

SINGLETON HEIGHTS PRE-SCHOOL INC.



CHILD SAFE POLICY

GOAL: Our service is committed to providing an environment that ensures children receive the care and protection necessary to ensure their safety, welfare and wellbeing, upholding the rights of all children irrespective of cultural background, gender or disability. All Staff, Educators, volunteers and visitors of our service, are committed to building and maintaining a child safe environment which is inclusive, transparent, promotes child participation, and ensures interactions and engagement with children are appropriate and safe. This is achieved through listening to and empowering children, having zero tolerance of abuse and following documented systems to take allegations seriously and respond appropriately.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION / LINKS:

ACT: Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) 2010 Act: Section 165-167, Child Protection (Working with Children) and Other Child Protection Legislation Amendment Act 2016, Child protection (Working with Children) Act 2012, Child protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013, Children's Guardian Act 2019, The Freedom of Information Act 1989, Child and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act, 1998, Criminal Code Act 1995, Crimes Legislation Amendment (Sexual Offences Against Children) Act 2010, Fair Work Act 2009, Privacy Act 1998, Work Health and Safety Act 2011, Adoption Act 2000, Crimes Act 1900 (Grooming and Child Abuse Material), Teacher Accreditation Act 2004

REGULATIONS: Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 73, 84, 84-A, B,C, 97-101, 109, 112, 115, 117A, 122, 123, 149B, C, 155, 156, 168, 170, 171

Child protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013, Child and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012, NSW Child Safe Scheme, Child Safety (NQF Child Safe Culture Guide) 2025

NQS: 2.1, 2.3, 5.1, 5.2, 6.7, 7.3

POLICY:

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Introduction

The Child Safe Standards recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses into Child Sexual Abuse, provide a framework so organisations can create and adopt a culture, policies, procedures and strategies, to keep children safe from harm.

The Child Safe Standards:

- help drive cultural change in organisations.
- are principle-based and outcome-focused.
- are flexible enough that they can be adapted by organisations of varying sizes and characteristics.
- avoid placing undue burden on organisations.
- help organisations address multiple risks.
- balance caution and caring.
- are a benchmark against which organisations can assess their child safe capability and set performance targets.
- are of equal importance and are interrelated.

A child safe culture is supported by a set of values and practices that guide the attitudes and behaviour of all staff while good leaders champion these values and embed them in organisational governance. The following values are at the heart of any approach that prioritises children's safety:

- The best interests of children and their protection from harm is paramount.
- Child abuse is not tolerated and will not occur.
- Children's rights are understood and respected.
- Concerns about child safety raised by children and their parents and carers are acted on.
- Reporting abuse is not obstructed or prevented.

Definition of a Child Safe Organisation

Child safe organisations create cultures, adopt strategies and act to prevent harm to children, including sexual abuse. The Australian and New Zealand Children's Commissioners and Guardians define a child safe organisation as one that systematically:

- creates conditions to reduce the likelihood of children being harmed.
- creates conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying and reporting harm.

- responds appropriately to disclosures, allegations and suspicions of harm.

Standard 1: Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

- The organisation publicly commits to child safety and leaders champion a child safe culture.
- Child safety is a shared responsibility at all levels of the organisation.
- Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children.
- Staff and volunteers comply with a code of conduct that sets clear behavioural standards towards children.
- Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and record keeping.

Standard 2: Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

- Children are able to express their views and are provided opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their lives.
- The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, helping children feel safe and be less isolated.
- Children can access abuse prevention programs and information.
- Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children to communicate and raise their concerns.

Standard 3: Families and communities are informed and involved.

- Families have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their child and participate in decisions affecting their child.
- The organisation engages in open, two-way communication with families and communities about its child safety approach and relevant information is accessible.
- Families and communities have a say in the organisation's policies and practices.
- Families and communities are informed about the organisation's operations and governance.

Standard 4: Equity is upheld, and diverse needs are taken into account.

- The organisation actively anticipates children's diverse circumstances and responds effectively to those with additional vulnerabilities.
- All children have access to information, support and complaints processes.
- The organisation pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disabilities, and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Standard 5: People working with children are suitable and supported.

- Recruitment, including advertising and screening, emphasises child safety.
- Staff and volunteers have Working with Children Checks.
- All staff, volunteers and students receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their child safety responsibilities, including reporting obligations.
- Supervision and people management have a child safety focus.

Standard 6: Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse are child focused.

- The organisation has a child-focused complaint-handling system that is understood by children, staff, volunteers and families.
- The organisation has an effective complaint-handling policy and procedure which clearly outline roles and responsibilities, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints and obligations to act and report.
- Complaints are taken seriously, responded to promptly and thoroughly, and reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.

Standard 7: Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training.

- Relevant staff, volunteers and students receive training on the nature and indicators of child maltreatment, particularly organisational child abuse.
- Staff and volunteers receive training on the organisation's child safe practices and child protection.
- Relevant staff and volunteers are supported to develop practical skills in protecting children and responding to disclosures.

Standard 8: Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur.

- Risks in the online and physical environments are identified and mitigated without compromising a child's right to privacy and healthy development.
- The online environment is used in accordance with the organisation's Code of Conduct and relevant policies.

Standard 9: Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved.

- The organisation regularly reviews and seeks to improve and child safe practices.
- The organisation analyses complaints to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.

Standard 10: Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe.

- Policies and procedures address all Child Safe Standards.
- Policies and procedures are accessible and easy to understand.
- Best practice models and stakeholder consultation inform the development of policies and procedures.
- Leader's champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.
- Staff understand and implement the policies and procedures.

Living Our Organisational Culture

Living your organisation's culture is especially important for leaders but is required of all. A child safe organisation that has strong leadership and values children:

- establishes and updates policies and procedures regularly.
- leads by example and models appropriate behaviour.
- looks for innovation and practices continuous improvement.
- places the needs and safety of children at its heart.
- values and empowers all children in its care and gives them a voice.

When a child knows they will be listened to, that they have a voice and that they can influence the culture of the organisation, they are more likely to speak up when something or someone is upsetting them. Empowering children in this way is an important step in keeping them safe.

Staff in child safe organisations understand that parents, carers and other important people in a child's life, have the primary responsibility for raising their children. A child safe organisation talks to, consults with and invites the participation of families, caregivers and the broader community, to promote the rights of children.

Child safe organisations facilitate open, two-way communication with families and communities. Organisations are more likely to foster a child safe culture if the surrounding community values children, and respects and upholds their rights.

A child safe organisation provides culturally safe and child-friendly services which take into account children's diverse circumstances. It recognises that some children are more vulnerable to abuse than others, or, find it harder to speak up and be heard. Children have diverse needs, abilities and backgrounds and may be particularly vulnerable if they:

- are living with a physical or intellectual disability.
- come from specific religious or cultural backgrounds.
- are very young.
- have previously been exposed to abuse/trauma.
- feel vulnerable because of their gender identity or sexuality.
- come from diverse family backgrounds.
- feel they are not encouraged by their family
- have Aboriginal heritage
- live remotely
- feel they are not listened to or respected
- are engaged with an organisation which has a lack of understanding or awareness of child abuse
- are engaged in an organisation in which Leaders fail to recognise child safety as a priority
- are engaged in an organisation in which organisational culture is not child safe
- are engaged in an organisation in which expectations are unclear about child/adult interactions and relationships
- are engaged in an organisation in which long-standing relationships between adults are prioritised
- are engaged in an organisation which prioritises protection of its reputation
- are engaged in an organisation in which policies and practices are not made visible
- are engaged in an organisation in which internal disciplinary processes are not adequate
- opportunities are available when an adult may be alone with a child
- opportunities to develop relationships with physical or emotional closeness are available
- Opportunities to engage with digital engagement are provided

Paramourncy

The Pre-School maintains a strong commitment to the paramourncy of children. They are at the heart of our service culture, with decisions being considered through the lens of a child.

The service "paramourncy statement" is included in many service policies and documents, to ensure it is foremost in discussions and reflective practice, as well as during committee, room and staff meetings. This paramourncy principle, the prioritising of children's rights and best interests, and considering decisions through the lens of a child, are embedded in our service culture and in decisions relating to:

- Service philosophy
- Service operation
- Policy development and review

- Procedures
- Curriculum and program development
- Staffing and rosters
- Supervision practices and procedures
- Budget allocations and financial management
- Environmental design
- Purchase of resources
- Maintenance
- Risk minimisation plans across the service including child health needs and everyday practice
- Planning and risk assessment procedures for excursions and experiences
- Employment practices

Evidence of paramourncy is documented in:

- Staff meeting, Management meeting and Room meeting agenda's
- Staff meeting, Management meeting and Room meeting minutes
- All service policies
- Service procedures
- Service risk minimisation plans
- Child health risk minimisation plans
- Excursion risk minimisation plans
- Quality Improvement Plan
- Service Reconciliation Action Plan
- Staff Position Descriptions
- Staff, Management, Volunteer/Student Codes of Conduct
- Staff, Management, Volunteer/Student Child Safe Orientation Programs
- Visiting therapist orientation package
- Staff recruitment processes
- Child enrolment package

Paramourncy Decision-making Register

The Nominated Supervisor/Director maintains a paramourncy decision-making register which records the reflective discussions and decisions made during Management Committee, staff and room meetings, as well as during reflective practice with Room Leaders and Educators. Each room will do so relation to decisions within their room practice.

The decision-making process through a paramourncy lens could include:

- child safety,
- child voice,
- inclusion,
- learning opportunities,
- emotional impact,
- environmental considerations,
- child health and wellbeing,
- individual needs,
- risk assessments,
- enrolment,
- staff recruitment,
- staffing/roster,
- response to complaints,
- purchases,
- governance decisions,
- excursions.

