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STATEMENT

Kogarah Community Services (KCS) is committed to promoting and protecting the best interests of children involved in all our programs. All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse.

KCS has zero tolerance for child abuse. All staff employed at KCS are responsible for the care and protection of children accessing our services, attending our programs and for reporting information about suspected child abuse.

Child protection is a shared responsibility among KCS management, employees, contractors, volunteers and students on placement. KCS will consider the opinions of children and use these opinions to inform our child protection practices.

Our Service embeds the *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations* and promotes a culture of safety and wellbeing to minimise the risk of child abuse and/or harm to children whilst promoting children's sense of security and belonging.

KCS supports and respects all children, staff, contractors, students on placement and volunteers. KCS is committed to providing a culturally safe and inclusive environment to indigenous children, those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children living with a disability.

KCS believes that:

- Children are capable of the same range of emotions as adults
- Children's emotions are real and need to be accepted by adults
- A reaction given to a child from an adult in a child's early stages of emotional development can be positive or detrimental depending on the adult's behaviour
- Children who enhance their understanding of their body's response to a situation are more able to predict the outcome and ask for help or evade a negative situation.

PURPOSE

KCS is committed to identifying possible risk and significant risk of harm to children and young people at our Services. We understand our duty of care to protect children from all types of abuse and adhere to our legislative obligations at all times.

We aim to implement effective strategies to assist in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children. The KCS team will act in the best interest of each child, assisting them to develop to their full potential in a secure and child safe environment.

SCOPE

This policy applies to KCS Board, KCS management, KCS staff, KCS students on placement, KCS volunteers, visitors (including contractors), children, families and the community.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse is any action towards a child or young person that harms or puts at risk their physical, psychological, or emotional health and development. Child abuse can be a single incident or it can be a number of different incidents that take place over time.

NSW Department of Communities and Justice identify different forms of child abuse which includes- neglect, sexual, physical and emotional abuse or psychological harm. https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/families/Protecting-kids/reporting-child-at-risk/harm-and-neglect?merge_chapters=true

INDICATORS OF ABUSE

There are common physical and behavioural signs that may indicate abuse or neglect. The presence of one of these signs does not necessarily mean abuse or neglect. Behavioural or physical signs, which assist in recognising harm to children, are known as indicators. The following is a guide only. One indicator on its own may not imply abuse or neglect. However, a single indicator can be as important as the presence of several indicators. Each indicator needs to be deliberated in the perspective of other indicators and the child's circumstances. A child's behaviour is likely to be affected if they are under stress. There can be many causes of stress and it is important to find out specifically what is causing the stress. Abuse and neglect can be a single incident or ongoing incidents and may be intentional or unintentional.

General indicators of abuse and neglect may include:

- marked delay between injury and seeking medical assistance
- history of injury
- the child gives some indication that the injury did not occur as stated
- the child tells you someone has hurt them
- the child tells you about someone they know who has been hurt
- someone (relative, friend, acquaintance, and/or sibling) tells you that the child may have been abused.

Neglect

Child neglect is the continuous failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child with the basic requirements needed for their growth and development, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical and dental care, and adequate supervision. Some examples are:

- inability to respond emotionally to the child
- child abandonment
- unable or unwilling to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, medical attention and/or safe home conditions
- depriving or withholding physical contact
- failure to provide psychological nurturing
- treating one child differently to the others

Indicators of Neglect in children:

- low weight for age and failure to thrive or develop
- child not adequately supervised for their age
- poor standard of hygiene leading to social isolation
- scavenging or stealing food
- extreme longing for adult affection
- lacking a sense of genuine interaction with others
- acute separation anxiety
- self-comforting behaviours, e.g., rocking, sucking
- delay in development milestones
- untreated physical problems, such as sores, serious nappy rash and urine scalds, dental decay

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is when someone involves a child in a sexual activity by using their authority over them or takes advantage of their trust. Children are often bribed or threatened physically and psychologically to make them participate in the activity. Sexual abuse includes:

- exposing the child to the sexual behaviours of others
- coercing the child to engage in sexual behaviour with other children or adults
- verbal threats of sexual abuse
- exposing the child to pornography or prostitution or using a child for pornographic purposes
- previous conviction or suspicion of child sexual abuse

Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- bruising or bleeding in the genital area
- bruising to buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs
- injuries such as tears to the genitalia
- the child describes sexual acts
- direct or indirect disclosures
- age-inappropriate behaviour and/or persistent sexual behaviour
- self-destructive behaviour- self-mutilation
- regression in developmental achievements
- child being in contact with a suspected or known perpetrator of sexual assault

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is when a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, non-accidental trauma or injury, caused by a parent, caregiver or other person. Educators will be particularly aware of and looking for possible physical abuse if parents or caregivers:

- make direct admissions about fear of hurting their children
- have a family history of violence
- have a history of their own maltreatment as a child
- make repeated visits for medical assistance
- use excessive discipline

Indicators of Physical Abuse

- facial, head and neck bruising
- lacerations and welts
- drowsiness, vomiting, fits or pooling of blood in the eyes that may suggest head injury
- explanations are not consistent with injury
- bruising or marks that may show the shape of an object
- adult bite marks or scratches
- multiple injuries or bruises
- ingestion of poisonous substances, alcohol or drugs
- sprains, twists, dislocations
- bone fractures
- burns and scalds
- general indicators of female genital mutilation, such as having a 'special operation'.

Emotional or Psychological Abuse

Psychological harm occurs where the behaviour of the parent or caregiver damages the confidence and self-esteem of the child, resulting in serious emotional deficiency or trauma. In general, it is the frequency and duration of this behaviour that causes harm. Some examples are:

- constant or excessive criticism, condescending, teasing of a child or ignoring or withholding admiration and affection
- excessive or unreasonable demands

- persistent hostility, severe verbal abuse, and rejection
- belief that a specific child is bad or 'evil'
- using inappropriate physical or social isolation as punishment
- exposure to domestic violence
- intimidating or threatening behaviour.

Indicators of emotional or psychological abuse

- feeling of worthlessness about themselves and life
- inability to value others
- lack of trust in people and expectations
- lack of 'people skills' necessary for daily functioning
- extreme attention seeking behaviours
- extremely eager to please or obey adults
- may take extreme risks, is markedly disruptive, bullying, or aggressive
- other behavioural disorders (disruptiveness, aggressiveness, bullying)
- suicidal threats (in young people)
- running away from home.

Carer Concern/Domestic Violence

Domestic violence, or intimate partner violence, is a violation of human rights. It involves violent, abusive or intimidating behaviour carried out by an adult against a partner or former partner to control and dominate that person.

Domestic violence causes fear, physical, and/or psychological harm. It is most often violent, abusive, or intimidating behaviour by a man against a woman, but can also be these behaviours by a woman against a man. Living with domestic violence has a profound affect upon children and young people and therefore constitutes a form of child abuse. (The NSW Domestic and Family Violence Action Plan, June 2010).

Indicators of domestic violence

The child may:

- demonstrate aggressive behaviour
- develop phobias & insomnia
- experience anxiety
- show signs of depression
- have diminished self esteem
- demonstrate poor academic performance and problem-solving skills
- have reduced social skills including low levels of empathy
- show emotional distress
- have physical complaints

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

People working or volunteering with children in New South Wales must, by law, have a Working with Children Check (WWCC). The Office of the Children's Guardian provides checks of workers and volunteers to organisations, contributing to creating safe environments for children and other vulnerable people.

A WWCC is an assessment of whether a person poses an unacceptable risk to children. As part of the process, the Office of the Children's Guardian will look at criminal history, child protection information and other information.

WWCC's are valid for five years. Cleared applicants are subject to ongoing monitoring and relevant new records may lead to the clearance being revoked. If new information about a person means they pose a risk to children's safety, that

person's check will be re-assessed and, if necessary, they will be prohibited from working with children. The Office of the Children's Guardian will inform both the person affected and any organisations they're linked to about the change in status.

KCS is registered with the Office of the Children's Guardian to verify employees and volunteers WWCC. WWCC must be verified BEFORE the employee or volunteer begins working with children.

