



Child Protection Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Our service ensures the welfare of all children at the service and recognises the obligations to defend the child's right to care and protection from abuse, violence and exploitation. Educators and Management have a responsibility to take action to protect and support children they suspect may be at significant risk of harm. All Educators will carry out the responsibilities of Mandatory Reporters as indicated under legislation. This involves following procedures outlined by Community Services Mandatory Reporting and NSW Commission of Children and Young People. All Management team and permanent Educators will receive training to obtain their full Child Protection certificate. All long-term Educators will be trained in the minimum of the child protection overview.

CONSIDERATIONS

Education & Care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard	Related Service Policies & Documentation	Other
R168-172, R84	Quality Area 7	1. NSW Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 2. NSW Family and Community Services (FACS) 3. Working with Children Check 4. NSW Government – Child Story Mandatory Reporter Guide. 5. Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 6. Ombudsman Act 1974 (with relevant Child Protection Amendments) 7. Employee Handbook (202)	

PROCEDURE

1. Mandatory Reporting

- 1.1 A Mandatory Reporter is anybody who delivers services to children as part of their paid or professional work.
- 1.2 In Out of School Hours Care, Mandatory Reporters are:
 - 1.2.1 Staff that deliver a service to children
 - 1.2.2 Management, either paid or voluntary, whose duties include direct responsibilities or direct supervision for the provision of these services.
 - 1.2.3 Staff are mandated to report to Community Services if they have current concerns about the safety or welfare for a child relating to Section 23 of NSW Children's and Young Persons Act 1998:

Section 23:

a) Child is at significant risk of harm – Neglect

a1) Basic physical or psychological needs not being met or are at risk of not being met

b) Parents/ carers unwilling or unable to provide necessary medical care

b1) Parents/ carers unwilling or unable to arrange for the child or young person to receive an education

c) Child is at significant risk of harm – Physical/Sexual abuse/III- treatment

d) Child is at significant risk of harm – Domestic violence

e) Child is at significant risk of harm – Serious Psychological harm

f) Child is at significant risk of harm – Prenatal report

- 1.3 All Permanent Educators and long-term casual staff will participate in training in relation to child protection and reporting as part of the training budget.
- 1.4 If any Mandatory Reporter forms any belief based on reasonable grounds that a child is at risk of harm, they should ensure they record the details of the report in a clear and concise format.
- 1.5 All reports are to be treated with strict confidentiality in adherence to the Centre's Confidentiality Policy and Procedure – refer to *Employee Handbook* (HNCCA 202).
- 1.6 Mandatory Reporters are to discuss concerns with the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person if they have reasonable grounds for concern for a child as he/she may have information the staff member may not be aware of. The Nominated Supervisor is to assist the Mandatory Reporter to perform the Mandatory Reporters Guidelines (MRG) Tool to determine if the report meets the threshold for 'Significant' risk of harm.

- 1.7 If directed by MRG to report to Community Services, staff should report concerns to Child Protection Helpline:
 - Mandatory Reporters phone 13 36 27
 - Non-Mandatory reporters phone 132 111
- 1.8 Ensure you have as much information as possible to give to the Helpline. This may include child's information, family information, reporter details and results from the MRG.
- 1.9 Once the report has been made and to the Community Services Helpline, no further report needs to be made unless new information comes to hand.
- 1.10 The report will be logged, filed and dated in the confidential filing folder.
- 1.11 The School Principal will be notified of any reports inclusive of suspected and significant risks.
- 1.12 At the discretion of the Centre Director, other staff may be informed of the report in order to aid monitoring of the reported situation.

2. Mandatory Reporting Guidance Tool

- 2.1 The Mandatory Reporting Guideline tool has been developed to assist Mandatory Reporters to determine if a child or young person is deemed to be at 'risk of significant harm'. The online tool Educators are to use is www.reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au
- 2.2 If new information develops concerning the child or young person run the MRG tool again.
- 2.3 If concerns do not meet the significant harm threshold, the MRG tool may guide you to 'Document and continue the relationship'. The Centre is then required to continue to support, provide services, coordinate assistance and referral for the child and their family.
- 2.4 Documentation of the MRG report should be printed and placed in the child/family file child incident file for future reference regardless of whether further action is required.

REFERRAL INFORMATION

For assistance with referral information

Family Services NSW www.familyservices.nsw.asn.au

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

In order to provide sound support and referral it may be necessary to exchange information with other professional bodies including government agencies or non-government organisations and services.

EMPLOYEE COMPLAINT

Where a complaint is made about a Educator, or someone in the service in relation to child protection.

1. Should an incident occur involving a child being put at risk of harm from an Educator, volunteer, trainee or a visitor of the centre, this is deemed as '**reportable conduct**' and such conduct requires to be reported to the NSW Ombudsman within 30 days.
2. Where the allegation is made to a staff member or Management member the stated facts are to be recorded in writing, using an Incident report that includes dates, times, names or person/s involved, name of person making the allegation and the person making the report. This report is to be strictly confidential and kept on record. The President of the Committee should be made aware of all complaints
3. If the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person is implicated, then the president of the Management Committee should take over the investigation.
4. Information and assistance for relevant forms can be found at www.nswombudsman.nsw.gov.au and at Employsure.
5. The person making the report should follow the advice of the Ombudsman's Department Officers.
6. The matter will be treated with strict confidentiality.
7. To ensure the protection of both the child and the Educator involved, the Educator should be encouraged to take special paid leave or stand down from duties that involve direct contact with the children whilst the complaint is under investigation and the situation is being resolved.
8. Support should be provided to all involved through counselling or referral to an appropriate agency.

RECRUITMENT AND ORIENTATION OF STAFF/ MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. Prior to employment all staff (including full time/part time, volunteers, casuals and students) will be subject to a Working With Children Check carried out by the NSW Commission for Children and Young People.

2. Educators will not be hired unless they have submitted a Working with Children's Check.
3. All Educators will be informed of their responsibilities as a Mandatory Reporter as part of their orientation and induction process. This will involve discussion regarding their current understanding, use of this policy and access to Child Protection training and appropriate interactions with children.
4. The Management Committee is made up of 4 office bearers, President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary and a minimum of 3 Committee members, all of whom must be members of the Association. These positions are elected at the Annual General Meeting. All Committee members must undergo a Police Check, have a Working With Children Check and complete a Declaration of Fitness and Propriety.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Child Story Reporter www.reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au

Ombudsman www.nswombudsman.nsw.gov.au

Human Services Network www.hsnet.nsw.gov.au

Child Protection Helpline 13 36 27

NSW Commission for Children and Young People www.kids.nsw.gov.au

Department of Family and Community Services www.facs.nsw.gov.au

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE

Date Approved by Director: ____ / ____ / ____

Signature of Approval by Director: _____

Date Approved by Management Committee: ____ / ____ / ____

Signature of Committee Representative: _____

Role of Committee Representative: _____

Date for Review: ____ / ____ / ____