In relation to room considerations, details in documentation displaying how children's best interests were prioritised could include: paramourncy in discussions that are written on program reflections or placed in reflective practice:

- Supervision considerations
- changes in routine
- change in practice to support a child with needs
- adjustments to transition activities
- adjustments to programmed activities
- change to room set up
- specific experience planned for a child to support engagement
- change to behaviour support plan

- responding to a hazard in the environment
- seeking training to support a child
- liaising with the Director or Educational Leader to support a child
- change to policy or procedure required

Responsibilities of the Management Committee/Approved Provider

All employers in child-related employment are required to comply with legislation designed to enhance the level and standard of child protection, through the creation of a child safe organisational culture. Through the creation, promotion and nurturing of the child safe culture organisations aim to deter offenders. To ensure the effective deterrent it is imperative that the Management Committee:

- familiarise themselves with the legislation.
- become familiar with the processes they will follow to ensure compliance.
- become familiar with government agencies.
- integrate the new child safe obligations into the processes they follow in managing employees, from recruitment, through to termination. The integration will be evident in things such as job descriptions, advertising vacant positions, developing and amending policies.
- Demonstrate clear decision-making that promotes child paramouncy, with all service decisions reflecting our service commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and displaying this priority when decisions involve a conflict of interest regarding the paramouncy consideration.
- demonstrate a commitment to providing a child safe organisation.
- have an established and consistent recruitment and selection process.
- have clear behaviour guidelines and Codes of Conduct for stakeholders.
- ensure on-going professional development of employees and volunteers is aligned to current practices and research.
- promote effective supervision of children and adult interactions with children.
- ensure the service maintains a "Register of Child Protection Concerns".
- act on small breaches in procedure with appropriate disciplinary action.
- promote and ensure staff are aware of, and understand the service "Protected Disclosure Policy", in relation to raising concerns about misconduct, breaches of law, or risks to children. This includes ongoing training.
- ensure any staff member making a protected disclosure is treated fairly, confidentiality is maintained, is free of victimisation or unfair treatment.
- ensure disclosures of inappropriate conduct are investigated appropriately.
- ensure inappropriate conduct is reported to the appropriate authority and required investigations are implemented.
- ensure there is an effective process for staff performance reviews.
- notify NESA of any decisions and/or information that could affect a teacher's accreditation, including teacher misconduct matters.

Each of these actions are supported by the collaborative relationship between the Management Committee and Nominated Supervisor, who will be responsible for ensuring they are performed and communicated to the Management Committee.

In respect to current staff:

The Management Committee and Nominated Supervisor will apply good governance which ensures:

- staff are aware of and have access to policies and procedures, and, adhere to them.
- staff have input into continuous improvement practices.
- staff have access to ongoing fit-for-purpose training.
- staff are educated about child protection, Child Safe Standards and the current legislation, Acts and Regulations:
- there are clear child safe policies and Codes of Practice for staff, children and families which are applied consistently. This includes clear procedures if and when a breach is identified.
- child safe policies underpin day-to-day practice.
- the implementation of a comprehensive job description for each staff member, outlining their duties and responsibilities and which will include child protection and Child Safe components.
- the maintenance of a clear procedure for mandatory reporting.
- all staff, volunteers and age-appropriate students hold a current, cleared Working with Children Check. If under the age of 18, volunteers and students will complete the service child protection declaration.
- the Nominated Supervisor and all nominated Responsible Persons, have obtained the accredited Child Protection qualification.
- policies and Codes or Practice are freely available to all stakeholders, and, are discussed and reviewed regularly.
- all stakeholders are aware of their obligations they suspect or witness harm to a child or children.
- a visual display within the Pre-School which outlines and demonstrates the organisation's commitment to child safe practices.
- a clear, visual display of all reporting procedures, which is located in the staff room, forwarded to each current staff member when reviewed and provided in staff, volunteer and student induction processes.
- the development of and adherence to an employee disciplinary policy for all breaches of conduct, including minor ones.

- mentoring, support and guidance to encourage child safe best practices in the workplace.
- ensure they understand the need to maintain a “Register of Child Protection Concerns”.
- engagement of all staff in performance appraisals, supporting the identification of any concerning behaviour. However, any identified behaviour would prompt this process, not waiting for the next identified review date.
- knowledge and understanding of the service “Protected Disclosure Policy”, which supports a child-safe, ethical and accountable service culture, by providing clear, safe and confidential mechanisms for raising concerns about misconduct, breaches of law, or risks to children.
- any staff member making a protected disclosure is treated fairly, confidentiality is maintained, is free of victimisation.
- disclosures of inappropriate conduct are investigated appropriately.
- a service culture which encourages staff to make a protected disclosure if they have reasonable concerns in relation to the conduct of another staff member, without fear of victimisation or unfair treatment.
- the offer of support for stakeholders, if they make complaints or raise concerns or allegations.

In respect to staff recruitment:

Legislation requires the Management Committee to apply good governance which includes:

- familiarising themselves with the legislation.
- registering with the relevant approved screening agency.
- maintaining a clear procedure for employment screening, prior to employment, through the “Working with Children Check”.
- completion of a “Prohibited Person” form.
- completion of a “Criminal History Check”.
- ensuring that advertisements and / or information packs sent to applicants for positions advertised, state that the preferred applicants will be screened and asked to make disclosure to the Pre-School about whether they are a ‘prohibited person’.
- treating any information disclosed from screening in a fair way.
- ensuring the education and training of all new Educators in relation to the relevant laws, acts, legislation and regulations. They will be given child protection and child safe information during the induction process.
- maintaining a comprehensive position description for each staff member outlining their duties and responsibilities, and which will include Child Safe requirements.
- ensuring the employee signs and receives a copy of their work agreement and position description.
- ensuring the employee signs the service “Code of Conduct”.
- ensuring employment advertising includes the organisation’s Statement of Commitment to Child Safety.
- ensuring induction packages for new staff includes a Code of Conduct, Child Safe Policies and Complaint Handling Policies.
- ensuring recruitment processes involve a range of interview questions relating to working in a child safe culture, to establish staff suitability. The questions will have a child focus and aim to provide:
 - a sense of the values and practices of an applicant
 - insights into attitudes toward children and behaviours they use to interact with children
 - an understanding of how an applicant may develop and maintain relationships with children and colleagues
 - a full understanding of their suitability and associated commitment to children and their safety, including carefully checking their work history and following up any child safety concerns
 - how the applicant’s views align with the service’s Code of Conduct, Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, Statement of Philosophy and child safety policies and procedures.
- All candidates will be questioned in regard to their knowledge of their mandated role in relation to child protection, as well as the “Child Safe Principles” “Child Safety (NQF Child Safe Culture Guide), and Reportable Conduct requirements. This includes, but is not limited to; regulations relating to children at risk of abuse and neglect, including the reporting criteria, procedures and responsibilities and maintaining a child safe culture. Any candidate must understand the required commitment to embedding child safe practices and a child safe culture. This includes:
 - upholding the “United Convention of the Rights of the Child”
 - putting child safety first,
 - promoting each child’s dignity, rights and cultural safety
 - responding to disclosures and suspicions of harm
 - protecting children from maltreatment, abuse and neglect
 - creating a culture that prioritises reporting concerns immediately
 - identifying, monitoring and mitigating child safety risks
 - adhering to all child safe supervision requirements, at all times
 - completing all regulatory requirements for documenting, reporting and investigating concerns and allegations
 - being aware of family circumstances and mitigating factors
 - completion of relevant training
 - ensuring engagement in the consultative process for all policies, procedures and risk assessment processes
- All candidates will be questioned in regard to their knowledge of the National Model Code and Guidelines and their responsibility when taking photographs or video of children, as well as the limits around the use of service-issued and personal devices.
- ensuring background and reference checks are being implemented and recorded.

- ensuring records are kept of staff interview responses, reference checks and inductions. (Refer to “Staff Recruitment Policy” and “Staff Induction Policy”.)
- As part of the induction process, the recruit will be required to complete a “Child Safe” orientation checklist and sign an acknowledgment which includes:
 - acknowledgement of having read the “NQF Child Safe Culture Guide” and “Online Safety Guide”.
 - understanding of the service “Child Protection”, “Child Safe”, “Reportable Conduct”, “Code of Conduct” and “Professional Development” policies.
 - acknowledgement of awareness of the service “Child Safe Folder”.
 - receipt of incident response/complaints procedures.
 - acknowledgment of reading and understanding the “Child Safety” risk assessment.
 - commitment to the completion of service identified child safe training on the Office of the Children’s Guardian, (or other), website.
 - knowledge and understanding of the service “Protected Disclosure Policy” supports a child-safe, ethical and accountable service culture, by providing clear, safe and confidential mechanisms for raising concerns about misconduct, breaches of law, or risks to children.

In respect to the Working with Children Check:

A Working with Children Check is a prerequisite for anyone working in paid or voluntary child-related work in NSW. The process involves a National Police check and a review of findings of misconduct. The Pre-School is registered with the Office of the Children’s Guardian and will obtain an online clearance before a volunteer, or new staff member, begins in the Pre-School. A copy of the clearance is held in a staff members personal file.

If a volunteer or student is under 18 years of age, and unable to apply for the “Working with Children Check”, they will sign the Pre-School volunteer or student “Child Protection Declaration”. By completing this form, they are declaring that they are not a prohibited person under the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998

All support service personnel, therapists and parents attending a Pre-School excursion, are required to provide a “Working with Children Check” number and are verified via the online process.

If an employee’s Working with Children Check expires, they become barred from working in a child-related role and will no longer be able to work with children. The service will:

- inform the employee that they are no longer to attend the Pre-School until their Working with Children Check is renewed.
- if an employee becomes barred, they will be informed of the timeframe for meetings and decisions to be made by the service, relating to the situation.
- the Management Committee and Nominated Supervisor will hold a protective planning meeting during which the risks are assessed.
- inform the employee of the outcome of the meeting.