DEFINITIONS

Mandatory reporting is the legislative requirement for selected classes of people to report suspected child abuse and neglect to government authorities. In NSW, mandatory reporting is regulated by the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (The Care Act).

Mandatory reporters are people who deliver the following services, wholly or partly, to children as part of their paid or professional work:

- Health care (e.g., registered medical practitioners, specialists, general practice nurses, midwives, occupational therapists, speech therapists, psychologists, dentists and other allied health professionals working in sole practice or in public or private health practices)
- Welfare (e.g., psychologists, social workers, caseworkers and youth workers)
- Education (e.g., teachers, counsellors, principals)
- Children's services (e.g., childcare workers, family day carers and home-based carers)
- Residential services (e.g., refuge workers)
- Law enforcement (e.g., police)
- Disability services- disability support workers and personal care workers
- Registered psychologists providing a professional service as a psychologist
- A person in religious ministry or a person providing religious-based activities to children

All KCS staff have a responsibility to recognise and respond to concerns for safety, welfare and the wellbeing of children and young people, and to report these concerns to management.

According to the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 mandated reporters (including people employed in children's services and unpaid managers of these services) must make reports if they suspect on reasonable grounds a child is at risk of significant harm. Mandatory reporters must make a report to the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) for any of the reasons below:

- the child's basic physical or psychological needs are not being met or are at risk of not being met
- the parents or other caregivers have not arranged and are unable or unwilling to arrange for the child to receive necessary medical care
- the parents or other caregivers have not arranged and are unable or unwilling to arrange for a school age child to receive an education (in accordance with the Education Act 1990)
- the child has been, or is at risk of being physically or sexually abused or ill-treated
- the child is living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence and they are at risk of serious physical or psychological harm
- the parent's or other caregiver's behaviour means the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering serious psychological harm.

Source: Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection Act) NO 157 Chapter 3 > Part 2 > Section 23 & Communities & Justice Mandatory reporters: How to make a child protection report

Maltreatment refers to non-accidental behaviour towards another person, which is outside the norms of conduct and entails a substantial risk of causing physical or emotional harm. Behaviours may be intentional or unintentional and include acts of omission and commission. Specifically abuse refers to acts of commission and neglect an act of

omission. Note that in practice, the terms child abuse and child neglect are used more frequently than the term child maltreatment.

Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) refers to circumstances causing concern for the safety, welfare and wellbeing a child or young person present to a significant extent. This means it is sufficiently serious to warrant a response by a statutory authority irrespective of the family's consent. Mandatory reporters should report their concern to the Child Protection Helpline within 24 hours.

What is significant, is not minor or trivial and may reasonably be expected to produce a substantial and demonstrably adverse impact on the child's or young person's safety, welfare, or wellbeing. In the case of an unborn child, what is significant is not minor or trivial and may reasonably be expected to produce a substantial and demonstrably adverse impact on the child.

Immediate Risk of Significant Harm (IROSH) is a term used in the Mandatory Report Guide to tell reporters that they must report immediately to DCJ.

Reasonable Grounds refers to the need to have an objective basis for suspecting that a child may be at risk of abuse and neglect based on:

- Firsthand observations of the child or family
- What the child, parent or other person has disclosed
- What can reasonably be indirect based on observation, professional training and/ or experience

CHILDESTORY REPORTER COMMUNITY (MRG)

If a child is at [immediate risk](#) and police or medical assistance is required, staff must contact emergency services immediately on 000.

Mandatory reporters in NSW should use the Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) if they have concerns that a child or young person is at risk of being neglected and/or physically, sexually or emotionally abused. The MRG assists in providing mandatory reporters with the most appropriate reporting decision.

Where a child may not be at immediate risk, staff, volunteers and students on placement are directed to speak immediately to their direct supervisor or management to discuss the matter immediately.

The MRG supports mandatory reporters to:

- determine whether a report to the Child Protection Helpline is needed for concerns about possible abuse or neglect of a child (including unborn) or young person
- identify alternative ways to support vulnerable children, young people and their families where a mandatory reporter's response is better served outside the statutory child protection system

It is recommended that mandatory reporters 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.

