



CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

CMMS-LC-M-PRO 0-04

CONTENTS

OVERVIEW OF PROCEDURES2

DEFINITION OF CHILD MALTREATMENTS:.....3

INDICATORS OF CHILD ABUSE:5

ABUSERS AND EFFECTS9

THE DETERENTS9

OBSERVATION/DISCLOSURE AND REPORTING 12

CHILDREN LEFT AT SCHOOL 17

ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE..... 17

VICTIMISATION.....17

BREACHES OF THE STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT 17

RELATED DOCUMENTS, FORMS ,INFORMATION SOURCES 16

Approved by:	Authorised by:	Document Controller:
CMM Board	Principal	Principal
Date: 27/02/2018	Date: 27/02/2018	Date: 23/01/18

REVISION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	ORIGINATED BY
1	17/02/2018	Comprehensive review and update in line with new Legislation and Regulatory Requirements	Janet Laing
2	10/02/2020	Review – inclusive School Code of Conduct	Janet Laing

1. Overview of Procedures

The procedures that form the actions to prevent, detect and report child abuse are varied and across several areas and stakeholders.

1.1 PREVENTION:

1.1.1 Education of the school staff and teaching staff on;

- the definitions of child maltreatment
- Indicators of child abuse and neglect
- The theoretical typologies of offenders and the impact of the effect of abuse

1.1.2 The deterrents for child abusers that are in place through instructing of the community stakeholders and the school infrastructure: Human Resources policies and procedures; Duty of Care procedures; School Code of Conduct; Complaints Management: Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures; Volunteers Policy and Procedures; Management of Bullying Policy and Procedures; marketing messages via the school website, Facebook page

1.1.3 The education programme of the children: Practical Life Skills of Care of self-including safety in the use of the internet, Protective Behaviours Curriculum

1.2 RECOGNITION AND RESPONDING:

1.2.1 Observation or disclosure, notification and support of a student at risk or are victims of abuse or neglect.

1.2.2 Response to disclosure to abuse or neglect including confidentiality and privacy responsibilities

1.2.3 Children left at school

1.3 INFORMING:

Informing parents of the content of the Child Protection Policy and Procedures via direct distribution of the policy and procedures; articles in the school newsletter; parent evenings

2. Definition of Child Maltreatment

The term child maltreatment refers to any non-accidental behaviour by adults or children that is outside the norms of conduct and entails risk of harm to a child or young person. The behaviours may be intentional or unintentional.

It may be the result or action or inaction on the part of a person who has responsibility to care for a child resulting in harm or injury to the child. The harm may include delayed physical and/or intellectual development. The maltreatment experienced is normally described in five categories. Each category of maltreatment is described by a range of indications listed below.

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional including psychological
- Neglect
- Family and domestic violence

2.1 Physical abuse

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

2.2 Sexual Abuse

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

2.3 Emotional Abuse

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

Included under emotional abuse is psychological abuse. This abuse damages a child's intellectual faculties and processes, including intelligence, memory, recognition, perception, attention, imagination and moral development. Children are likely to feel worthless, flawed, unloved, unwanted, endangered or only of value in meeting another's needs.

2.4 Neglect

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

2.5 Grooming

Staff must be aware of the difference between grooming and child abuse; be aware that grooming is carried out to lower the child and or family inhibitions to the aim of child abuse.

Grooming is the deliberate actions undertaken to engage in sexual activity with a child.

It is different from sexual abuse in that it is primarily a preparatory activity occurring before abuse occurs but is continued during and after abuse to ensure the safety of the groomer.

3. Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive but contains those that will be of most use to staff. This list has been taken from the Department for Child Protection document "Identifying and responding to child abuse and neglect – A Guide for Professionals".

Students frequently show indicators from more than one category; and the examples listed are not necessarily exclusive to a single category of abuse. Any of these indicators may suggest that a student is being abused, neglected or at risk of harm; however, indicators should be considered in the context of the student's age, medical and developmental history, and capabilities. In addition, mental illness, substance abuse and domestic violence within families must also be considered.