In respect to an allegation regarding a staff member:

The Management Committee and Nominated Supervisor will:

- report allegations, even if they are believed to be false, vexatious or misconceived, following the steps following.
- ensure that all policies and procedures are adhered to along with directions of authorities/government agencies.
- ensure the service “Protected Disclosures Policy” is adhered to.
- make a notification within 24hours, through the ACECQA NQAITS portal, using the “Notification of Serious Incident” form (SI01). This is the responsibility of the Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor.
- report the suspected abuse through the Child Protection Helpline, 132 111.
- contact the Police, if the allegation is a criminal offense.
- investigate reportable allegations against their employees, using an internal and/or external process.
- protect the privacy of the employee, maintaining confidentiality in respect to any investigation or other disciplinary process.
- notify the NSW “Office of the Children’s Guardian” of the allegation/incident, within 7 days. This is the responsibility of the Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor.
- notify the “Office of the Children’s Guardian” at 30 days, of the actions taken since the matter was notified, and the actions the service intends to take in relation to the investigation process. This is the responsibility of the Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor.
- submit an “Entity Report Form” to the “Office of the Children’s Guardian”, when the investigation is complete, along with all investigation findings. This is the responsibility of the Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor.
- **if an allegation is not made to the Pre-School and the information comes from an external agency, each of the above notifications will be made at the time of becoming aware of the allegation.**
- ensure that any decision to terminate an employee as a consequence of a disciplinary process is fair and substantiated.
- notify NESA of any decisions and/or information that could affect a teacher’s accreditation, including teacher misconduct matters.

Documenting the Standard

Singleton Heights Pre-School displays and reinforces its commitment to child safety through the creation, review and improvement of related documentation. These documents include:

- the maintenance of a “Child Safe Policy” and “Child Protection Policy”.
- an organisational statement of commitment to child safety which is displayed in the foyer of the service.
- codes of Conduct signed by all staff, volunteers, students and Management Committee members.
- a “Position Description” is signed by all permanent staff.
- inclusion of current information and requirements within related service policies including “Staff Code of Conduct”, “Reportable Conduct”, “Staff Recruitment”, “Staff Induction”, “Staff Professional Development”, “Responsible Persons Policy” and “Child Protection Policy”.
- risk minimisation strategies which are documented and signed by all staff.
- complaint handling processes and information sharing.
- documented reporting procedures.
- posters and other information promoting child safety, which is shared during induction processes and with families.
- meeting agendas and minutes that show child safety is a standing agenda item.

Responsibilities of the Nominated Supervisor

There are many ways to support professional development so staff receive ongoing support and advice about child protection practices:

- regular team meetings where children's safety is a standard agenda item.
- encourage staff to ask questions, voice concerns or give feedback about the organisation's child safe practices.
- clearly state the importance of child safe protocols in the position descriptions of all staff.
- develop and distribute child safe resources and information for staff.
- maintain a “Child Safe” folder, ensuring quick access to all relevant documentation.
- display a clear, visual display of all reporting procedures, which is located in the staff room.
- conduct regular performance appraisals where you can provide and collect feedback from staff on their strengths and area of improvement.
- staff are expected to complete relevant training and registers maintained to support ease of review.
 - Child Protection training will be completed by any staff member in the role of Room Leader or Responsible Person, with a refresher being completed every 2 years.
 - Every staff member, volunteer and student are required to complete the Mandatory Child Safe Training prior to commencement. The register maintains supports ensuring that this is renewed every 2 years.
- the Nominated Supervisor assumes the role of the Child Safety Contact Officer.
- ensure all Educators are aware of and understand the requirement for the service to maintain a “Register of Child Protection Concerns”. It will be stored confidentially with the child records in each room and reviewed each time an entry is made,
- promote and ensure staff are aware of, and understand the service “Protected Disclosure Policy”, in relation to raising concerns about misconduct, breaches of law, or risks to children.
- ensure any staff member making a protected disclosure is treated fairly, confidentiality is maintained, is free of victimisation or unfair treatment.
- ensure disclosures of inappropriate conduct are investigated appropriately.
- ensure inappropriate conduct is reported to the appropriate authority and required investigations are implemented.
- notify NESA of any decisions and/or information that could affect a teacher's accreditation, including teacher misconduct matters.

Leaders Promote a Culture of Safety and Reporting:

A strong child safe culture is underpinned by strong leadership practices which prioritises children's safety, creating a culture of ongoing reflection and continuous improvement. Successful leaderships will promote the importance of child safety at the service and demonstrate what it looks like, through:

- discussing and promoting child safe pedagogical practice.
- leading by example and finding ways to improve child safety, including identifying and fixing risks before they become problems.
- taking child safety issues seriously, responding quickly, and ensuring all staff and volunteers have the resources they need.
- creating an environment where all staff feel supported and encouraged to raise concerns, making it normal to report issues.
- considering what professional development opportunities should be made available for all staff at the service to understand and implement child safe practices.
- being aware that staff may have their own trauma, and providing support through the Employee Assistance Program and informing attendees ahead of meetings, about detailed child safety discussions.

- considering additional support required for voluntary boards and committees in understanding their leadership role in promoting child safety.
- embedding a culture of continuous improvement at the service to make the service a safe place for children. Include everyone at the service (including staff, children, families and communities) in continuous improvement practices.
- making risk assessments a regular part of review processes and improving child safety at the service.
- using complaints or incidents to reflect on responses and improve the service's practices, policies and procedures.
- sharing the service child safety commitment and information with new staff through the induction process and families through the enrolment process.
- creating, promoting and modelling a respectful, child safe culture, where children's views are always listened to, including their right to say 'no'.
- creating a safe space for Educators and volunteers to report harm or risks to children and fulfil their reporting obligations.
- ensuring everyone knows the signs of child maltreatment, abuse, neglect and grooming.
- ensuring all staff are practicing child safe supervision practices
- engaging in child safe practices when recruiting and inducting new staff.
- development of clear procedures and expectations around child safety and ensuring these are followed by staff.
- promotion of a culture where children are able to express their views and are provided opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their lives.
- the organisation is aware of and responds to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children from CALD backgrounds and others who may have additional vulnerabilities.
- leading a culture of continuous improvement in which all stakeholders are consulted in relation to the continuous improvement of procedures, practices, program and environment.
- personal behaviour demonstrates child safe practices and acting as a role model in prioritising child safety.
- ensure all new employees and Management Committee receive a copy of the "Child Safe Policy" during induction and that they have the opportunity to ask questions and clarify their responsibilities.
- conduct and implement the risk assessment and management process, in consultation with all stakeholders.
- professional development is prioritised by the service and provides staff with the knowledge, skills and confidence to prevent and identify abuse, and to respond to complaints.
- incorporate risk management of child abuse into decision-making and actively monitor risks to child safety.
- encourage day-to-day practices that prioritise child safety.
- a "Code of Conduct" is signed by all staff, volunteers, students and Management Committee members, and consultation during induction ensures that it has been understood.
- creation of a "Child Safe Policy" and "Reportable Conduct Policy", in consultation with all stakeholders, and ensuring the review of these as per the service policy review schedule, or when necessary.
- the service culture promotes reporting when necessary.
- confidentiality is maintained.
- the required documentation is completed and forwarded to relevant agencies.
- the curriculum includes developmentally appropriate content and resources to teach children child safe principles and this is consistently reinforced.
- ensure families know how, when and to whom complaints can be made. If an incident occurs, the Pre-School will provide families with relevant and appropriate information in a timely manner.
- families and community members are encouraged to provide feedback on how the organisation keeps children safe, and this information is acted upon when necessary.
- the creation of a culture where complaints are taken seriously and all adults take responsibility for the safety of children.
- the service culture which encourages staff to make a protected disclosure if they have reasonable concerns in relation to the conduct of another staff member, without fear of victimisation or unfair treatment.
- leaders know the value of continuous monitoring of staff.
- leaders and staff review critical incidents to identify the root cause of the problem, identify risks to the safety of children and make improvements.
- leaders clearly explain that breaches of Codes of Conduct will result in disciplinary action.
- staff are given support and information on what to report and how to report, including reports to external bodies.

Child Safety Contact Officer

The Nominated Supervisor is appointed the role of the "Child Safety Contact Officer" and is responsible for ensuring the safety of children, as well as recognising and responding to issues. This Officer will:

- have formal training in identifying and responding to child abuse.
- be experienced in managing complaints and allegations.
- know child protection legislation relevant to their industry.
- provide support and guidance on expectations of appropriate behaviour for staff interacting with children.
- be proficient at educating or training staff, particularly in the area of child protection.
- interact with children on an informal day-to-day basis.
- accept the nominated role in writing.

Responsibilities of Educators and Staff

Ethical practice and service policy ensure Educators maintain a professional boundary between themselves and children/families. All staff are knowledgeable of their mandated role in relation to child protection, as well as the “Child Safe Principles” and Reportable Conduct requirements. This includes but is not limited to regulations relating to embedding a commitment to child safe practices, children at risk of abuse and neglect, including the reporting criteria, procedures and responsibilities. All staff are knowledgeable of their mandated role in relation to child protection, as well as the “Child Safe Principles” “Child Safety (NQF Child Safe Culture Guide), and Reportable Conduct requirements. This includes but is not limited to:

