

<https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/departments-of-communities/concerns-the-safety-or-wellbeing-of-child-or-young-person>

or call the Department of Communities Central Intake Team on **1800 273 889**.

After hours **Crisis Care** (hyperlink) : [Crisis Care](#) provides Western Australia's after-hours response to reported concerns for a child's safety and wellbeing and information and referrals for people experiencing crisis. **Crisis Care: Free call 1800 199 008.**

What Should Be Reported?

For the Department of Communities to assess the child's safety and determine the most appropriate response, **it is important that there is as much information provided as possible.** Before making a report, a reporter should consult "*Recognising Child Abuse*" from the *Western Australia Department of Communities* (the electronic version) which forms part of this policy, to assist them gather information and manage information received from the child (if there has been a disclosure)

It is expected that reporters maintain diarised notes with as much detail as possible and includes dates, times, observations, notable incidents, quotes from discussions (direct or overhead) and or engagements which can assist with forming a belief and in reporting. This may also be called upon and used if evidence is required at a later time. **All information gathered as a result of an investigation is required under legislation to be maintained by the school permanently.**

A reporter should not at any time attempt to "investigate" a disclosure or attempt to interrogate in order to gather new information.

A reporter should be able to specify the grounds on which they formed the belief that a child's welfare is of concern.

A reporter does not have to be able to prove that harm has occurred.

Information that must be included:

- the reporter's name and contact details
- the name of the child, or, if this cannot be obtained after reasonable inquiries, a description of the child, and
- the grounds on which the reporter believes that the child has been the subject abuse or is the subject of ongoing abuse.

The following information must also be provided to the extent that it is known:

- the child's date of birth
- where the child lives
- the names of the child's parents or other appropriate persons (e.g., adult relative or person who the child usually lives with), and
- the name of the person alleged responsible, their contact details and their relationship to the child.

Other important information

The following may be useful for The Department of Communities and WA Police Force in undertaking an assessment and/or investigation; therefore, please provide as much detail as possible in the following areas:

- the child's current whereabouts
- all telephone numbers linked to the child, caregivers and/or the child's current address
- the child's school, day care centre or kindergarten
- the child's cultural background
- whether the child has a disability or additional needs
- whether the child or family needs an interpreter
- the child's family arrangements, such as siblings and carers
- whether the person alleged to be responsible for the abuse has threatened to further harm the child
- whether the child and the child's family/carers are aware of the report
- the context of the disclosure
- if the child has disclosed abuse, what they said happened and who they disclosed to and when

- a description of any behaviours/interactions with the child that are of concern, including frequency and severity of behaviours
- whether the child has any injury, or medical needs.

PLEASE NOTE: If the adult responsible for the alleged abuse is a staff member (employed or volunteer) of Child Side Playgroup and School, **the reporter must report this in confidence** to a Co-Principal, a Continuity and Cohesion Educator and or the Governing Council Chair so that they may appropriately manage the risk at school.

The recipient of this information must not reveal the identity of the reporter.

After a Report about Welfare Concerns has been made

After receiving a professional referral, the Department of Communities will conduct an initial assessment to decide on the next steps in relation to the child, including determining if any immediate action is required to protect the child's safety.

You may be contacted by WA Police and/or the Department of Communities for further information after submitting a professional referral.

After a professional referral is made, the sender will receive confirmation. This confirmation is proof that a referral has been made, so it is important that the response is retained and securely stored.

PLEASE NOTE: If the adult responsible for the alleged welfare concern is a staff member (employed or volunteer) of Child Side Playgroup and School, **the reporter must report this in confidence** to a Co-Principal, a Continuity and Cohesion Educator, and or notify the Governing Council Chair so that they may appropriately manage the risk at school.

The recipient of this information must not reveal the identity of the mandatory reporter.

Once you have reported to either a Co-Principal, a Continuity and Cohesion Educator and or the Governing Council Chair about your concerns they, as a part of managing the risk at the school will continue to support you through the remainder of the process.

Decisions will need to be made about communicating with parents. Non-offending parents will likely need to be informed of the disclosure. You **MUST seek direction and advice** with the Department of Communities and/or WA Police Force **prior to making any notifications** to ensure you are not jeopardising any investigation. It must be clearly communicated to children that their parents will need to be informed; however, **the timing of informing parents and the decision of who informs the parents needs to be made in consultation with Communities and/or WA Police Force.**

- If, following a referral, a family approaches the school to receive support for their child or the school in their duty of care of the child wishes to meet with the parents/carers, or has been recommended to do so by the Department of Communities, it is recommended that any meeting be conducted with a minimum of two school members present (either a Co-Principal, Continuity and Cohesion Educator and or the Governing Council Chair) to provide support.
- The school may consider support from the school psychologist or outside agencies such as the AISWA or appropriate services the child may already be utilising.

Note: It is important to remember that the focus of any meeting in this instance should be the welfare of the child.

- A Co- principal should arrange ongoing support for the reporter, the child and anyone else affected. The need for ongoing support is often necessary as the reporter will continue in

their role with the child and the Department of Communities role may continue for an extended period of time.