The single most helpful item for staff to consider is the deviation from normal or baseline behaviour of a child. A child who has been abused experiences mixed emotional and physical responses to abuse and may well be confused by the disconnect between respect/love for the abuser and abhorrence or ambivalence to the abuse itself.

PHYSICAL ABUSE		
Physical Indicators	Child Behavioural Indicators	Other Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broken bones, unexplained bruises, burns, welts in various stages of healing • Hair missing in tufts • Lacerations and abrasions especially to the eyes, lips, gums and mouth • Missing or loosened teeth • Self-mutilation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child is unable to explain an injury or explanations given are inconsistent, vague or bizarre • Direct admissions from the parents that they are concerned that they might harm their child • Repeated presentations by the child of injuries, ingestions or minor complaints • Child is unusually frightened of a parent or carer • Legs and arms are kept covered by inappropriate clothing in warm conditions • Ingestion of poisonous substances including drugs or alcohol • The avoidance of physical contact by the child particularly of a parent or carer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A history of family violence • Marked delay between injury and obtaining medical assistance • A parent who shows little concern about the welfare of their child or the treatment and care of the injury

SEXUAL ABUSE		
<p>Physical Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain or bleeding in the anal or genital areas with redness or swelling • Blood stained underwear • Signs of pain, itching or discomfort in the genital area • Urinary tract infections • Pregnancy or fear of pregnancy 	<p>Child behaviour Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexualised behaviours inappropriate to their age including sexually touching other children and themselves and wearing inappropriate clothing • Knowledge of sexual behaviour inappropriate to their age • Disclosure of abuse either directly or indirectly through drawings, play or writing that describes abuse or in a disguised way e.g. I know a person who... • Fear of being alone with a person • A child implying that he/she is required to keep secrets • Poor peer relationships • Inappropriate expressions of affection • Inappropriate interest in sexual matters • Possession of pornographic materials • Use of sexual language inappropriate for child's age • Reluctance to change clothes in front of others • Inability to concentrate at school • Fear states: e.g. anxiety, depression, obsessively neat, socially withdraw or overly compliant behaviour 	<p>Other indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presence of sexually transmitted disease

EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

Physical indicators:

- Depression
- Eating disorders (anorexia or bulimia)
- Lethargy or fatigue
- Symptoms of stress
- Evidence of drug abuse or dependence
- Wetting, soiling, smearing
- Psychosomatic complaints

Child Behaviour indicators:

- The child exhibits extremes in behaviour from overly aggressive to overly passive
- Delayed physical, emotional or intellectual behaviour
- Compulsive lying or stealing
- High levels of anxiety
- Lack of trust in people
- Feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves
- Uncharacteristic seeking of attention or affection
- Reluctance to go home
- Rocking, sucking thumbs or self-harming behaviour
- Fearfulness when approached by a person known to them
- Attempted suicide
- Excessive shyness
- Fire setting
- Truancy or school avoidance
- Deliberate harming of animals
- Poor peer relationships

Other indicators:

- The parent/carer who constantly criticises, threatens, belittles, insults or rejects the child with no evidence of love, support or guidance

NEGLECT		
<p>Physical indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abandonment • Poor hygiene • Lack of adequate or suitable clothing • Inadequate nutrition • Lack of medical or dental care • Constant fatigue • Untreated sore, boils or lice • Lack of adequate supervision • hunger 	<p>Child behaviour indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental delays • Falling asleep at school • Poor school attendance or alternatively always attending school even when sick • Poor academic performance • Steals or begs for food or eats food from the bins • Dull apathetic appearance • Engages in vandalism • Engages in in sexual misconduct • Uses drugs or alcohol • Arrives early at school or reluctant to leave • Child states there is no one at home to provide car/supervision 	<p>Other indicators:</p>

