



## Child Safety and Well-Being Policy

### **Aims**

- A. To safeguard and promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people.
- B. To maintain a Culture of Safety where recognising and reporting child safety concerns is facilitated.
- C. To prevent the opportunity for abuse of any kind to occur.
- D. To protect students from harm when involved in school activities.
- E. To protect students, by intervening, if we believe the welfare of a child is at risk outside the school.
- F. To provide training to staff to identify indicators of abuse and ensure they are adequately prepared and resourced to respond to any suspicion of abuse.

### **Scope and Application**

This policy is available on the school website.

This policy applies to:

- A. Employees
- B. Students
- C. Parents and volunteers
- D. Community members
- E. Visitors to the school.

### **Definitions**

- A. **'Child'** - a person who is under the age of 18 years. 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.
- B. **Teacher** - A Person who is registered under the teacher registration act 2012.
- C. **Visitors to the school** – Any visitors to the school who are not Community members, such as a contractor, specialist, or dignitary making a one-time or irregular visit to the school.
- D. **Corporal Punishment** - Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light; typically involving hitting the child with the hand or an implement; can also include, for example, forcing the child to

stay in an uncomfortable position. It does not include the use of reasonable physical restraint to protect the child or others from harm.

- E. Mandatory Reporter** - In Western Australia, the mandatory reporters of child sexual abuse are the following professions in both the government and non-government sectors:
1. doctors
  2. nurses
  3. midwives
  4. teachers
  5. police officers.
- F. Non-Mandatory Reporter** - Teacher assistants, school chaplains and school psychologists are examples of people who work with children in schools that **are not** mandated reporters.
- G. Grooming** - The process by which a person prepares a child, significant adults and the environment for the abuse of a child. It does not necessarily involve any sexual activity or even discussion of sexual activity. It may only involve establishing a relationship with the child, parent or carer for the purpose of facilitating sexual activity at a later time.
- H. Child Abuse and Neglect** - Maltreatment of a person under the age of 18 years. It is the result of action or inaction on the part of a person who has responsibility to care for a child resulting in harm or injury to the child. The harm may include delayed physical and/or intellectual development. The maltreatment experienced is normally described in five categories, each described below by a range of indicators. (Descriptions of these indicators below have been taken from the Department for Child Protection document “Identifying and responding to child abuse and neglect – A Guide for Professionals”.)

**1. *Physical abuse***

Physical abuse occurs when a child has experienced severe and/or persistent ill-treatment. It can include, but is not limited by injuries such as cuts, bruises, burns and fractures caused by a range of acts including beating, shaking, illicit administration of alcohol and other drugs, attempted suffocation, excessive discipline or physical punishment.

**2. *Sexual abuse***

Sexual abuse covers a wide range of behaviour or activities that expose or subject a child to sexual activity that is exploitative and/or inappropriate to his/her age and developmental level. These behaviours include observation or involvement with inappropriate fondling of a child’s body, making a child touch an adult’s genitalia, showing pornographic material or sexual acts to a child, and sexual penetration of the child. Harm from sexual abuse may include significant emotional trauma, physical injury, infections and impaired emotional and psychological development.

**3. *Emotional abuse***

Emotional abuse is a sustained, repetitive, inappropriate, ill treatment of a child or young person through behaviours including threatening, belittling, teasing, humiliating, bullying, confusing, ignoring and inappropriate encouragement. Children who have been emotionally abused are likely to have a reduced capacity to experience a range of emotions, to express emotion appropriately and to modulate their emotional experience. Children who have been emotionally abused are likely to be fearful, withdrawn and/or resentful, distressed and despairing.

#### **4. Psychological abuse**

Psychological abuse is the sustained, repetitive, inappropriate, ill treatment of a child or young person through behaviours including threatening, isolating, neglecting, discrediting, misleading, disregarding, ignoring and inappropriate encouragement. This abuse damages a child's intellectual faculties and processes, including intelligence, memory, recognition, perception, attention, imagination and moral development. Children are likely to feel worthless, flawed, unloved, unwanted, endangered or only of value in meeting another's needs.

#### **5. Neglect**

Neglect is the failure of a parent/caregiver to provide a child with the basic necessities of life. These include adequate supervision, adequate food or shelter, suitable clothing, effective medical, therapeutic or remedial care and emotional security. Neglect can be acute, chronic or episodic, and can result in detrimental effects on the child or young person's social psychological, educational or physical development and/or physical injury. Neglect should be considered in the context of physical, emotional or psychological abuse.

#### **Note:**

Child abuse and neglect, as defined by the Department for Child Protection, is maltreatment done by a person who has responsibility to care for a child and this document concentrates specifically on that relationship.