The MRG provides eight different decision trees to assist reporters to match the concerns identified. The decision trees include:

- 1) Physical abuse
- 2) Neglect, incorporates:
 - a) Supervision
 - b) Shelter/environment
 - c) Food
 - d) Hygiene/clothing
 - e) Medical care
 - f) Mental health care

- g) Education – not enrolled / habitual absence
- 3) Sexual abuse, incorporates:
 - a) Abuse of a child
 - b) Abuse of a young person
 - c) Problematic sexual behaviour toward others
- 4) Psychological harm
- 5) Danger to self or others
- 6) Relinquishing care
- 7) Carer concern, incorporates:
 - a) Substance abuse
 - b) Mental health
 - c) Domestic violence
- 8) Unborn child

<https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/mrg>

Mandatory reporters will be provided with an outcome that advises on the best course of action. A Decision Report can be generated and kept on record at the service. Depending upon the outcome, reporters can submit a child protection report (eReport) directly through the ChildStory Reporter Community website or contact the Child Protection Helpline immediately on 132 111.

IMPLEMENTATION

Kogarah Community Services strongly opposes any type of abuse against a child and endorses high quality practices in relation to protecting children. Educators have an important role to play to support children and young people and to identify concerns that may jeopardise their safety, welfare, or wellbeing. To ensure best practice, all permanently employed educators will attend approved Child Protection training certified by a registered training organisation. These educators will continue to maintain current knowledge of child protection and Mandatory Reporter requirements by completing Child Protection Awareness Training annually.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Management will:

- Children's Services Responsible Person in day-to-day charge of the OSHC Service has successfully completed a course in child protection approved by the Regulatory Authority
- Working with Children Checks (WWCC) for all staff and volunteers are validated and recorded
- All employees, volunteers and students on placement are:
 - provided with a copy of the current Child Protection and Child Safe Environment Policies as part of the induction process at the Service
 - aware of their mandatory reporting obligations and responsibilities to report suspected risk or significant risk of harm to the NSW Child Protection Helpline on 132 111
 - aware of indicators showing a child may be at risk of harm or significant risk of harm.
- registration for the Service is completed for eReporting through the ChildStory Reporting Community
- training and development is provided for all educators, community engagement and other identified staff, and volunteers in child protection on an annual basis
- staff are provided with a reporting procedure and professional standards to safeguard children and protect the integrity of all staff and volunteers
- Staff are provided with training and ongoing supervision to ensure they understand that child safety is everyone's responsibility, and they adhere to the Child Safe Standards
- access is provided to all staff regarding relevant legislations, regulations, standards and other resources to help educators, staff, and volunteers meet their obligations
- records of abuse or suspected abuse are kept in line with our Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

- to notify the regulatory authority through the NQA-ITS (within 7 days) of any incident where it is reasonably believed that physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring while the child is being educated and cared for by the Service
- to notify the regulatory authority through the NQA-ITS (within 7 days) of any allegation that sexual or physical abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring while the child is being educated and cared for by the Service
- to comply with legislation for Reportable Conduct Scheme and ensure the Office of the Children's Guardian is notified within 7 business days of becoming aware of any allegations and/or convictions of abuse or neglect of a child made against an employee or volunteer and ensure they are investigated, and appropriate action taken. 7-day notification form

All KCS staff will:

- contact the police on 000 if there is an immediate danger to a child and intervene if it is safe to do so
- be able to recognise indicators of abuse
- respect what a child discloses, taking it seriously and following up on their concerns through the appropriate channels
- 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 Child Protection Helpline on 132 111
- have completed online training to understand the child protection reporting process and use of the Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) <https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/mrg>
- complete the MRG on each occasion they have concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing
- follow the advice provided by the MRG outcome and submit an eReport through ChildStory Reporter website if required
- refer families to appropriate agencies where concerns of harm do not meet the threshold of significant harm. These services may be located through CWU (Child Wellbeing Units) or/and FRS (Family Referral Services) <https://www.familyconnectsupport.dcj.nsw.gov.au/> Family consent will be sought before making referrals.
- promote the welfare, safety, and wellbeing of children at the Service
- allow children to be part of decision-making processes where appropriate
- 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
- understand that allegations of abuse or suspected abuse against them are treated in the same way as allegations of abuse against other people
- NOT investigate suspicion of abuse or neglect but collect only enough information to substantiate concerns and pass on to the Child Protection Helpline or appropriate authority.