GROOMING		
	<p>Child Behaviour Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child is holding a secret • Child spends long hours on the internet • Child talks about a special friend made through the internet 	<p>Other indicators:</p> <p>Grooming behaviour with children may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • selecting, befriending a child and gaining his or her trust, exploiting the child’s vulnerabilities; • testing a child’s boundaries through telling inappropriate jokes, roughhousing, backrubs, tickling, or sexual games; • moving from non-sexual touching to “accidental” sexual touching. This typically happens

GROOMING

		<p>during play so the child may not even identify it as purposeful, inappropriate touching. It is often done slowly so the child is gradually desensitized to the touch;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">manipulating the child to not tell anyone about what is happening. The abuser may use a child's fear, embarrassment, or guilt about what has happened. Sometimes, the abuser uses bribery, threats, or coercion;causing the child to feel responsible for the abuse. Children may not notice or may become confused as the contact becomes increasingly intimate and sexual. May include but not limited to: <p>In addition to grooming behaviours the groomer will use deflection strategies which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">promotes self and creates a reputation as caring, child-loving, competent, available, trustworthy, truthful;raises doubts about the motives, mental health, reliability of the child or anyone else who might approach support services with allegations;fosters dependency as someone the family can rely on; andpositively represents child to others so as to be perceived as someone who would never harm the child.
--	--	---

4. The theoretical typologies of offenders and the impact of the effect of abuse

1. There is no set profile of an abuser

A child abuser can be a member of the family (father, stepfather, mother etc.) or someone close to the family or the child (church member, teacher, community group leader). There is no reliable profile of a child sexual abuser and institutions and communities must be vigilant for those in their care.

A child abuser usually spends enough time grooming the child so the child is made to feel that they are in some way complicit in the acts, thus making disclosure a difficult process.

Many child sex abusers hold positions of trust within the community with ready access to children and their families. Occupations that some convicted child sex offenders have held include bus driver, entertainer, teacher, scout leader, librarian, principal, church leader, judge.

2. All abuse has an impact and can be life changing

Children or young people are at significant risk of developing psychological and emotional problems later in life, and at risk of repeating the pattern of abuse with their own children, through an inter-generational mechanism.

5. The deterrents for a child abuser

5.1 Identifying Stakeholders

The stakeholders of this policy and procedures are all staff of Casa Mia Montessori School including teachers, assistants, administrative staff, relief teachers and assistants, specialist teachers, volunteers and parents.

All staff will acquaint themselves with the School Code of Conduct and this policy and procedures and will endeavour to provide a school environment which the children can trust and feel safe in.

5.2 Infrastructure to support the Child Protection Policy and Procedures

5.2.1 Effective Human Resources Practices

- Structured and formalised recruitment and selection processes
- Clarification at all stages of the recruitments and selection process of the School's commitment to the protection of the children particularly in Induction and Probation
- Assessment of all positions in the school community; identification of high risk positions and the establishment of safeguards to protect both employees from placing themselves in vulnerable situations and students from being abused e.g. the younger children are changed in front of the viewing window of the toilets; an adult may not be with a student on their own.
- Clear position descriptions with defined roles and responsibilities

- The use of several different tools to screen for selection e.g. application forms, reference checks, interviews.
- Appropriate processes for informing and screening for all positions in the school community. This includes people such as friends and family of current employees, and parents whose services may be utilised for a short period to 'help out'. Screening is the process of giving and gathering information about an applicant for employment or volunteering in order they and the School may make informed choices whether to apply or employ. Screening includes structured referee checks, criminal history checks, checks with past or current employers for any disciplinary records. In addition, there is access to the Western Australian Teacher Registration Board for teaching staff and the Working with Children Check to ensure that people are not employed where there are unresolved allegations of abuse or a non-issue of the working with children check.
- Advise potential employees of the requirement that they participate in orientation, supervision, training and performance management.
- Implement professional behaviour standards through the School Code of Conduct, the Staff handbook and school policies and procedures.
- Have a pool of employees or volunteers who have been screened to enable emergency staffing needs to be met.
- Monitor and review recruitment and selection processes.
- Provide staff with regular training both external and in-house to equip them with the skills to address the duty of care needs of the child.
- Staff Attendance – Daily records of staff attendance, hours of attendance and classroom/class contact.