However, it is very important to note that the definitions of child maltreatment described in this policy can be used to explain some of the behaviour that can occur in schools by one child to another. While the treatment of such behaviour may be dealt with through other school policies such as Bullying Prevention and Behaviour Management, the victim of that 'bullying' may display some of the physical and behavioural indicators as those described in this document. These events will be treated seriously by the school with the aim to help both parties.

It is also important to note that the child who is 'bullying' may be doing so because they have been subjected to the same inappropriate behaviour and may require assistance through the school's Child Protection policy.

### **Principles**

- A.** The school will maintain a culture of child safety and wellbeing and will ensure that all policies, procedures, practices and strategies are underpinned by our nominated child-safe organisational framework, National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
- B.** The school explicitly forbids the use of any form of child abuse, corporal punishment or other degrading punishment as defined and provides clear guidance to all members of the school community about what forms of behaviour management are permitted.
- C.** The school responds appropriately to complaints and allegations of grooming, child abuse and breaches of the Code of Conduct in the best interests of the students and in line with the school's policies and procedures.
- D.** All members of the school community are responsible for caring for the students of the school. This includes reporting any instances of suspected abuse or neglect AND taking action if they believe any current processes of the school may allow abuse or neglect to occur.
- E.** The school regularly reviews policies and procedures regarding student safety and wellbeing, in consultation with students.

- F. Regular professional development about the law regarding mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse and the school's policies and procedures that aim to ensure student's safety and wellbeing at school and school-related activities will be completed by all staff, governing body members and regular volunteers.
- G. Staff and volunteers are adequately screened and supervised. They receive ongoing training to support their awareness of how to keep children safe. Visitors are also screened and supervised.
- H. Students will be supervised by adults deemed responsible and appropriate by the Principal during the school's hours of operation, and during official school events including excursions and camps.
- I. A protective behaviors curriculum will be delivered that is a realistic and age-appropriate program enabling students to recognise and report abuse, understand power in relationships and develop protective strategies, including seeking help.
- J. The 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.
- K. Following a complaint or allegation of grooming or child abuse, support will be provided for reporters and a plan of support will be developed for any child affected by child abuse.
- L. Suspected abuse or intention to make a report about a child will not be communicated to parent or legal guardians prior to receiving approval from CPFS or the WA police.
- M. Professional confidentiality is protected when staff provide information in the best interest of the child regarding suspicion of child abuse.
- N. Grooming behaviors and allegations of child abuse are classified as gross misconduct and staff members will be suspended immediately pending further investigation.
- O. A regular school audit of the school's physical and online environment is conducted to assist in deterring inappropriate interactions and facilitate detection of grooming and child abuse. Clear records are kept of audits and any consequent actions taken.
- P. School records pertaining to allegations, findings, or complaints of grooming and child abuse involving staff or students, past or present, will be as detailed as possible, stored securely and destroyed only after approval from the Director General. Records may also be forwarded to the Director General with her permission in accordance with the State Records Act 2000.

## **Responsibilities**

### **A. Board**

1. Ensuring this policy is updated in line with legislative changes.
2. Ensuring the protective behaviours curriculum is delivered.
3. Ensuring all staff and governing members have current grooming and mandatory reporting training.
4. Ensuring that all Board members and staff have current WWC, Police Clearance and Fit and Proper status.

5. Ensuring that the vetting of job applicants is thoroughly carried out in line with the hiring procedure by the Principal or their delegate, prior to employment commencing.
6. Ensuring that a critical incident report has been made to DES if required.

#### **B. Principal**

1. Ensuring this policy is updated in line with legislative changes.
2. Reporting on behalf of non-mandatory reporters.
3. Overseeing the development and implementation of individual support plans.
4. Ensuring support is provided for mandatory reporters.
5. Communicating with external agencies, including but not limited to CPFS and police.
6. Acting on and following through on instances of suspected abuse or neglect.
7. Protecting the identity of mandatory reporters.
8. Keeping comprehensive records of any suspected incidences of abuse.
9. Ensuring at all times that students will be supervised by adults deemed responsible and appropriate.
10. Ensuring volunteers and external providers and contractors are deemed appropriate to be in the school and all Working With Children Checks, Police Clearances, Teachers' Registration and Volunteer Declarations have been completed prior to commencement.
11. Ensuring that any volunteer or employee that has been issued an Interim Negative Notice or Negative Notice MUST NOT engage in child-related work.
12. Ensuring that any staff or volunteers with expired or withdrawn WWC cards do not engage in child related work.
13. Overseeing the implementation of a Protective Behaviours Curriculum.
14. Overseeing the currency of grooming and mandatory reporting training for all staff. New staff who have not completed mandatory reporting training will be enrolled in the first available workshop.
15. Informing DES of a critical incident if the incident occurred on school grounds and/or involved school staff.
16. Informing the Chair of the Board of any reports made to CPFS or critical incident.
17. Ensuring that all pre-employment documentation and checklists are completed.