- maintaining a child safe culture.
- maintaining a child focus.
- Upholding the “United Convention of the Rights of the Child”.
- putting child safety first.
- promoting each child’s dignity, rights and cultural safety.
- responding to disclosures and suspicions of harm.
- protecting children from maltreatment, abuse and neglect.
- embedding a culture of child safety throughout the organisation.
- creating a culture that prioritises reporting concerns immediately.
- identifying, monitoring and mitigating child safety risks.
- adhering to all child safe supervision requirements.
- completing all regulatory requirements for documenting, reporting and investigating concerns and allegations.
- reading provided information.
- engaging in relevant training.
- ensuring engagement in the consultative process for all policies, procedures and risk assessment processes.
- requesting support if circumstances prompt experiencing their own trauma during this time.
- working within their Code of Conduct, position description and service policies.
- linking practice to the relevant Acts, Laws, Regulations, Code of Ethics and National Quality Standards.
- being aware of how personal values/beliefs may impact on effective decision making.
- all primary contact Educators completing accredited Child Protection training and child safe training while all other Educators, and administrative staff, are also encouraged to complete the training. Educators are knowledgeable about the types of harm, grooming and reporting procedures.
- becoming familiar with the “Child Safe”, “Reportable Conduct” and “Code of Conduct” policies and abiding by these in their interactions and practices.
- being knowledgeable of the National Model Code and Guidelines and their responsibility when taking photographs or video of children as well as the limits around the use of service-issued and personal devices. These practices support each child’s dignity and rights as well as the health, safety and wellbeing of children in our early education and care service.
- promoting a culture where children are able to express their views and are provided opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their lives.
- being aware of, and respond to, the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children from CALD backgrounds and others who may have additional vulnerabilities.
- listening to children and parents, considering and responding to their diverse needs.
- ensuring all stakeholders are consulted in relation to the continuous improvement of procedures and practices in the workplace.
- engaging in continuous professional development.
- maintaining a “Register of Child Protection Concerns”.
- reporting any behaviours of concern, completing the appropriate form.
- engaging with the service culture which encourages staff to make a protected disclosure if they have reasonable concerns in relation to the conduct of another staff member, without fear of victimisation or unfair treatment.
- ensuring confidentiality is maintained.
- ensuring the curriculum includes age-appropriate information, teaching about protective behaviours children and this is consistently reinforced.
- ensuring that families know how, when and to whom complaints can be made. If an incident occurs, they provide families with relevant and appropriate information.
- supporting new staff to maintain, understand and provide a child safe culture.
- maintaining respectful, inclusive relationships with children.
- reporting any concerns or breaches of appropriate child safe behaviour.
- being aware of family circumstances and mitigating factors for child safety.

In Respect to Families

Staff in child safe organisations understand that parents, carers and other important people in a child’s life, have the primary responsibility for raising their children. A child safe organisation talks to, consults with, and invites the participation of

families, caregivers, and the broader community to promote the rights of children. Open, two-way communication is practiced with families and communities.

Staff wear easily identifiable clothing with their name and the service logo embroidered on it, supporting families to recognise service staff.

Families and community members are provided with information and encouraged to provide feedback on how the organisation keeps children safe, and this information is acted upon, where necessary. This may occur through:

- policy development and review using a consultative process.
- conducting and implementing the risk assessment process, in consultation with all stakeholders.
- ensuring all stakeholders are consulted in relation to the continuous improvement of procedures and practices in the workplace.
- informal discussions with families and formal meetings.
- surveys distributed by the service
- ensuring that families know how, when and to whom complaints can be made. If an incident occurs, families are able to access relevant and appropriate information.
- developing strong relationships with families and community members, respecting their identities and cultures.
- supporting families to feel comfortable asking questions about child safety and work with them to address issues as they arise.
- encouraging families to give feedback on child safety concerns and act on their feedback.
- sharing information and discussing child safety with families, reminding them that the goal is to keep children safe from maltreatment, abuse and neglect and to support their learning and development
- making sure families receive child safety policies during the enrolment process. Remove any barriers that would prevent families from accessing and understanding them
- asking families what makes them feel comfortable and culturally safe and take any concerns seriously.
- respecting each family's background and cultural identity and using this information to inform Educators' practices.
- ensure children and families with diverse needs and family structures feel included. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, culturally and linguistically diverse families, LGBTIQA+ family members and family members with additional needs
- be aware of any legal restrictions on family members' contact with children.

Families are provided with the relevant information to make a complaint of child abuse. Child safe organisations respond by immediately protecting children at risk and promptly addressing complaints, thoroughly, and fairly.

CHILD ABUSE and NEGLECT

About Child Abuse:

Child abuse is the term commonly used to describe different types of maltreatment inflicted on a child or young person. It includes assault (including sexual assault), ill treatment, neglect and exposing the child or young person to behaviour that might cause psychological harm. Child abuse can be a criminal offence under the *Crimes Act 1900*.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse or ill treatment is defined as the non-accidental injury and/or physical harm to a child or young person by a parent, caregiver, another person responsible for the child or young person, or older child that occurs. It includes harm or injuries which are caused by corporal punishment, excessive discipline, beating, shaking, bruising, pushing, shoving, punching, slapping, kicking, biting, lacerations, welts, burns, fractures or dislocation, female genital mutilation or attempted suffocation or strangulation.

In the workplace, we need to consider employee responses, interactions or behaviours which are not appropriate. These may include:

- “A smack never hurt me”.
- Using bullying or intimidation in the belief a child will achieve more.
- Educators not having the skills to manage a child’s behaviour resulting in loss of temper
- Individuals experiencing difficult personal circumstances so they have lower than normal tolerance levels.

Psychological/Emotional Abuse

Behaviours that cause psychological harm include acts by a parent, caregiver, or other person that damage the cognitive and emotional development of a child or young person. Serious psychological harm may occur when a child or young person is exposed to:

- chronic or severe domestic violence.
- severe parental/carer mental health or substance abuse concerns.
- persistent and repetitive parental/carer behaviours that have a negative impact
- parental/carer criminal or corrupting behaviour.
- parental/carer behaviours that deliberately expose a child or young person to traumatic events.

In the workplace, we need to consider employee responses, interactions or behaviours which are not appropriate. These may include:

- A lack of positive, nurturing engagement or mental stimulation for children, due to a lack of training and professional skills.
- Belittling or humiliating a child due to how the carer was raised or cultural beliefs. This leads them to believe that this approach will make the child more ‘resilient’.
- Deliberate shaming or embarrassing of a child to make them feel isolated or inadequate.
- Using inclusion or exclusion techniques, providing special treatment to one or more children. This may lead to particular children feeling isolated or the child feeling privileged, and ‘closer’ to their abuser.
- Bullying, threatening language and intimidation.

Neglect

Neglect is the failure to provide the basic physical and emotional necessities of life. Neglect can take one or more of the following forms:

- **Neglect of basic physical needs** occurs where there is a risk of harm or actual harm caused by the parent or caregiver’s failure to provide for a child’s basic physical needs, such as:
 - food
 - clothing and hygiene
 - physical shelter / environment
 - medical care
 - mental health care
 - education
 - safety from harm – including issues of appropriate supervision.

Depending on the age of the child, the focus is not simply and solely on the absence of physical care, adequate nutrition or appropriate clothing. Rather, the issue is whether the omission of such basic care needs has impaired or could risk impairing the child’s development.

- **Neglect of basic psychological needs** occurs when a child or young person is not receiving appropriate interaction, encouragement, acceptance, nurturing or stimulation from their parents or caregivers. This form of neglect also refers to the persistent ignoring of a child’s signals of distress, pleas for help, attention, comfort, or reassurance. Without this care, a child or young person may not develop appropriate attachments with primary carers and others, significantly impairing their ongoing emotional, cognitive and physical development.

- **The neglect of necessary medical care** presumes that risk of harm is likely to arise from a failure to provide medical service or treatment. This can include the withholding or failure to provide essential medication for a child.

- **Lack of adequate supervision** for example if a child is missing or if an Educator fails to ensure the child has been collected by an authorised person.

- **Failing to Report** harm, abuse or reportable conduct to the appropriate authorities.

Sexual abuse

Child sexual abuse is any sexual act or sexual threat imposed on a child or young person. Adults, adolescents, or older children, who sexually abuse children or young people, exploit their dependency and immaturity. Coercion may be physical or psychological and is intrinsic to child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse includes inappropriate physical contact, grooming, inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature, crossing professional boundaries by spending time alone with a child or having contact with the child outside of the workplace or inappropriately sitting a child on your lap when an individual's hands are not visible.

Offenders use a range of tactics including force, threats, and tricks to engage children in sexual contact and try to silence the child. They may also try to gain the trust and friendship of parents in order to obtain access to children.

Inappropriate Behaviours

Grooming

Grooming is the process by which a person manipulates children and their carer's, integrating themselves into family situations over weeks, months or years, where they can access and exploit children, and commit abuse. They often target vulnerable children, with the adults also being groomed so they don't understand, fail to properly interpret, or sometimes even support the behaviour of the perpetrator.

Grooming may manipulate the feelings of children and their carers so that the perpetrator becomes a trusted and liked figure in their lives. As well as enabling abuse to occur, it also assists offenders to avoid detection. This is called Influencing Guardianship. There are two main types of guardianship influence:

- **Professional**
 - Undermining others in the organisation to deflect and disguise the groomer's behaviour.
 - Ignoring warnings from others about their breach of professional conduct or boundaries.
 - Arranging activities that involve a child and require the supervision of the groomer.
 - Volunteering for tasks which leave them alone with a child.
 - Blaming the child for any inappropriate behaviour.
- **Family**
 - Convincing a parent or guardian that the groomer is a person of integrity or expertise.
 - Making themselves invaluable to the child's successes and achievements.
 - Undermining parental guidance and authority.
 - Ignoring requirements to limit contact with a child.
 - Telling a child their parents don't understand them or their relationship.
 - Telling a child they won't be believed if they speak up.
 - Seeking invitations to a child's home.

People who are grooming may seek to desensitise individuals to their inappropriate actions and relationship to a child by;

- repeatedly flattering a child.
- flattering a parent, either personally or about their child.
- claiming to have a 'special relationship'.
- talking to a child about their own or the child's sexuality.
- entering private areas such as changing rooms unnecessarily or unannounced.
- nudity or partially undressing in front of a child or encouraging the child to undress.
- having a child pose in an adult or sexualised way for photographs.
- commenting on the sexual characteristics of a child such as changes due to puberty, growth of breasts or body hair.
- gift Giving can create the illusion of a 'special relationship' between the victim and the perpetrator. The perpetrator could also use the threat of removing the gift to gain compliance.
- physical Interaction including repeatedly brushing against a child, going beyond normal touching while performing a legitimate task, or seemingly accidental or deliberate touching intimate areas can indicate grooming, including, adjusting a child's clothing inappropriately, restricting a child, hugging a child or insisting they hug you, sitting a child on their lap or kissing a child. This normalises inappropriate behaviour and tests the boundaries of what the child finds acceptable.
- engaging in activities that result in touching including rough play, wrestling or tickling.
- taking unnecessary photos of a child.
- special treatment such as allowing a child to break or breach rules, showing favouritism, giving a child a birthday card, having a special pet name for a child or consistently selecting one child or a specific group of children for demonstrations is special treatment. This sort of behaviour can create an inappropriate relationship based on power.
- breaching the boundaries of professional counselling.

