



Dara School

Out of School Hours Care

**Child Protection Policy
and
Procedure**

CHILD PROTECTION OSHC POLICY

1. PURPOSE

All staff at our service take seriously their responsibility to protect children from any type of abuse, neglect, violence or exploitation and are aware of their roles and responsibilities regarding child protection. It is the legal and moral obligation of every adult who works with children to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

We will implement a child protection risk management strategy to ensure the safety of each child is paramount. The service will always act quickly in the best interests of a child.

2. SCOPE

This duty of care is held by all of those involved in the Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) service, including owners, sponsors, advisory committees, licensees, coordinators, casual and permanent childcare professionals, and volunteers.

3. POLICY PRINCIPLES

The Dara OSHC Service stakeholders are committed to the provision of a secure environment in which children can grow and be safe. Educators and staff have an obligation to all children attending the service and are committed to defending their right to care and protection. To support this right and to ensure children's protection, the service complies with the procedures set down under the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, Part 1 and Part 2 when dealing with any allegations of abuse or neglect of children.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff members, and volunteers will implement a Child Protection Risk Management Strategy to ensure the health, wellbeing, and safety of all children at the service. We will initiate and maintain ongoing planning and commitment to a safe and supportive environment so children:

- feel safe and protected from harm
- help plan activities and make decisions
- are consulted and respected
- have their best interests considered and upheld.

The child protection risk management strategy consists of:

1. Code of Conduct

The service upholds a Code of Conduct concerning employers, educators, volunteers, students, families, and children to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children (See Educator and Management Policy).

2. Recruitment, Selection, and Training Procedures include child protection principles.

The Approved Provider is responsible for developing recruitment and professional development procedures that ensure all people working at the service do not pose a risk to children and understand how to respond to disclosures or suspicions of harm and abuse. (See Appendix A and Educator and Management Policy “Professional Development Requirements).

3. Procedures for Reporting and Documenting Abuse or Neglect

4. Procedures for Managing Breaches

5. Risk Management for High-Risk Activity

6. Information for Families

5. Procedures for Reporting and Documenting Abuse or Neglect

The World Health Organization ([WHO], 2006, p. 9) defines child abuse and neglect as:

All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development, or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

Recruitment and Screening

Dara School will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children, as designated by legislation. We employ a range of screening measures and apply best-practice standards in the screening and recruitment of employees and volunteers. We interview and conduct referee checks on all employees and prospective employees as well as mandatory Working with Children Checks, and Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care (RRHAN-EC) training. The screening requirements for employees, volunteers, and other designated persons will meet legislated requirements and national standards. All people within the scope of this policy will have a valid Working with Children Check and renew it every five years.

Training and Support

Staff and volunteers will receive training that explains their child protection responsibilities before commencing any activities at the School.

Child protection training will outline the roles and responsibilities as a mandated notifier. School staff, counsellors or staff designated to provide advocacy and wellbeing will meet job and person specifications and will receive ongoing professional development.

Conduct

Staff and volunteers are expected to relate respectfully with all members of the education team and community (including one another). Staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report and intervene against behaviours that compromise the safety or wellbeing of children.

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

All staff will follow approved student attendance, behaviour management and incident policies.

All staff will meet adult conduct requirements as outlined by legislation, state government codes and licensing or regulations.

Allegations against staff or volunteers will be referred to the police for investigation by the appropriate authority and decisions about placement of the individual facing the allegation will be made in the best interests of the child.

Supervision

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

Relationships with children

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

Responding to a child's disclosure

It is important that when a child discloses an allegation of abuse, staff are ready to listen carefully. Finding a quiet, private place to talk and allowing a child to tell their story using their own words is important. Childcare professionals should avoid asking leading questions or probing for information that the child is not ready to disclose. It is important that the child is reassured that they have a right to feel safe and have done the right thing in telling someone what has happened. Staff should let the child know that they believe them and will try to help them.

Legal responsibilities for mandated notifiers

It is an individual's personal responsibility to report suspected abuse and/or neglect. It is not the responsibility of the employer, manager or supervisor. The notifier must form a reasonable suspicion that abuse or neglect has occurred but does not need to wait for proof.