#### **A. Administration staff**

1. Being familiar with this policy.
2. Keeping updated and accurate records.
3. Completing mandatory reporting training. New staff who have not completed mandatory reporting training will be enrolled in the first available workshop.
4. Passing on all correspondence expediently to the Principal relating to Working with Children checks, Teacher Registration.

#### **A. Teaching Staff**

1. Being familiar with this policy.
2. Observing, recording and reporting suspected abuse or neglect.
3. Completing compulsory grooming training annually and mandatory reporting training every two years. New staff who have not completed mandatory reporting training will be enrolled in the first available workshop.
4. Knowing how to respond to disclosure and with the indicators of abuse and neglect and what to do in both cases (see Child Safety and Well-Being policy – procedures and forms).
5. Being aware of any legal documents related to or restricting access to a student.
6. Delivering the protective behaviours curriculum.
7. Complying with the practices outlined in the appropriate relationships policy and staff code of conduct.
8. Complying with the supervision policy.
9. Keeping comprehensive records of any suspected incidents of abuse.

**A. Adult members of school community**

1. Inform the Principal and Teacher of any legal documents related to or restricting access to their child, and promptly inform the school of any change in circumstances.
2. Report to the Principal any concerns of suspected abuse or neglect relating to children within the school community.

## **Related Legislation**

- A. Children and Community Services Act 2004
- B. Children and Community Services Amendment (Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children) Act 2008
- C. Criminal Code Act (1913)
- D. Criminal Code Amendment (Cyber Predators) Act 2006 (changes to s204B of The Criminal Code)
- E. Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004
- F. The *Criminal Code Amendment (Cyber Predators) Act 2006* is the legislation in Western Australia that protects children under the age of 16, or that the offender believes is under the age of 16, from an adult who uses electronic communications with the intent to procure the child to engage in sexual activity; or to expose the child to any indecent matter.

## **Related Kerry Street Documentation**

- A. Procedures including:
  1. WA Department of Child Protection and Family Support – How do I recognise when a child is at risk of abuse?
  2. Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect (Appendix 1, Child Protection, Department of Education Regulatory Framework System).

3. Response to Disclosures of Abuse and Neglect (Appendix 4, Child Protection, Department of Education Regulatory Framework System).
  4. Child Protection Notification Steps (Mandatory Reporting) AISWA website.
  5. Child Protection Notification Steps (Non-Mandatory Reporting) AISWA website.
  6. Facts Sheets 9 pages (Dept. Child Protection).
  7. Mandatory Report – Sexual Abuse Form.
- B. Policies including:**
1. Duty of Care Policy.
  2. Employment and Dismissal of Staff Policy.
  3. Volunteers Policy.
  4. Concerns and Complaints Policy.
  5. Bullying Prevention Policy.
  6. Behaviour Guidance Policy.
  7. Excursions and Camp Policy.
  8. Staff Code of Conduct.
- C. Student Code of Conduct**
- D. Student Records;** to ensure the school has knowledge of any court orders restricting access to students.

## References

- A. National Safe Schools Framework, Department of Education, Science and Training
- B. National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- C. [How do I recognise when a child is at risk of abuse?](#) (WA Department of Child Protection and Family Support)
- D. [AISWA child-protection1\\_0-2.doc](#)
- E. [Working with Children Check Guidance Notes](#) and Fact Sheets
  1. [Information for employers and volunteer organisations](#)
  2. [Information for self-employed people](#)

## Contact Person

Enquires relating to this policy should be directed to the School Principal or Chair of the School Board.

## Breaches of this Policy

Any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of contract.

## Authorisation and Review

- A. This policy has been read, discussed and endorsed by the staff on 17 November 2004.
- B. This policy was authorised by the Kerry Street Community School Council on 25 November 2004.
- C. Policy reviewed by meeting of staff and council on 13 January 2006.
- D. This policy was reviewed in October 2009. Mandatory Documents added to paper copy.
- E. This policy was reviewed in February 2012. Mandatory Documents added to electronic copy.
- F. Updated including Appendix material August 2012.
- G. This policy was reviewed September 2012.
- H. This policy was reviewed August 2016.
- I. Reviewed June 2018.
- J. To be reviewed S1 2022

## Revision History

Date	Revision	Detail
June 2018	V.2	Separation of policy and procedures. Minor formatting/editing.
April 2019	V.3	Update of training requirements. Change of policy title to <i>Child Safety and Wel-Being</i> .
September 2020	V.4	Policy edit to include 2020 Registration Standard requirements