DOCUMENTING A SUSPICION OF HARM

If KCS Staff, volunteers or students on placement have concerns about the safety of a child, they will:

- seek immediate guidance from their direct supervisor, or the next most senior staff member to discuss their concerns and be guided on next steps where appropriate
- record their concerns in a non-judgmental and accurate manner as soon as possible
- 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)
- not endeavour to conduct their own investigation
- document as soon as possible so the details are accurate including:
 - 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 DISCLOSURE

A disclosure of harm emerges when someone, including a child, tells you about harm that has happened or is likely to happen. When a child discloses that he or she has been abused, it is an opportunity for an adult to provide immediate support and comfort and to assist in protecting the child from the abuse. It is also a chance to help the child connect to professional services that can keep them safe, provide support and facilitate their recovery from trauma. Disclosure is about seeking support and your response can have a great impact on the child or young person's ability to seek further help and recover from the trauma.

When receiving a disclosure of harm, the staff member will:

- remain calm and find a private place to talk
- not promise to keep a secret
- tell the child/person they have done the right thing in revealing the information but that the staff member will need to tell someone who can help keep the child safe
- 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
- not attempt to conduct their own investigation or mediate an outcome between the parties involved.
- Speak to their direct supervisor or the next most senior staff member immediately to discuss the matter and be guided on next steps where appropriate
- document as soon as possible so the details are accurately captured including:
 - 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.

In addition, staff receiving a disclosure from a child will:

- give the child or young person their full attention
- maintain a calm appearance
- reassure the child or young person it is right to tell
- accept the child or young person will disclose only what is comfortable 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
- not 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
- not confront the perpetrator.

When receiving a disclosure of harm, the Volunteer or Student will:

- remain calm
- not promise to keep a secret
- tell the child/person they have done the right thing in revealing the information but that the Volunteer or Student will need to tell another staff member so they can help keep the child safe
- not attempt to conduct their own investigation or mediate an outcome between the parties involved.
- Speak to their direct supervisor or the following senior staff member immediately to discuss the matter and be guided on next steps where appropriate
- document as soon as possible so the details are accurately captured including:
 - 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.

CONFIDENTIALITY

It is important that any notification remains confidential, as it is vitally important to remember that no confirmation of any allegation can be made until the matter is investigated. The individual who makes the notification should not inform the suspected perpetrator (if known). This ensures the matter can be investigated without contamination of evidence or pre-rehearsed statements. It also minimises the risk of retaliation on the child for disclosing.

Protection for reporters

All reporters are protected against retribution for making or proposing to make a report under amendments to the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 effective 1 March 2020. The identity of the reporter is protected by law from being disclosed, except in certain exceptional circumstances. Provided the report is made in good faith:

- The report will not breach standards of professional conduct
- The report cannot lead to defamation and civil and criminal liability
- The report is not admissible in any proceedings as evidence against the person who made the report
- A person cannot be compelled by a court to provide the report or disclose its contents
- The identity of the person making the report is protected.

A report is also an exempt document under the Freedom of Information Act 1989.

Sharing of Information

Chapter 16A of the [NSW Children and Young Person \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998](#) provides for the exchange of information and cooperation between prescribed bodies, if the information relates to the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person.

Sharing personal information about children and their families must be lawful, which means either gaining consent, or working within relevant legislation. Information sharing by consent, where possible, is important to meaningful work with families to facilitate change. Consent may be obtained verbally or in writing; however, you should not seek consent if doing so might compromise the safety of a child or any other person.

Information can only be shared between prescribed bodies. Prescribed bodies or organisations include:

- NSW Police
- public service agencies or public authorities
- private and public schools, and TAFE establishments
- health care providers
- OOHG providers
- organisations that have direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services or law enforcement, wholly or partly to children or their parent/s.