5.2.2 Supporting policies and procedures:

- ✓ Management of Bullying
- ✓ Outdoor Procedures
- ✓ Access to Students
- ✓ Children leaving school during school hours
- ✓ Excursion
- ✓ Photographs
- ✓ Privacy
- ✓ Visitors
- ✓ Acceptable use of mobile phones and the internet
- ✓ Reporting

- ✓ Complaints
- ✓ Behaviour Management
- ✓ School Code of Conduct
- ✓ School Handbook
- ✓ Staff Handbook
- ✓ Volunteers
- ✓ Attendance

5.2.3 Espousal of School Values

Casa Mia Montessori School Values are individual-responsibility and community spirit. These values are demonstrated when practices that promote personal growth and wellbeing are encouraged and community life is maintained through the encouragement of a sense of belonging and acceptance.

These activities support the specific educational programmes that provide are of self and protective behaviours for the children, staff and parents.

5.2.4 Specific Educational Programmes

The school curriculum has a comprehensive, realistic age appropriate personal safety component enabling the students to recognise their own feelings of insecurity and fear, recognise abuse and report it, understand power in relationships and develop protective strategies including seeking help.

5.2.5 Staff Training in delivering the Protective Behaviour Curriculum

Protective behaviours curriculum area is on the fortnightly staff meeting agenda to ensure the continuous delivery of the protective behaviour curriculum. Ideas and results are discussed and recorded in the staff meeting.

Staff are sent on professional development for the Protective Behaviour Curriculum and in Mandatory reporting annually.

The Montessori Element of Practical Life – Care of Self is a fundamental part of the school curriculum.

5.2.6 Informing parents and the community

Parents and the community are informed through the school newsletter and parent evenings of the practises in the school to provide their children with protection. Parent information sessions are organised.

The school website states the care levels for the children, provides a copy of the School Code of Conduct and a list of policies and procedures that can be requested.

6. Observation/ disclosure and reporting

Where a staff member has concerns for the wellbeing of child, but has not yet formed a belief, it is important that this be discussed with an appropriate person within the school. If the teacher concerned, wishes, the Principal and other relevant staff may be involved in discussions with the teacher in relation to a specific child, **prior** to the teacher forming a belief based on reasonable grounds.

If a teacher has formed a belief that a child has been sexually abused, the teacher reports the belief first then may inform the Principal.

The reporting paths are different for sexual abuse and other forms of abuse:

Child Protection Notification for non-sexual abuse (refer flow chart 1)

Step 1

The individual teacher/staff member makes observations and keeps records of concerns that exist and have lead them to believe that a report may be necessary

OR

A student discloses abuse (non-sexual) or neglect of the types listed below:

1. Disclosure of abuse or neglect from someone with a responsibility to care for the student

Note: it may assist teachers to think in terms of reporting a behaviour or a series of behaviours and concerns rather than reporting an individual family.

Step 2

The teacher's observations or child's disclosure should be discussed in the first instance with the Principal.

The teacher and Principal may wish to consult with a member of the Non-Government Schools Psychology Service.

Note: Confidentiality and privacy is paramount and disclosures o this information should only be discussed with those in the school who are required to know.

Step 3

The Principal will then decide the appropriate actions to take.

