

CHILD PROTECTION NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE

Our Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) Service is committed to providing a child safe environment where children's safety and wellbeing is supported and children feel respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. Our OSHC Service embeds the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and promotes a culture of safety and wellbeing to minimise the risk of child abuse or harm to children whilst promoting children's sense of security and belonging. We will ensure all employees and volunteers understand the meaning, importance and benefits of providing a child safe environment and critically, understand their obligations and requirements as Mandatory Reporters. Educators will continue to maintain current knowledge of child protection and mandatory reporter requirements by completing Child Protection Awareness Training annually.

Working in conjunction with the *Child Protection Policy*, this procedure has been developed to ensure all employees and volunteers understand their obligations and requirements as mandatory reporters and what to do when making a notification.

Education and Care Services National Law or Regulations (R. 84, 155,175, 176, 177 and S162(A)) NQS QA 2: Element 2.2.1 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 Health practices and procedures
Related Policy: Child Protection Policy

In an emergency or life-threatening situation, educators should contact 000 regarding urgent concerns relating to immediate danger to a child's health or safety.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURE		
1	Educators are to comprehend their obligations as mandatory reporters and their requirement to report any situation where they believe, on reasonable grounds, that a child is at risk of significant harm to the NSW Child Protection Helpline: 132 111 (available 24 hours/7 days a week).	
2	Educators are to make a report to the relevant state Department when they have current concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of a child at risk of significant harm	
3	When a decision has been made to make a report to the <i>Child Protection Helpline</i> the following information must be prepared in advance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details which identify the child such as the child's name, date of birth, address, phone number, cultural identity or Aboriginality, language barriers, disabilities • details of the parents, carers or other household members such as name, date of birth or age, address, phone numbers, cultural identity or Aboriginality, language barriers, disabilities • details of the educator and service such as name, address, phone and email details • information and details regarding the significant risk of harm 	

4	Educators will respect what a child discloses, taking it seriously and follow up on their concerns through the appropriate channels	
5	Educators do not have to prove that reportable conduct is happening or have evidence of who may be abusing the child to contemplate making a notification	
6	Educators will prepare accurate records recording exactly what happened, conversations that took place and what was observed to pass on to the relevant authorities to assist with any investigation.	
7	Educators will understand that allegations of abuse or suspected abuse against them are treated in the same way as allegations of abuse against other people	
8	It is important for educators to remain sensitive to the practices of families of culturally diverse or indigenous backgrounds; however, the child protection policy must be adhered to. The processes and procedures within the policy attempt to allow for the individual differences of families.	
9	Educators are to keep up-to-date developmental records on all children. Records are a significant part of a child or young person's time in care and contribute to their life story	
10	Educators will share and exchange information in accordance with legislation to relevant agencies. Information to be shared and exchanged should relate directly to the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children.	

ONLINE REPORTING GUIDE

1	Educators will complete online training (if applicable) to understand the child protection reporting process and use of the online reporting guide per state requirements. NSW: Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/mrg	
2	Educators will use the <i>MRG</i> if they have concerns that a child or young person is at risk of being neglected or physically, sexually or emotionally abused.	
3	Educators will complete the MRG on each occasion they have risk concerns, regardless of their level of experience or expertise. Each circumstance is different, and every child and young person is unique.	
4	Educators are to use the MRG report to determine if a report to the Child Protection Helpline or a child protection report (eReport) should be made	
5	Educators are to print out the Final Decision from the MRG and place in a confidential file	
6	Educators are to follow the recommendations of the MRG. This may include alternative supports for vulnerable children and their families.	
7	Educators will refer families to appropriate agencies where concerns of harm do not meet the threshold of significant harm.	
8	When a decision has been made to make a report to the <i>MRG</i> the following information must be prepared in advance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details which identify the child such as the child's name, date of birth, address, phone number, cultural identity or Aboriginality, language barriers, disabilities 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details of the parents, carers or other household members such as name, date of birth or age, address, phone numbers, cultural identity or Aboriginality, language barriers, disabilities • details of the educator and service such as name, address, phone and email details • information and details regarding the significant risk of harm 	
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DOCUMENTING A SUSPICION OF HARM		
If educators have concerns about the safety of a child, they will:		
1	Record their concerns in a non-judgmental and accurate manner as soon as possible	
2	Record their own observations as well as precise details of any discussion with a parent (who may for example explain a noticeable mark on a child).	
3	Not endeavour to conduct their own investigation	
4	Document as soon as possible so the details are accurate including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child’s personal details (name, address, DOB, details of siblings) • time, date and place of the suspicion • full details of the suspected abuse • date of report and signature 	

DOCUMENTING A DISCLOSURE		
When receiving a disclosure of harm, educators will:		
1	Remain calm and find a private place to talk	
2	Not promise to keep a secret or make a promise they cannot keep	
3	Tell the child/person they have done the right thing in revealing the information but that they’ll need to tell someone who can help keep the child safe	
4	Only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter because probing questions could cause distress, confusion and interfere with any later enquiries	
5	Not attempt to conduct their own investigation or mediate an outcome between the parties involved	
6	Document as soon as possible so the details are accurately captured including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time, date and place of the disclosure • ‘word for word’ what happened and what was said, including anything they (the staff member/educator) said and any actions that have been taken • date of report and signature 	
7	In addition, an educator receiving a disclosure from a child will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give the child or young person their full attention • maintain a calm appearance/response • reassure the child or young person that they’ve done the right thing by telling a trusted adult 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accept that the child or young person will disclose only what they're comfortable with and recognise the bravery/strength of the child for talking about something that is difficult • let the child or young person take his or her time • let the child or young person use his or her own words without interruption or suggestions/completing their sentences • don't make promises that can't be kept. For example, never promise that you will not tell anyone else • honestly tell the child or young person what you plan to do next • do not confront the perpetrator 	
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REVIEW OF PROCEDURE			
Date procedure created	July - December 2022	To be reviewed	2024
Approved by	Jan Flanagan	Signature	
Procedure Reviewed Date	Modifications/Changes		