- transporting a child in a personal vehicle.
- wanting to be present unnecessarily during changing of a child.
- seeking information about the child's movements outside the professional setting.
- finding reasons to contact the child or family, outside the professional setting.
- breaching professional conduct by attending events not related to the professional setting including attending birthday parties, sporting events. Dance concerts, award ceremonies, or inviting a child/family to attend an event
- requesting a child/family to visit their home.
- visiting a child who is sick at home.
- meeting a child /family in a community setting.
- offering to babysit in breach of the Code of Conduct.
- offering tuition.
- personal emails or contact through social media to a child or family.
- asking a child to keep contact secret.
- influencing a parent or guardian to believe they are a person of integrity or expertise.
- making themselves appear invaluable to a child's success.
- ignoring requests from a parent to limit contact.
- telling a child their friendship needs to be secret.
- telling a child they won't be believed if they speak up.
- seek invitations to a child's home.
- ignoring colleague's warnings about professional boundaries or breach of professional conduct.
- causing colleagues to believe a change in a child's behaviour is trivial.

Sexual Misconduct

Sexual misconduct includes behaviour that can reasonably be construed as involving an inappropriate and overly personal or intimate relationship with a child or young person. Grooming should be considered sexual misconduct where there is evidence of a pattern of behaviour that is consistent with manipulating an alleged victim for sexual activity. Sexual misconduct includes:

- descriptions of sexual acts without a legitimate reason to provide the descriptions.
- sexual comments, conversations or communications.
- comments to a child that express a desire to act in a sexual manner towards the child or another child.
- crossing professional boundaries.
- grooming behaviours.
- sexually explicit comments and other overtly sexual behaviour.
- inappropriate touching.

Sexual Offence

A sexual offence refers to an offence of a sexual nature, committed against, with, or in the presence of a child. This includes::

- sexual touching of a child
- grooming
- production, dissemination or possession of child abuse material

Assault

Assault refers to the intentional or reckless application of physical force without lawful justification or excuse. This includes hitting, striking, kicking, punching or dragging or threatening to physically harm a child.

III-Treatment

III-treatment of a child means conduct towards a child that is unreasonable and seriously inappropriate, improper, inhumane or cruel. This includes:

- making excessive demands.
- a pattern of hostile or degrading comments or behaviour.
- using inappropriate forms of behaviour management.

Neglect

Neglect of a child, means a significant failure to provide adequate and proper food, supervision, nursing, clothing, medical aid or lodging for the child, that causes or is likely to cause harm to a child. This includes failing to protect a child from abuse or exposing a child to a harmful environment such as where illicit drugs are manufactured or used.

Emotional or Psychological Harm

This refers to behaviour that causes significant emotional harm or psychological harm to a child. Examples of indicators of significant emotional harm or psychological harm:

- displaying behaviour patterns that are out of character
- regressive behaviour
- anxiety or self-harm

Online Safety

If there are concerns about children's online safety, these may also need to be reported to the police and child protection agencies. You should also contact the federal police - Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation, and the eSafety Commissioner, if concerns include:

- cyberbullying of a child
- adult cyber abuse
- image-based abuse
- illegal and restricted content

If the alleged conduct involves a criminal allegation, immediately report the matter to Police.

If the alleged conduct poses a risk of significant harm to a child or young person, or class of children or young people, report the matter to the Child Protection Helpline (132 111 or through Child Story).

Effects of Abuse

For many people, abuse can have profound and lasting impacts. Impacts may be immediate and temporary or an individual may experience complex trauma and cause effects across their lifespan. Some emerge later in life or fade away, only to re-emerge or manifest in response to triggers or events. Child abuse can effect many areas of a person's life, including their:

- mental health
- interpersonal relationships
- physical health
- sexual identity, gender identity and sexual behaviour
- connection to culture
- spirituality and religious involvement
- interactions with society
- education, employment and economic security

Register of Child Protection Concerns

A "Register of Child Protection Concerns" will be maintained by each room in the service to support consistent and accurate documentation, review and follow-up of matters relating to the safety and wellbeing of the children. This ensures secure record-keeping of child protection concerns and includes:

- the date a concern was raised or identified
- a brief description of the concern
- persons involved eg: child, parent/guardian, Educator, others
- actions taken or decisions made including reporting steps to the "Department of Communities and Justice", The "Early Learning Commission" or Police.
- mandatory notifications made, notification numbers, details of any review or disclosure of the matter

If the observation or concerns do not meet the reporting threshold, the register will document:

- any trends or patterns in child behaviour
- unexplained injuries
- concerning observations
- monitoring and follow up of matters
- any concerns which don't meet the reporting threshold for mandatory reporting but are relevant for continued risk assessment of a child's safety.

This record will be stored confidentially with the child records in each room, and reviewed each time an entry is made.

DETERRING OFFENDERS IN OUR ORGANISATIONAL SETTING

- A “*Committed Offender*” actively manipulates environments and seeks out victims to groom.
- An “*Opportunistic Offender*” sexually discriminates and is quick to exploit opportunities presented to them.
- A “*Situational Offender*” is not primarily attracted to children but are stimulated to offend by environmental cues.

There are some simple barriers which can be put in place to deter offenders in organisational settings. This is known as governance, and includes:

- a demonstrated commitment to the provision of a child safe organisation.
- established and consistent recruitment and selection processes
- having clear behaviour guidelines and Codes of Conduct for all stakeholders.
- ensuring the on-going professional development of staff is aligned to current practices and research.
- having effective supervision of children including removing opportunities for adults to be alone with children.
- following up all breaches in procedure with appropriate disciplinary action.
- promoting a culture where reporting is supported.

Adopting Situational Prevention Approaches

Situational prevention reduces inappropriate behaviour by making systematic and permanent changes to social and physical environments. This is known as target hardening and makes it hard for people to offend.

- **Step 1: Increasing the effort needed to engage in inappropriate behaviour.**

Increasing the effort needed to offend means making it harder for potential offenders to gain access to children in settings where they could be abused, as well as reducing opportunities for abuse to occur. There are ways to increase the effort needed to offend:

- demonstrating it will be difficult to offend in the organisation. The Pre-School ensures position advertisements promote the organisation’s commitment to being child safe.
- a key component of the services recruitment process is the screening of all employees through the Working with Children Check. Reference checks for applicants confirm their previous employment history, and any instances of inappropriate behaviour with children.
- reflecting on the physical environment to allow more natural surveillance opportunities.
- the service maintains Codes of Conduct, policies, and procedures that are consistently applied.
- embedded professional development of staff ensures they have current training.
- enforcing disciplinary protocols to raise awareness that particular actions will have consequences.

- **Step 2: Increasing the risks of getting caught.**

To reduce the likelihood of detection in an organisational setting, the Nominated Supervisor and all employees are responsible for monitoring, supervising, and evaluating the behaviour of individuals on the premises. The Pre-School will:

- *Extend guardianship.*
 - Encouraging and supporting the inclusion of families and children voices in the programs and decision-making processes.
 - Encouraging and supporting children to have a voice so they’ll speak up if they feel unsafe, upset or scared.
 - Teach children protective behaviours.
- *Assist natural surveillance.*
 - Make sure areas are well lit.
 - The design of open plan spaces.
 - Asking children using the service to identify any areas where they don’t feel safe.
 - Windows aren’t obscured with posters.
 - Ensure children are not in isolated areas unless they’re with more than one adult.
- *Improve the knowledge* and confidence of staff when reporting concerning behaviour.
- *Empower children* and ensure they have the capacity to voice their opinions and report situations when they feel uncomfortable.
- *Reducing anonymity* through all staff being easily identifiable to children, parents and families by wearing uniforms or badges. All volunteers and students wear service supplied badges and visitors are accompanied by a staff member.

- **Step 3: Remove excuses for inappropriate behaviour.**

Many offenders minimise the criminality of their behaviour in order to lower their internal inhibitors. They do this so they can convince themselves they are not harming their victims, or that their actions are not really intended to desensitise the child. The Pre-School will:

- set clear rules of acceptable behaviour through the awareness and implementation of associated policies and Codes of Conduct for staff, volunteers, students and the Management Committee.
- have clear and obvious instructions about children’s rights
- have clear procedures in relation to acting in response to inappropriate behaviours through the existence and implementation of a disciplinary policy and reporting policy.
- demonstrate governance and leadership through clear organisational policies which promote a strong child safe culture.

- Practice effective supervision as per associated service policy and procedure.
- Provide initial and ongoing training through:
 - an effective induction program.
 - provide support and guidance to all staff in relation to Child Safe practice and policy information and how they can access it.
 - encourage an open and transparent culture.
 - put in place ongoing mentoring, support, and guidance to encourage child safe best practices in the workplace.
 - carry out performance appraisals so any concerning behaviour is identifiable.
 - offer support to families if they make complaints, raise concerns or allegations.
 - provide ongoing training in Child Protection and Child Safe Practices.

CHILD SAFE RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

What is risk management?

Research demonstrates that children who experience varied and interesting activities are more likely to grow and develop to their full potential, so our program and practices, aim to provide children with leadership opportunities, team building capacity and life skills. A Child Safe Risk Management Strategy is not meant to dissuade organisations from providing fun, interesting play and learning opportunities.

As a Child Safe Organisation, the Singleton Heights Pre-School's risk management procedure involves identifying and analysing all the risks of harm to children that currently exist or could occur. The risk minimisation process:

- **Establish settings** the organisation works in.
- **Identify risks** which could occur within the different settings.
- **Analyses and evaluation of risks.**
- **Develop interventions** that aim to reduce risk by reflecting on prevention strategies, processes, and checks we should put in place to reduce the risk.

DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE

Child Disclosure

It is very rare for a child to disclose abuse or neglect immediately or the first time something happens. Often children and young people experience a great sense of helplessness and hopelessness and think that nobody can help them. Weeks or even years may pass before a child or young person makes their abuse known, either directly or indirectly.

Depending on the age of the child and the nature of the abuse or risk, there can be a range of inhibitors to them telling someone about their situation. For instance, a child or young person may:

- believe that they are responsible for the abuse.
- not understand that it is inappropriate behaviour by others.
- want to protect the person responsible.
- want to protect their own 'reputation'.
- feel ashamed of the abuse / of the perpetrator / of protecting the perpetrator.
- feel scared or powerless.
- have been threatened with further harm if they tell someone.

A disclosure occurs when a child lets you know in some way that they have been abused or are likely to be abused. When a child does disclose this information, they might do this purposefully or accidentally. They could:

- 'Blurt out' a harmful experience or their fear of something.
- confide privately that they have been abused or fear that they will be.
- tell another child.
- provide hints as evidenced in drawings, play or stories.
- disguise a disclosure by posing 'what if' or 'a friend of mine' scenarios.
- present with somatic symptoms (such as constantly feeling 'sick').

Responding to a child who discloses.

How an Educator responds to a disclosure by a child or young person can be critical. If the child senses that the person they tell is not interested in listening to them, or doesn't believe them, the child will typically stop disclosing the events. This will delay them from seeking help in the future. Many of the permanent staff in the Pre-School engage in accredited Child Protection training to support them to respond to disclosures appropriately.

If a child makes an allegation Educator's will:

- remain calm.
- continue to engage the child in the play they are participating in.
- give the child your full attention
- if a child/young person uses a communication board/form or argumentative communication, consider whether another trusted person needs to be present who is able to understand them and accurately record the communication.
- listen carefully without interrupting. However, respectfully interrupt the child if they begin to disclose in front of other children, and move the conversation to a safe and private space if possible.
- allow them to talk, using their own words and not ask "leading" questions.
- be open and non-judgemental to their account and support them in telling their experience.
- reassure the child that you believe them and that they did the right thing by speaking up. Recognise their bravery/strength for talking about something difficult
- establish the welfare and safety of the child.
- arrange urgent medical treatment as required.
- make detailed notes to document all the information given and received (as soon as possible after the child has disclosed).

- record what the child said 'in their own words'.
- ensure any other adult witnesses, also write down their account of what the child said.
- tell them it is not their fault and that they have a right to be safe.
- explain clearly what will happen next and that you might need to share some information to keep them safe.
- follow the service internal policies, procedures, flow charts and complaints and allegations policy.
- alert the Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person.
- participate in an exchange of information if appropriate.
- only tell the people you need to tell to keep the child safe.

Staff will not:

- express panic, shock, anger, disapproval, judgement or disbelief.
- ask "leading" questions (ie: questions that contain or suggest answers, or multiple choice questions), or probe for additional information that the child is unwilling to provide.
- dismiss, minimise or challenge the disclosure.
- make promises that cannot be kept (including keeping the disclosure a secret).
- make the child or young person tell others
- investigate the allegations.
- confront the alleged perpetrator.
- confront parents or caregivers.
- leave the child alone.

The role of the person hearing the disclosure is not to interview or gather evidence, as this is the responsibility of the relevant authority caseworkers or Police Officers, who have received special training in investigative interviewing of children and young people.

It is important to acknowledge the impact of a disclosure on the child or young person. They may regret telling someone, or may react with guilt, anxiety or shame. They may even recant their disclosure in the days following, or seek to provide more information. Disclosure is not always a discrete event but often an evolving process.

Immediately after the disclosure, the staff member will document and date the comments and statements made by the child. The staff member will use their exact words and record any observations about the child's mood or demeanour during the disclosure. This information will need to be communicated to the Helpline during the reporting process, as it will assist in the assessment and investigation process.

Documenting Abuse while in the Care of Child-Centred Organisations

In response to recommendations from the "Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, 2017", organisations engaged in child-related work must retain records relating to child sexual abuse that has, or is alleged to have occurred, for at least 45 years.

Good record keeping helps to avoid additional distress and trauma for survivors who may be seeking and documenting information about their abuse while in the care of child-centred organisations. This is consistent with the implementation of the 10 Child Safe Standards. Our service will ensure:

1. full and accurate records relevant to child safety and wellbeing and sexual child abuse are created and kept. This is in the best interests of children and is an integral part of institutional leadership, governance and culture. This will be documented through the service "Register of Child Protection Concerns".
2. full and accurate records will be created about all incidents, responses and decisions affecting child safety and wellbeing, including child sexual abuse.
3. records relevant to child safety and wellbeing, including child sexual abuse, are maintained appropriately.
4. records relevant to child safety and wellbeing, including child sexual abuse, will only be disposed of in accordance with law or policy.
5. individuals' existing rights to access, amend or annotate records about themselves, should be recognised to the fullest extent, unless it is contrary to the law.

Good record keeping is important in identifying, preventing, and responding to the risks and incidents of child sexual abuse and is an important part of making and supporting institutions to be child safe. The key elements for good record keeping reflected in the Guide to the National Quality Framework include, that records identified as relevant to child safety and wellbeing, (including child sexual abuse), be:

- kept for 45 years,
- clear, objective, and thorough,
- maintained in an indexed, logical, and secure manner,
- retained and disposed of in a consistent manner.

It is already the responsibility of the Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor to keep incident, injury, trauma and illness records until the child is 25 years old. In accordance with the findings of the "Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, 2017", the Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor should retain

records relating to child sexual abuse that has, or is alleged to have occurred, for at least 45 years from the date the record was created.

The Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor are required to keep a record of each Educator's, volunteer's and student's Working with Children Check (WWCC), under their relevant jurisdiction law. The service register must include the identifying number of the current check under their relevant law, and the check's expiry date if applicable. For all services this information must be included in the staff record (Regulations 147 and 149).

Note: Exemption for New South Wales under the above Regulations. If the staff member, volunteer, or student has provided: proof of their current teacher registration, a record of the identifying number of the teacher registration and the expiry date of that registration. These must be recorded by the Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor. **Our service will not invoke this exemption.**

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ALLEGATIONS AND ACTION INVOLVING STAFF

Defining Reportable Conduct

The *Children's Guardian Act 2019* defines reportable conduct as:

- a sexual offence.
- sexual misconduct.
- ill-treatment of a child.
- neglect of a child.
- an assault against a child.
- an offence under s 43B (failure to protect) or s 316A (failure to report) of the Crimes Act 1900.
- behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child.

Section 25A of the *Ombudsman Act* defines 'reportable conduct' as:

- a) any sexual offence or sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including a child pornography offence), or
- b) any assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child, or
- c) any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child,

Reportable conduct does not extend to:

- a) conduct that is reasonable for the purposes of discipline, management or care of children, having regard to the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the children and to any relevant codes of conduct or professional standards, or
- b) the use of physical force that, in all the circumstances, is trivial or negligible, but only if the matter is to be investigated and the result of the investigation recorded under workplace employment procedures, or
- c) conduct of a class or kind exempted from being reportable conduct by the Ombudsman under Section 25CA.

A Child Safe Complaints Process and Clear Reporting Process

A child focused complaint process supports children who are exposed to the risk of harm and encourages them to speak up. Children, families and staff are educated on whom to tell if they want to make a complaint of child abuse. Child safe organisations respond by immediately protecting children at risk while complaints are addressed promptly, thoroughly and fairly.

A complaint may be made verbally (in formal or informal conversations), or in writing (letter, email, SMS, social media platform, digital form). It may be:

- a concern
- an allegation
- a grievance
- a statement that something is unacceptable.

A person may not expressly state that they are making a complaint.

Complaints can be made to:

- the Nominated Supervisor/Director
- Educators or administrative staff
- Management Committee members
- external bodies like the NSW Early Learning Commission, police
- a child protection agency, or the eSafety Commissioner.

Anyone can make a complaint, including:

- a child or young person
- an adult, or child on behalf of a child
- Educators or staff members
- Volunteers or students on practicum placement
- a parent or family member
- a visiting professional or member of the public.

All staff understand their reporting obligations, including to external authorities. Child safe cultures create environments where staff are supported to identify and report suspected harm of children, demonstrating the service commitment to believing children and keeping them safe. This is in reference to:

- disclosures.
- incidents of inappropriate behaviour around children.
- suspicion of harm or neglect.
- potential grooming.

- serious physical assault of a child.

The service culture encourages staff to make a protected disclosure if they have reasonable concerns in relation to the conduct of another staff member, without fear of victimisation or unfair treatment. (refer "Protected Disclosures Policy").

Throughout this process the organisation will ensure all stakeholders are supported, through the understanding of clear documentation outlining what will occur after an allegation is made, and proposed timeframes. The Pre-School will ensure:

- every action is clear, transparent, and fair.
- all legislative reporting requirements are met.
- there is a clear process and timeframe for resolution.
- the child / children will remain empowered throughout the process.
- how breaches of conduct will be dealt with, including when disciplinary action will be implemented.