The notification report will contain a statement of the observations, information and opinions on which the suspicion is based. All notifiers are immune from civil and criminal liability for reporting suspicions in good faith (section 31 of the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017) and the notifier's name is protected in most cases. Feedback about how the notification is being responded to, will be provided on a need-to-know basis and will be subject to confidentiality principles. Mandated notifiers have a legal responsibility to make reports, it is an expectation that they will notify the Department of Child Protection through the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 when there is a suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child has been abused and/or neglected.

Reasonable grounds may include:

- when observations of a particular child's behaviour and/or injuries, or knowledge of children generally leads to a suspicion that abuse is occurring;
- when a child says that he/she has been abused;
- a child says that they know of someone who has been abused (she/he may possibly referring to her/himself); or
- when someone who is in a position to provide reliable information, perhaps a relative or friend, neighbour, or sibling of the child says a child is at risk.
- **To make a report**
- All serious concerns MUST be reported via phone and not through the online system in the first instance.
- Ring the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) 13 14 78 and follow the phone prompts to the service for Education and Care Settings or Yaitya Tirramangkotti if the notification concerns an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child or young person.
- Complete the mandatory notification record form. Print out the information and provide it to the Director. Delete the mandatory notification record form from the electronic file and do not place it in the student file.
- Limit details in the mandatory notification record form to factual information (as far as possible) and be aware that this document may be produced under subpoena in court.
- When filling out the mandatory notification record form, be aware that while the name of the person making the notification will in most cases be protected from disclosure, other names included on the mandated notification record form as having contributed to the notification may not be protected from disclosure.
- Any actions recommended by the Department of Child Protection must be recorded on the mandatory notification record form and reported to the Director, as the Director has the duty of care responsibility in directing further actions to support the child or young person.
- Following a notification, the Director will store the mandatory notification record form in a secure, confidential file and may wish to discuss the report with the staff member to determine further actions or support for the child or young person. The actions

may include the Director contacting the child's family and/or referral to therapeutic or support services.

- Following the notification, the Director will report to the Principal.

Notification of those involved in the Service

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

Documentation

The Service will maintain well-kept records to prepare and support its ability to make a report. All documentation will remain strictly confidential. Staff members should make a record of what they have heard, observed, and done and should sign and date their notes whilst using the following principles of good record keeping:

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

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

6. OTHER OSHC POLICIES OR DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THIS POLICY

H8 Interactions with Children OSHC Policy

A5 Confidentiality OSHC Policy

A9 Staffing OSHC Policy

H1 Child Safe Environment OSHC Policy

A6 Grievance OSHC Policy

7. RELATIONSHIP TO REGULATIONS

National Quality Standards (NQS)

Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety

Education and Care Services National Regulations

168 Education and care services must have policies and procedures

103-110 Centre based services and family day care services

111-115 Additional requirements for centre-based services

8. REFERENCES

Child Protection Policy and Guidelines accessed 12 May 2022 at www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse/report-child-abuse-or-neglect

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child accessed 12 May 2022 at www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention

Child Abuse Report Line (CARL)- 131 478 – accessed 26 May 2022

www.reportchildabuse.families.sa.gov.au

Department of Education training

[Notification \(lawhandbook.sa.gov.au\)](http://www.notification.lawhandbook.sa.gov.au)

Early Years Learning Framework 2009 accessed 12 May 2022

[A09-057 EYLF Framework Report WEB.indd \(acecqa.gov.au\)](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/A09-057-EYLF-Framework-Report-WEB.indd)

Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (www.legislation.sa.gov.au) accessed 12 May 2022

Equal Opportunity Act 1984 accessed on 20 March 2022 from www.legislation.sa.gov.au

Equal Opportunity (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act 2009 [Equal Opportunity \(Miscellaneous\) Amendment Act 2009 | South Australian Legislation](http://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/Equal-Opportunity-Miscellaneous-Amendment-Act-2009)

World Health Organization. (2006). *Preventing child maltreatment: A guide to taking action and generating evidence*. Geneva: WHO. Accessed on 20 March 2022 from <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/43499>

Child Family Community Australia, accessed 28 November 2021 at <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/what-child-abuse-and-neglect>

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