- It is acknowledged and understood that being in a situation that requires you to make a report can be stressful and upsetting. Remember to look after yourself and be mindful of any impacts reporting may have on your own health, wellbeing, and safety.

Depending upon the circumstances, and the directions received from the Department of Communities, the following actions may also be carried out:

Contact Crisis Care: who provide Western Australia's after-hours response to reported concerns for a child's safety and wellbeing and information and referrals for people experiencing crisis.

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Lodge a Reportable Conduct Report (if the welfare concern involves a Child Side Staff member – employed or volunteer) which is required to be completed and reported to the WA Ombudsman. This report will be investigated (in relation to the conduct of the person, not the potential criminality of an allegation) and managed at the school level (possibly in conjunction with other agencies) and in relation to school policy and procedure.

Lodge a Reportable Incident Report (if the welfare concern involves a Child Side Staff member – employed or volunteer) is also required to be lodged with the Director General of the Education Department of WA.

Issue formal warning or suspension or cessation of employment of a staff member for a breach of code of conduct. (if the welfare concern involves a Child Side Educator employed or volunteer)

Contact the Teacher Registration Board (TRBWA) (if the welfare concern involves a Child Side Educator employed or volunteer)

Manage Information within and external to the School Community.

Manage Actions as provided through feedback from the Department of Communities.

Provide support to the Reporter during and after the process as required and necessary.

Storage and Retention of Child Protection Related Documentation

The CSS *Retention of Records Policy* outlines the processes and procedures for the retention and storage of Child Protection related Documentation.

- The Co-principal (Administration) is responsible for the storage and retention of all Child Protection related documentation.
- All documentation related to Child Protection matters is maintained in a lockable cabinet in the main office building. Only the identified staff have key access to this cabinet.
- Both Co-principals and the Continuity and Cohesion Educators have key access to all Child Protection confidential information.
- The Governing Council Chair can request access to this information via a Co-principal or a Continuity and Cohesion Educator.
- **All documentation associated with Child Protection matters are considered confidential** and should not be shared, copied, or distributed unless directed by a Co-principal or a Continuity and Cohesion Educator.
- **All documentation created by a reporter** about a Child Protection matter **must be relinquished** to a Co-principal or a Continuity and Cohesion Educator for storage and retention.
- **At no time is it appropriate for ANY Child Protection related documentation to be destroyed. Relocation of Child Protection documentation should not take place without the express approval of both the Governing Council Chair and a Co-principal.**

Confidentiality and Legal Protection

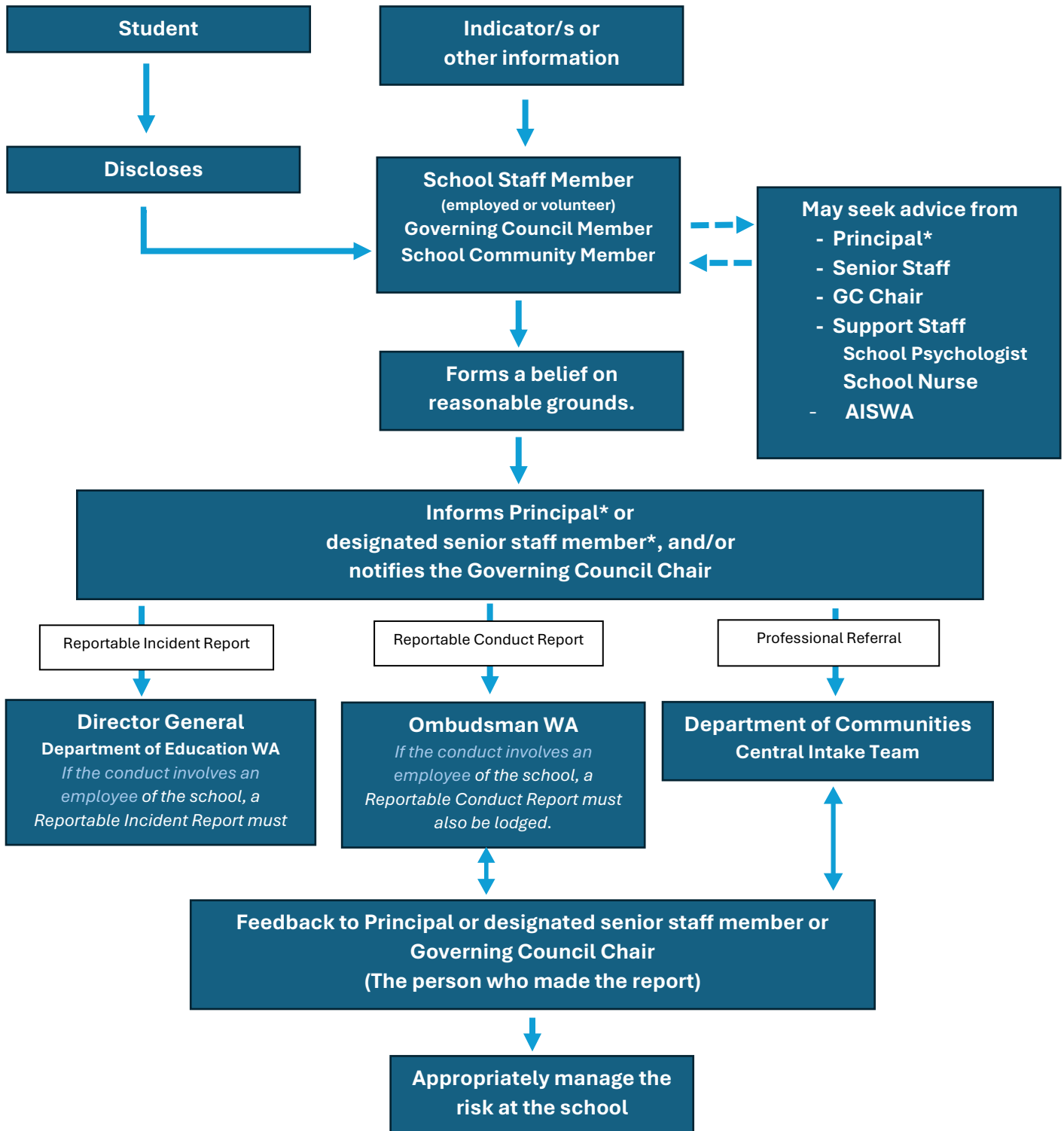
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There are exceptions where disclosure of a reporter's identity is permitted. In such cases, consideration will be given to ensuring the reporter's safety has been considered.