Actions Following an Allegation including Notifying and Investigating Reportable Allegations

The Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor are required to ensure that:

- Documented systems are in place for preventing, detecting and responding to reportable allegations or convictions. These include ensuring that all policies and procedures are adhered to, Working with Children checks and Criminal Record Checks are completed appropriately and documentation kept, ensuring all employees sign a position description and Code of Conduct, and ensuring effective leadership.
- Any investigation or process involving an employee is conducted in a fair way.
- All allegations of abuse will be reported to the Child Safety Contact Officer / Nominated Supervisor and will be taken seriously. If a child is "at risk of significant harm", a report will be made to the Child Protection Helpline. A determination will also be made in reference to contacting the police. This will be done by undertaking a risk management approach following an allegation to ensure the protection and safety of children, staff and visitors to the service. Based on this risk assessment, decisions will be made in order to manage the risks that have been identified. (See Action Plan 1).
- All allegations of child abuse or neglect made against staff members must immediately be referred to the Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor, using the "Complaint Record Form" in the "Child Safe Folder".
- The Police are contacted immediately, if the allegation is of potential criminal conduct.
- The Reportable Conduct Directorate will be contacted for advice (02) 8219 3800 or at reportableconduct@kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au.
- A notification will be made within the earlier of 72hours after the event or 24hours after becoming aware of the notifiable event through the ACECQA NQAITS portal, using the "Notification of Serious Incident" form (SI01). This is the responsibility of the Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor. Under the National Law and National Regulations, the Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor must notify the NSW Early Learning Commission within 24 hours of a complaint made by any person alleging that:
 - a serious incident has occurred or is occurring while a child was being educated and cared for by the service, and/or
 - the National Law has been breached (section 174(2)(b) of the National Law)

An actual breach of the law does not have to be proven before a notification is made. Once an allegation is made of a breach of the National Law, you must notify the NSW Early Learning Commission.

- **If the NSW Early Learning Commission and/or police are already investigating a reportable allegation against an employee, the Pre-School is still required to notify the Office of the Children's Guardian of the allegation and, make a notification within 24hours, through the ACECQA NQAITS portal, using the "Notification of Serious Incident" form (SI01). This is the responsibility of the Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor. However, consultation will be made with those bodies before taking any other action (except action to address any immediate risks).**
- An internal investigation may be initiated in response to the allegation and information gathered.
- A meeting will occur between the Approved Provider, (President), Nominated Supervisor and the staff member against who the allegation is made, under instruction from the Reporting agency/investigating authority. This is in relation to the information which can be shared and when. The staff member will be made aware of the allegation against her / him and advised that a response is not required at this stage; entitled to have a support person present during any interviews; informed of the ongoing investigatory procedures; offered counselling or support; advised about his / her employment status during the period of investigation.
- The investigation may include a statement from the person who made the allegation, statements from witnesses, a statement from the person against whom the allegation has been made and any other relevant documentation.
- A risk assessment will determine if a change is required in relation to the employee's duties or if a suspension is required.

- The Approved Provider, (President), must tell a child's parent as soon as practicable, but not later than 24 hours, if their child is involved in an incident, while being educated and cared for by the service. Advice will be sought from the investigating authority to determine what information to share, and support will be offered.
- A notification to the Office of the Children's Guardian is made within 7 days of becoming aware of a reportable allegation or conviction against an employee of the Pre-School. This is the responsibility of the Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor. Information is provided to the Children's Guardian, that is required under relevant provisions of the Act. This may include information about the reportable allegation, the entity's response to a reportable allegation and systems for preventing and responding to reportable allegations.
- As soon as practicable after receiving the reportable allegation, arrangements are to be made for it to be investigated / determined by an external, independent investigator. The investigation will be completed within a reasonable time, having regard to the principles of procedural fairness and the mandatory considerations.
- The parents/carers of the child may receive information about the allegation, the progress of the investigation, the findings and actions taken, unless the Pre-School / investigating authority, determines that it is not in the public interest to do so.
- The privacy of the employee is protected, (refer the "Protected Disclosure Policy")., with an appropriate level of confidentiality of information relating to reportable allegations being ensured. This includes only disclosing information about the allegations in circumstances permitted by the Act or other legislation or any disciplinary process involving an employee.
- By 30 calendar days after the Pre-School becomes aware of the reportable allegation, either a finalised "*Entity Report*" or an "*Interim Report*" is provided to the Office of the Children's Guardian. The interim report will provide reasons why the investigation has not been completed and an estimated timeframe for completion. This is the responsibility of the Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor.
- At the end of the investigation of a reportable allegation, the Pre-School must send a report to the Office of the Children's Guardian using the "*Entity Report*". This is the responsibility of the Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor.
- The Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor will communicate any decision to staff, while maintaining confidentiality.
- Any decision to terminate an employee as a consequence of a disciplinary process, will be fair and substantiated.

Engaging with and Providing Support to Staff

This will be through a meeting with the Nominated Supervisor and Approved Provider, (President), and under instruction from the Reporting agency, when necessary. The staff member against whom an allegation has been made will be:

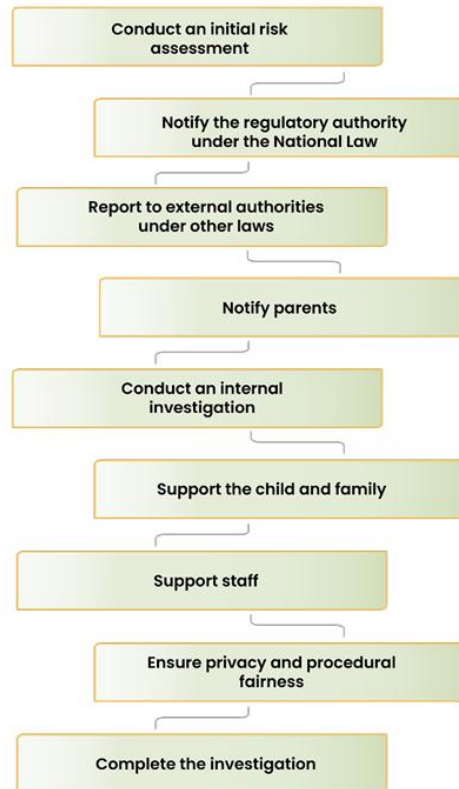
- made aware of the allegation against her / him and advised that a response is not required at this stage.
- entitled to have a support person present during any interviews with the Approved Provider, (President). Fellow staff members are excluded from this support role.
- informed of the ongoing investigatory procedures, and of his / her right to contact the NSW Early Learning Commission and the police, if applicable.
- encouraged to contact support services/people.
- offered counselling or support.
- advised about his / her employment status during the period of investigation.
- informed of the outcome of the investigation itself, in writing.
- informed of the substance of final report sent to OCG.
- made aware of appeal mechanisms and their right to appeal.

Staff involved in the process in other ways, will be informed of requirements to maintain privacy and confidentiality. Support and opportunities for debriefing and support will also be provided. This will include staff who:

- receive a complaint,
- receive a disclosure,
- provide support to the family,
- are required to participate during any external or internal investigations.

Complaints process

The following diagram explains the steps to take after receiving a complaint:



Conducting an Internal Investigation

The Approved Provider, (President), and Nominated Supervisor will decide whether an internal or external investigation is needed. The process will be in line with the service's complaints handling process and comply with reporting requirements under the National Law, and any reporting requirements under other laws. The service will:

- ensure any investigation is fair to both the child and the adult, or child whom concerns or allegations have been made about.
- establish whether the complaint is about child safety or staff misconduct.
- work with authorities including the police, NSW Early Learning Commission or child protection agency, if needed.
- find out from that authority what the next steps in the external investigation will be, what contribution (if any) the service can make to that process, and whether the service can start or continue its own investigation.
- if the complaint is about online harm, file a report with the ACCCE and eSafety Commissioner.
- carefully plan the investigation process to avoid causing more trauma to the child.
- have one trusted Educator as the contact person for the child.
- inform the child's parent or guardian, unless directed by an external authority not to do so, and seek guidance from external authorities on when and how this conversation occurs.
- seek guidance from external authorities to determine if it is appropriate to talk to staff, other children and families at the service, and what level of information to provide.
- offer a community member's presence for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children, culturally and linguistically diverse children, or children with additional needs.
- identify any specific needs the child has, like communication support.
- ensure anyone who interviews children, has had appropriate training.
- make sure any interviews with children are safe, comfortable, and only happen once.
- let the child explain what happened in their own words.
- use open-ended questions like 'Please tell me about what happened?'
- avoid asking too many questions as this may overwhelm a child.

If the allegation is of a serious nature, the service will engage an external investigator to complete this process.

Records and Informing Workers

- It is important that records are kept of any allegation raised in the organisation. The Office of the Children's Guardian has developed a Complaint Record Form that shows the information to be kept. A copy of the form and other resources can be found on the OCG website and the service "Child Safe Folder".
- A reporting body must keep records of all allegations, investigations, and findings of misconduct for at least 30 years unless the records are given to the Children's guardian.
- If a reporting body ceases to trade and there is no successor body, the records need to be lodged with the Children's Guardian before the reporting body ceases to exist.
- In certain circumstances, including changes of findings or the rectification of errors, a reporting body may have to alter a notification made to the Children's Guardian.
- A reporting body must also – as soon as practicable after making a notification or amending or withdrawing a notification – give written notice to the child-related worker who is the subject of the notification, amendment, or withdrawal.

The Educator/individual, will be advised of the outcome of the investigation in writing. Advice will be provided about the investigation finding and any follow up action that may be required. Advice will also be provided about any rights of appeal and the person will be advised that the Office of the Children's Guardian has been notified.

Exchange of information

The Children and Young Person (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012 allows information to be exchanged between specified people and agencies without the consent of an individual, where there is significant risk of harm to a child. Information can also be shared without an individual's consent if there is a serious and imminent threat to any person's health or safety.

A "prescribed body" is any organisation specified in The Children and Young Person (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012.

"Prescribed bodies" under the legislation are:

- NSW Police;
- A government department or a public authority;
- A government school or a registered non-government school or a TAFE;
- A public health organisation or a private hospital;
- A private fostering agency or a private adoption agency;
- Agencies that provide residential child care or a child care service under the Act;
- Any other organisations that have direct responsibility for, or supervision of, the provision of healthcare, welfare, education, children's services, residential services, or law enforcement, to children;
- The Family Court of Australia (for the purposes of section 248 but not Chapter 16A);
- Centrelink (for the purposes of section 248 but not Chapter 16A);
- Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Aboriginal Affairs (for the purposes of section 248 but not Chapter 16A).

The information shared must relate to safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person, and can only be shared with a "prescribed body" if it relates to:

- a child's history or circumstances
- a parent or other family member
- people having a significant or relevant relationship with a child
- the other agencies' dealings with the child, including past support or service arrangements

An agency is not required to disclose information if they believe it would prejudice a criminal investigation or inquest, endanger a life or it is not in the public interest.