To provide or request information it must relate to the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a particular child or class of children. The information must be for the purposes of assisting a prescribed body to:

- make any decision, assessment or plan or to initiate or conduct any investigation, or to provide any service, relating to the safety and welfare of the child or class of children, or
- manage any risk to the child or class of children that might arise in the prescribed body's capacity as an employer or designated agency. NSW Health has developed templates and resources [Fact Sheets](#) regarding sharing of information relating to Child Protection with other professionals.

BREACH OF CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

All staff working at KCS have a duty of care to support and protect children. A duty of care is breached if a person:

- does something that a reasonable person in that person's position would not do in a particular situation
- fails to do something that a reasonable person in that person's position would do in the circumstances or
- acts or fails to act in a way that causes harm to someone the person owes a duty of care

Managing a Breach in Child Protection

Management will investigate the breaches in a fair, unbiased and supportive manner by:

- discussing the breach with all people concerned and advising all parties of the process
- giving the educator/staff member the opportunity to provide their version of events
- documenting the details of the breach, including the versions of all parties
- recording the outcome clearly and without bias
- ensuring the matters in relation to the breach are kept confidential
- reach a decision based on discussion and consideration of all evidence.

Outcome of a Breach in Child Protection Policy

Depending on the nature of the breach outcomes may include:

- emphasising the relevant element of the child protection policy and procedure
- providing closer supervision
- further education and training
- providing mediation between those involved in the incident (where appropriate)
- disciplinary procedures if required
- reviewing current policies and procedures and developing new policies and procedures if necessary

REPORTABLE CONDUCT SCHEME-ALLEGATIONS AGAINST EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS OR STUDENTS (OR CONTRACTORS)

KCS has the legislative obligation under the Reportable Conduct Scheme to notify the Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) of reportable allegations and convictions against their employees (including volunteers and contractors), investigate the allegation and advise the Office of the outcome.

All staff members have an obligation to report relevant allegations of a child protection nature as part of the Reportable Conduct Scheme to KCS or OCG. This reportable conduct may have occurred either within work hours or outside work hours. A child is anyone under the age of 18 at the time of the alleged conduct occurred.

In addition, KCS must take appropriate action to prevent reportable conduct by employees. The Children's Guardian Act 2019, effective 1 March 2020, defines the head of an organisation as a 'relevant entity'. An approved education and care service is listed at Schedule 1 of the Act as an 'entity'.

KCS must notify the Children's Guardian within seven (7) business days and conduct an investigation into the allegations. 7-day notification form Reportable Conduct Directorate: (02) 8219 3800. (Monday – Friday). A final report of the investigation must be ready to submit within 30 calendar days or provide information about the progress of the investigation to the Children's Guardian. 30 Day interim report form

KCS must send a report to the Office of the Children's Guardian that enables the Office of the Children's Guardian to determine whether the investigation was completed satisfactorily and whether appropriate action was or can be taken. KCS must ensure an appropriate

level of confidentiality of information relating to the reportable allegations as per the Act or other legislation. The heads of relevant entities have obligations under section 57 of the Act to disclose 'relevant information' to the following persons unless they are satisfied that the disclosure is not in the public interest:

- a child to whom the information relates
- a parent of the child
- if the child is in out-of-home care- an authorised carer that provides out-of-home care to the child.

[See: [Office of the Children's Guardian](#) for further information.]

The Children's Guardian will monitor the entity's response and may conduct their own investigation. The Children's Guardian Act 2019 defines reportable conduct as:

- a sexual offence has been committed against, with or in the presence of a child
- sexual misconduct with, towards or in the presence of a child
- ill-treatment of a child
- neglect of a child
- an assault against a child
- an offence under s43B (failure to protect) or s 316A (failure to report) of the Crimes Act 1900; and
- behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to the child

Pending Investigation

For the protection of both the children and the staff member (including volunteers and students on placement) involved, the individual being investigated will be removed from duties involving direct care and contact with the children and/or the family where appropriate, until the matter has been investigated. The individual is afforded natural justice and procedural fairness in the investigation process. Support will be provided to all involved, including referral to an appropriate agency or the Employment Assistance Program. KCS's existing EAP provider is Acacia EAP:

<https://www.eapcounselling.com.au/eap-program/>

EDUCATING CHILDREN ABOUT PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOUR

Our Children's Services and Community Engagement programs will educate children

- about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, and what is appropriate and inappropriate contact at an age-appropriate level and understanding
- about their right to feel safe at all times
- to say 'no' to anything that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable
- about how to use their own knowledge and understanding to feel safe
- to identify feelings that they do not feel safe
- the difference between 'good' and 'bad' secrets
- that there is no secret or story that cannot be shared with someone they trust
- that educators are available for them if they have any concerns
- to tell educators of any suspicious activities or people
- to recognise and express their feelings verbally and non-verbally
- that they can choose to change the way they are feeling.