A mandated reporter is also protected from liability. If a report is made in good faith, they will not incur any civil or criminal liability by making a report.





Child Side Playgroup and School Notification Procedure – Non-Mandatory Reporting


- Child Abuse and/or neglect (non-mandatory report)



* Principal = Co Principal (Administration) or Co Principal (Senior Educator)
 * Designated senior staff member = Continuity and Cohesion Educators

Child Side Playgroup and School Mandatory Reporting (concerns about sexual abuse) Checklist

STEPS	ACTION	Date
	Initial concern raised/ disclosure	
	Is the child at Immediate risk? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call the WA Police • Inform the Co-Principal, designated senior school staff and or the GC Chair so they can manage the risk at school. 	
	Information gathering	
	Seeking advice	
	Form a belief	
	If you are not a designated Mandatory Reporter ...	
	Contact (in confidence), a Co-Principal, A Continuity and Cohesion Educator and or the GC Chair to lodge a <i>Mandatory Report</i> on your behalf.	
	Contact (in confidence), a Co-Principal, Continuity and Cohesion Educator and or the GC Chair if the welfare concern involves a staff member (employed or volunteer) of Child Side Playgroup and School.	
	If you are a designated Mandatory Reporter	
	Make a <i>Mandatory Report</i> to the Department of Communities THEN Inform Co-Principal, Continuity and Cohesion Educator and or the GC Chair of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mandatory Report lodgement number provided by the Department of Communities upon the receipt of the report, • The date the report was lodged, • The name of the child named in the report, • Any other relevant information, • Relinquish written records, diary, notes which support your report so that it can be maintained securely and confidentially. 	
	Contact (in confidence), a Co-Principal, Continuity and Cohesion Educator and or the GC Chair if the welfare concern involves a staff member (employed or volunteer) of Child Side Playgroup and School.	
	Co-Principal, Continuity and Cohesion Educator and or the GC Chair will manage the risk at the school level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the welfare concern involves a Child Side employee (paid or volunteer): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remove the staff member from the school site while the allegation is under investigation. - Notify the Chair of the Governing Council (if they haven't already been contacted) Convene a GC Meeting if required. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lodge a <i>Reportable Incident Report</i> with the Director General of the Department of Education WA. - Lodge a <i>Reportable Conduct Report</i> to the WA Ombudsman. - Contact the WA Police (if required) - Contact the TRBWA. - Contact AISWA. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigate the allegation - The report should be investigated (in relation to the conduct of the person, not the potential criminality of an allegation) and managed at the school level (possibly in conjunction with other agencies) and in relation to school policy and procedure. - Maintain a regular with the WA Ombudsman. - Issue a formal warning or suspension or cessation of employment of a staff member for a breach of code of conduct. (if required) 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain contact with the Department of Communities and cooperate with all requests to support the process as directed. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Child and or their family (if appropriate and with the guidance of the Department of Communities) 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meet with the family if appropriate - Seek other agency support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crisis Care School Psychologist School Nurse Domestic Violence referral agencies Kids Helpline Beyond Blue Lifeline 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Complainant (the person who made the report) 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meet with complainant regularly and if appropriate to keep communication and feedback channels open - Support with ongoing contact with the Department of Communities and assist to cooperate with all requests to support the process as directed. - Seek other agency support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Psychologist Beyond Blue Lifeline 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage communication at the School Community level and with other staff, if necessary, if required and as appropriate. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain thorough records of all actions, activity, communications, and contacts following the appropriate records management procedures and practices. 		