It is recommended the information is to be exchanged in written form however, it may be exchanged verbally where there is an established arrangement between agencies. However, a written record of the verbal exchange is required and will be stored securely on the premises.

Making a Notification to NESA

The Teacher Accreditation Act (TA Act) and the Teacher Accreditation Manual (TA Manual) require employers to notify NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) of decisions and/or information that could affect a teacher's accreditation, including teacher misconduct matters.

NESA is responsible for the accreditation of teachers in NSW. NESA has the sole regulatory authority to suspend, cancel, revoke, or impose conditions on a teacher's accreditation in response to criminal and/or misconduct matters.

The Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor will inform NESA of any relevant decisions and provide information relevant to any grounds for suspension or revocation of a teacher's accreditation. This notification is required under section 42B of

the TA Act and permitted under Chapter 16A of the “Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998, No 157 (CP Act).

When must NESA be notified?

Principals and/or employers must provide information to NESA;

- where the teacher is no longer engaged or is suspended from employment¹, or placed on alternate duties outside of a classroom/service environment on the basis of a serious risk to children/students or colleagues during an investigation
- when a decision is made to dismiss, or accept the resignation of a teacher prior to being dismissed, for conduct that may reflect adversely on their professional standing, integrity, suitability, or competence to teach
- where the employer becomes aware of a teacher being charged or convicted of a criminal offence that could result in the suspension or revocation of their accreditation
- in any case where the teacher’s conduct or behaviour may impact on their accreditation.

Making a Notification

The notification will be made by emailing the completed “*Employer Notification Form – Misconduct*” and all relevant documents to TANotifications@nesa.nsw.edu.au. Enquiries can be made to **1300 739 338**.

Information NESA requires includes:

- A completed “*Employer Notification Form – Misconduct*”
- Attach a copy of all relevant documents. This may include:
 - a. investigation report(s)
 - b. letters of allegations, show cause, preliminary and final findings
 - c. letters related to decisions about a teacher’s employment, eg: termination of employment/dismissal, resignation or Deed of Release or Deed of Settlement
 - d. Teacher’s responses to the allegations, preliminary and final findings, show cause letter and any primary evidence relied upon in an investigation, eg: statements, file notes, interview transcripts, copies of text/email messages, images, photos, CCTV footage/video stills, medical evidence provided by the teacher
 - e. the current status of the teacher’s employment arrangements, eg: teacher on alternate duties or teacher suspended with, or without, pay.

Once the assessment is complete, NESA will inform the teacher of the decision regarding their ongoing accreditation in NSW. This includes providing the teacher 14 days written notice of an intention to revoke or suspend their accreditation and advice that the teacher may make a submission to NESA. NESA then informs the teacher of the final decision including the reason/s for the decision and internal review options. In cases where a teacher’s accreditation is revoked or suspended, NESA will inform:

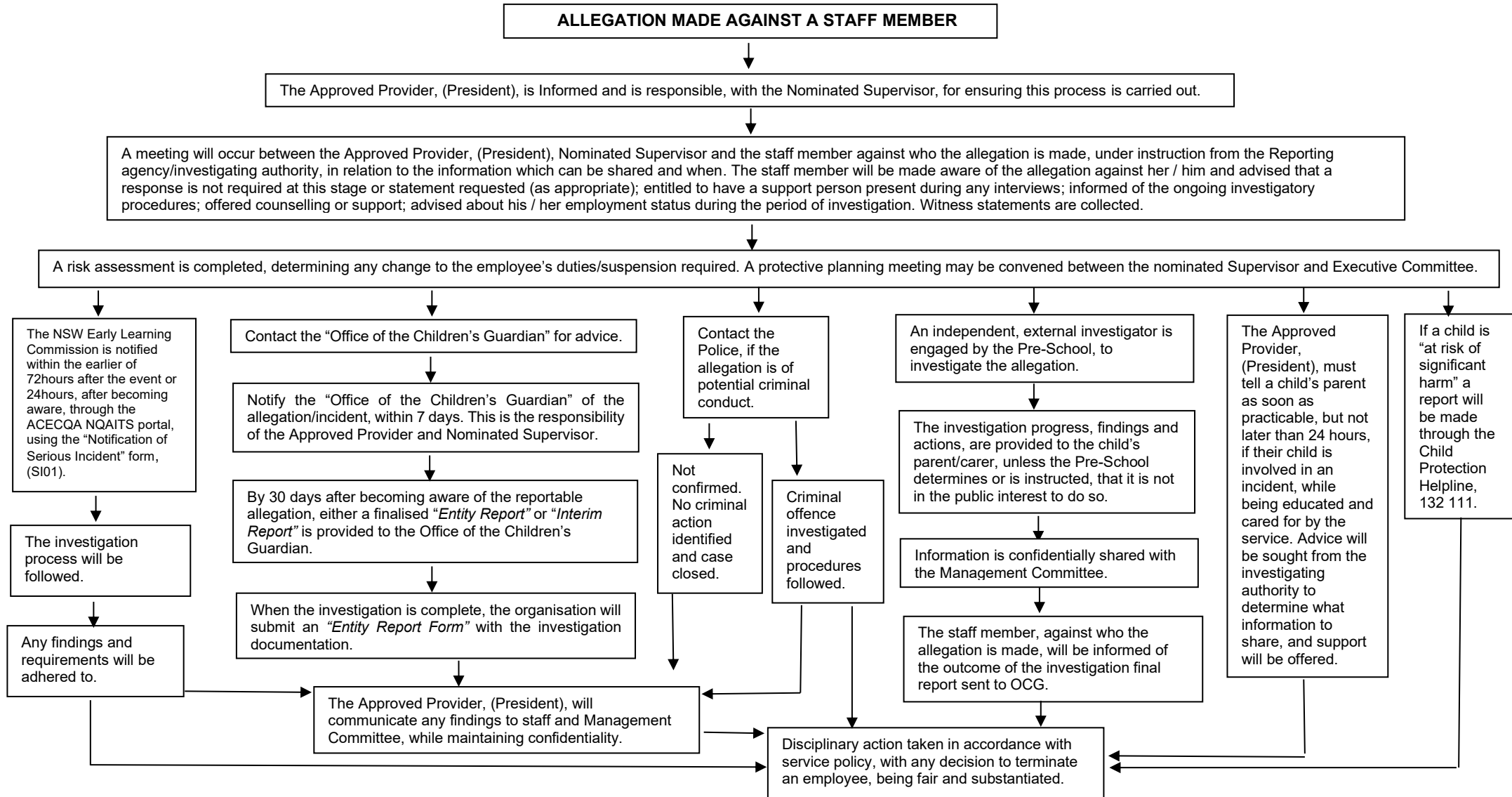
- the teacher’s employer, (if they are still employed).
- all interstate teacher regulatory authorities.
- other regulatory agencies eg: Office of the Children’s Guardian (OCG), NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) where relevant.

SINGLETON HEIGHTS PRE-SCHOOL INC.



ACTION PLAN 3

Process of Investigation Following Allegation against Staff



SINGLETON HEIGHTS PRE-SCHOOL INC.



CONFIDENTIAL RECORD OF CONCERN – STAFF ALLEGATION

(Action Plan 3)

Name of Staff Member: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Name of Notifier: _____

Name of Educator's involved/present at the incident: _____

Name of child/children involved: _____

Location of Incident: _____

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT OF CONCERN:

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This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Reported to Police: Yes ☐ No ☐

Name of Licensee: _____ Signature: _____

CONTACT LIST

The Child Protection Helpline
Telephone: 132111
(Mandatory Reporters)

Lifeline
(24 hours)
Telephone: 131114

N.S.W. Ombudsman
Telephone: 1800 451 524

Kids Helpline
Freecall: 1800 551 800 (24 hrs)

NSW Parent Line
Telephone: 1300 130 052

Domestic Violence Line
Telephone: 1800 656 463

Singleton Family Support
Telephone: 6572 4288

Victims Support Line
Telephone: 1800 633 063

Sexual Assault Centres,
Department of Health
Listed in white pages under "H"
For Hunter New England Health

Child Abuse Prevention Service (CAPS)
Freecall: 1800 424 017 or within

Singleton Community Health Service
Telephone: 6571 9248

Benevolent Society / Family Referral Service
Telephone: 1300 006 480

NSW Mental Health Line
Telephone: 131114

Rape Crisis Centre
Freecall: 1800 424 017

Translating & Interpreter Services
Telephone: 131450

Quality Assurance History

Date	Reason for Review	Consultation Process	Changes made	Date Adopted
02/2021	Creation of new policy	Nominated Supervisor, Management Committee and Educators	N/A	04/2021
04/2022	New documents available for risk management	Nominated Supervisor, Management Committee and Educators	Additions to vulnerable children, grooming and long term effects.	06/2022
07/23	Scheduled review	Nominated Supervisor	Nil	N/A
03/24	Change to Regulation references.	Nominated Supervisor	Regulation references.	N/A
04/24	Change to regulation references and closure of CCSA	Nominated Supervisor	Regulation references and removal of CCSA reference	N/A
07/24	New guidelines received	Nominated Supervisor, Staff, Management Committee, Parents	Policy Created	07/2024
07/25	New "Child Safety – NQF Child Safe Culture Guide" and Child Safe requirements.	Nominated Supervisor, Educators, Families and Management Committee	References to the new "Child Safety – NQF Child Safe Culture Guide" and Child Safe requirements.	07/25
10/25	Update to allegation processes.	Nominated Supervisor, Educators, Families and Management Committee	Approved Provider references and Action Plan.	10/25
04/26	Regulatory Authority name change	Nominated Supervisor	Name change completed	N/A
05/26	New NESA reporting requirements	Nominated Supervisor, Management Committee and Educators	Addition of paramountcy information, NESA reporting requirements, "Protected Disclosure" and child protection register information.	05/26