

Our Lady of Hope Greenwith Campus Outside School Hours Care



POLICY DOCUMENT

CHILD PROTECTION

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BACKGROUND

It is every child's right to be safe and protected from all forms of abuse, neglect, violence or exploitation. It is the legal and moral obligation of every adult who works with children to ensure their safety and wellbeing. This duty of care is held by all those involved in the outside school hours care service including owners, sponsors, management committees, licensees, coordinators, casual and permanent child care professionals, students and volunteers.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Our Lady of Hope Greenwith Campus OSHC Service stakeholders are committed to the provision of a safe environment in which children can grow and be safe. Educators and staff have an obligation to all children attending the service and are committed to defend their right to care and protection. To support this right and to ensure children's protection, the service complies with the procedures set down under the Children's Protection Act 1993 section 11(1) and (2) when dealing with any allegations of abuse or neglect of children.

RELATIONSHIP

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	2		
103-115		Interactions with Children Policy Staffing Policy Excursion Policy Child-safe Environment Policy Confidentiality Policy Philosophy Statement	Child Protection Act 1993 OHS&W Act DECD Child Protection Policy CESA Child Protection Policy Equal Opportunity Act 1984 OLOH Child Protection Policy United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Procedures for Reporting Child Abuse

HOW THE POLICY WILL BE IMPLEMENTED.

Recognition of Abuse

Physical abuse is commonly characterised by physical injury resulting from:

- hitting, punching, kicking (marks from belt buckles, fingers)
- shaking (particularly young babies)
- burns (irons, cigarettes)
- biting
- pulling out hair or
- the administration of alcohol or other drugs.

Sexual abuse occurs when someone in a position of power to a child uses that power

It can include:

- sexual suggestion
- exhibitionism, mutual masturbation, oral sex
- showing pornographic material
- using a child in the production of pornographic material
- penile or other penetration of the genital or anal region or
- child prostitution.

Emotional abuse tends to be a chronic behavioural pattern directed at a child so that a child's self esteem and social competence are undermined or eroded over time.

It can include:

- devaluing
- ignoring
- rejecting
- corrupting
- isolating
- terrorising or
- chronic or extreme domestic violence in a child's presence.

Neglect is characterised by the failure to provide for a child's basic needs.

It may include:

- inadequate supervision of a young child for long periods of time
- failure to provide adequate nutrition, clothing or personal hygiene
- failure to provide needed or appropriate health care, or medical treatment
- disregard for potential hazards in the home
- forcing a child to leave home early or
- allowing a child to engage in chronic truancy.

Recruitment and Screening

Employees and volunteers will be screened for their suitability to work or volunteer with children and young people.

The service's induction process will be used to ensure that new child care professionals feel confident and well prepared to manage situations that have the potential to place children at risk. Responsibilities in relation to the child protection policy, the importance of supervision and appropriate responses to bullying will form an important part of the induction process.

Training and Support

Staff and volunteers will receive approved training and support which explains their child protection responsibilities and outlines how these responsibilities can be met with sensitivity and purpose. One of these responsibilities is their role as a mandated notifier under Section 11(1) and (2) of the Children's Protection Act 1993.

Conduct

Staff and volunteers are expected to relate respectfully with all members of the education or care community. Staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report and intervene against behaviours that compromise the safety or wellbeing of children and young people.

All staff and volunteers will follow approved protective practice guidelines in their physical and social interactions with children and young people.

Supervision

Staff need to be aware of the children and the environment at all times. Actively supervising children in areas they can access plays an important part in providing a safe and protective environment. Volunteers and visitors to the service should be closely monitored and not be left alone to supervise individual or groups of children.

Relationships with children

Staff will take the time to observe individual children and to actively listen to their comments about their day and the events occurring in their lives. Attention will also be paid to children's non-verbal communication, their body language, facial expressions, creative expressions and play behaviour with other children.

Responding to a child's disclosure

It is important that when a child discloses an allegation of abuse, staff are ready to listen carefully. Finding a quiet, private place to talk and allowing a child to tell their story using their own words is important. Child care professionals should avoid asking leading questions or probing for information that the child is not ready to disclose.