RESOURCES FOR INDICATORS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Childcare Centre Desktop- NSW Child Protection MRG Support Guide

Child Safe Organisations <https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au>

NAPCAN- Prevent Child Abuse & Neglect <https://www.napcan.org.au/napcan-brochures/>

NSW Department of Education Child Protection- Responding to harm <https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/child-protection/child-protection-policy-guidelines/resources>

NSW Government Communities & Justice [ChildStory](#)
[ChildStory Reporter Community](#)
[Office of the Children's Guardian](#)
 Office of the Children's Guardian [Child Safe Standards training and resources](#)
[Child Protection Reporting: Overview of legislative amendments \(NSW\) 2020](#)

COMPLIANCE

Children's Services – National Quality Standard

National Quality Standard (NQS)		
Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety		
2.2	Safety	Each child is respected
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.
2.2.3	Child Protection	Management, Educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

Education and Care Services National Regulations	
84	Awareness of child protection law
155	Interactions with children
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
175	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority
176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
S162 (A)	Persons in day-to-day charge and nominated supervisors to have child protection training

SOURCE

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014)
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- Australian Government Australian Institute of Family Studies. (2005). [National comparison of child protection systems](#)
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- Australian Government: Australian Institute of Family Studies. (2020). [Mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect](#)
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- ChildStory Reporter: <https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/>
- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).
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- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).
- Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (amended 2020).
- NSW Government Communities & Justice. (2019). [Mandatory reporters: What to report and when](#)
- NSW Government Communities & Justice. Child Protection Reporting: [Overview of legislative amendments](#)
- NSW Government Communities & Justice. [Information sharing for service coordination](#)
- NSW Government. Department of Health and Aged Care. Child Protection and Wellbeing. [Information exchange for safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people](#)
- NSW Government Legislation [Children's Guardian Act 2019](#)
- NSW Government Legislation [The Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998](#)
- NSW [Office of the Children's Guardian](#)
- Ombudsman Act 2001.
- Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

RECORD OF REVISIONS

Unless the Policy specifically states otherwise, the Policy does not form part of your employment agreement with KCS. KCS may unilaterally vary, remove or replace this Policy at any time. To the extent that this Policy imposes any obligations on KCS and/or purports to provide any right or benefit to you, those obligations are not contractual and do not give rise to any contractual rights. The Employee is required to be familiar with the content of the Policy and comply with the terms at all times.

File Reference	KCSP028 – Child Protection				
Date Created	16/8/2022	Created By	Jordan Ross	Responsible	Children's Services Manager

Version Number	Modified or Reviewed by	Modifications Made/Notes	Date	STATUS (Internal, External, Archived)
1	Oonagh	New policy	August 2014	External
2	Oonagh	Notification of Insurance Company	Nov 2015	External
3	Louise	Update on OSHC procedures	Dec 2015	External
4	Tury	Update according to changes to government name	Jul 2017	External
5	Tury	Review with reference to the policy template of Childcare Desktop and Our Community's Child Safety Toolkit. Separation of Policy and Procedures.	May 2020	External
6	Tury	Modifications to comply with NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme and changes to legislation – <i>Children's Guardian Act 2019</i> .	November 2020	External
7	Marisa	Content review	19/1/2021	External
8	Jordan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy maintenance • revision of some areas within definitions to correspond to Communities & Justice glossary • minor formatting edits within text • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required • Made into whole of KCS document. Originally CSP012 from Childcare Desktop version. 	August 2022	External
9	Board	Ratified by the Board at August meeting	29/8/22	External