It is important that the child is reassured that they have a right to feel safe and have done the right thing in telling someone what has happened. Staff should let the child know that they believe them and will try to help them.

Legal responsibilities for mandated notifiers

It is an individual's personal responsibility to report suspected abuse and/or neglect. It is not the responsibility of the employer, manager or supervisor.

The notifier must form a reasonable suspicion that abuse or neglect has occurred but does not need to wait for proof.

The notification report will contain a statement of the observations, information and opinions on which your suspicion is based.

All notifiers are immune from civil and criminal liability for reporting suspicions in good faith; (section 12(a) and (b) of the Children's Protection Act 1993) and the notifier's name is protected in most cases.

Feedback about how the notification is being responded to, will be provided on a need-to-know basis and will be subject to confidentiality principles.

Mandated notifiers have a legal responsibility to make reports, it is an expectation that they will notify Families SA through the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 when there is a suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child has been abused and/or neglected.

Reasonable grounds may include:

- when observations of a particular child's behaviour and/or injuries, or knowledge of children generally leads to a suspicion that abuse is occurring;
- when a child says that he/she has been abused;
- a child says that they know of someone who has been abused (she/he may possibly referring to her/himself); or
- when someone who is in a position to provide reliable information, perhaps a relative or friend, neighbour, or sibling of the child says a child is at risk.

To make a report

- Ring the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) **13 14 78** and follow the phone prompts to the service for *Education and Care Settings* or *Yaitya Tirramangkotti* if the notification concerns an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child or young person.
- Complete the mandatory notification record form. Print out the information and provide it to the Director. Delete the mandatory notification record form from the electronic file and do **not** place it in the student file.
- Limit details in the mandatory notification record form to factual information as far as possible and be aware that this document may be produced under subpoena in court.
- When filling out the mandatory notification record form, be aware that while the name of the person making the notification will *in most cases* be protected from disclosure, other names included on the mandated notification record form as having contributed to the notification *may not* be protected from disclosure.
- Any actions recommended by Families SA must be recorded on the mandatory notification record form and reported to the Director, as the Director has the duty of care responsibility in directing further actions to support the child or young person.
- Following a notification, the Director will store the mandatory notification record form in a secure, confidential file and may wish to discuss the report with the staff member to determine further actions or support for the child or young person. The actions may include the Director contacting the child's family and/or referral to therapeutic or support services.
- Following the notification the Director will discuss the report with the Principal and/or may wish to contact ACCESS OCAR on 1300 66 77 00 for personal debriefing, support or counselling.

Notification of those involved in the Service

If staff suspect someone else involved in the service is abusing children they are obligated to report their suspicions or concerns. The matter should also be reported to the Director as part of the notification process.

Documentation

The Service will maintain well-kept records to prepare and support its ability to make a report. All documentation will remain strictly confidential.

Staff members should make a record of what they have heard, observed and done and should sign and date their notes whilst using the following principles of good record keeping:

- Be factual and record only what is relevant.
- Identify the people whose actions or views you they have recorded.
- Objective observations

Once processed the record should then be given to the Director.

RESOURCES/REFERENCES

1. Creating Child Safe Environments, August 2010 at www.dfc.sa.gov.au
2. DECD Responding to Abuse and Neglect www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/childprotection/faqMandatoryNotificationTrng/?reFlag=1
3. DECD Policy: Child Protection in Schools, Early Childhood Education and Care Services at www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ChildProtectioninSchoolsE.pdf
4. DECD Cyber Safety: Keeping Children Safe in a Connected World at www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/CyberSafetyKeepingChildre.pdf
5. Keeping Them Safe: The SA Government Child Protection Reform program at www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/default.aspx?tabid=283
6. Safety in Children's Services Factsheet, Sonja Tansey for NCAC 2006 at www.acecqu.gov.au (go to NCAC archive)
7. Child Protection Policy at www.acecqu.gov.au (go to NCAC archive)
8. Protective Practices for Staff in Their Interactions with Students (April 2009) DECD at www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ProtectivePracticesforSta.pdf
9. Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conference (2005) Creating safe environments for children—Organisations, employees and volunteers: National framework. Retrieved January 18,

(Chairperson)

(Date Reviewed)

(Principal)

(Date Reviewed)