- (a) There are concerns but nothing specific to report. Lodge the report in the student's file AND the file in the office – Pending Mandatory Reporting
 - Try and stay in touch with the family
 - Talk about services which can help families
 - Encourage their involvement in parenting activities
 - Link the family with community groups from similar culture or religious backgrounds
 - Link the family with day care or play activities
 - Talk with someone experienced in supporting families or child protection
- (b) The abuse or neglect can be described:
 - Contact the Department for Child Protection or
 - The police if concerned about the child's immediate safety or where criminal acts have occurred.
- (c) The child has told of the abuse:
 - Believe the child
 - Let the child know that:
 - It is not their fault
 - Telling you is the right thing to do
 - You will need to tell the authorities to stop the abuse
 - Let the child use their own words. Don't ask leading questions
 - Contact the Department for Child Protection
 - Only discuss the child's situation with people dealing with this matter

Note: The Duty Officer at the Department for Child Protection can also be used initially in a consultative role if the Principal is unsure of what action to take.

Step 4

If following a report, a family approaches the school, it is recommended that any interview will be conducted with a minimum of two school members present. E.g. the Principal and one other to provide support.

Note: The focus of the meeting should be the welfare of the child.

Step 5

The Principal should undertake ongoing support for the teacher, the student and anyone else affected. The need for ongoing support could be necessary as the teacher continues in their role with the student and the Department for Child Protection's role may continue for a while.

Child Protection Notification for sexual abuse (refer flowchart 2)

In the instance of the teacher having a belief that a child is being sexually abused or there has been disclosure by the child or parents, the teacher does not report to the Principal in the first instance.

The teacher can contact the Department for Child Protection for advice.

After the notification process has commenced then the Principal is advised.

Step 1

The individual teacher/staff member makes observations and keeps records of concerns that exist and have lead them to believe that a report may be necessary

OR

1.A student discloses sexual abuse

2.Disclosure of abuse from someone with a responsibility to care for the student e.g. parent, family member

Note: it may assist teachers to think in terms of reporting a behaviour or a series of behaviours and concerns rather than reporting an individual family.

Step 2

Step 3

On direction from the Department of Child Protection, the Principal is informed

.The Department of Child Protection will provide direction from this point forward.

Note: Confidentiality and privacy is paramount, and disclosures of this information should not be disclosed.

Step 4

The Principal will undertake ongoing support for the teacher, with regards to the student the direction will be provided by the Department of Child Protection.

7. Response to disclosure to abuse or neglect including confidentiality and privacy responsibilities

There may be times when a student makes a disclosure of abuse of neglect or sexual abuse. Staff must accommodate the immediate needs of this student.

- Use 'protective interrupting' if a student begins to disclose in class or a public area
 - ✓ Acknowledge that you have hear them and stop them from disclosing any further
 - ✓ Be supportive and gently indicate that they might tell you about it in a more private situation
 - ✓ Quietly arrange to see them as soon as possible, in a location away from other students.
- Establish clear limits on confidentiality
- Listen attentively

- Be empathetic to the student's feelings
- Acknowledge that it is difficult to talk about such things
- Try to identify student fears
- Let the student tell the story in their own words
- Accept what is said – only the minimum of information is required
- Reassure the student that it is right to tell, that they are believed and they are not to blame
- Be calm and non-judgemental
- Tell the student that a report will be made to a person who will be able to provide protection
- Allow the student the option of support during any agency interview and reassure them of the availability of continuing support
- Document the disclosure and subsequent discussion and actions
- Explain what will happen next
- Try and stay with the student until necessary steps have been taken to ensure their safety and support

Staff must be mindful they do not:

- Push for details or to conduct an investigation. Other agencies have that responsibility
- Express judgement of the student, perpetrator or family
- Get angry, upset or show shock
- Blame the student
- Put words into the student's mouth or interrogate as this could jeopardise the interviewing process of the Department of Child Protection and police
- Promise not to tell when there are clear limits on confidentiality
- Give a lecture about right or wrong
- Say 'forget it', 'you'll get over it' or other such minimalizing statements
- Give excessive pity
- Engage in general staffroom discussion about the disclosure

8. Children Left at School

It is imperative that the school exhausts all avenues in attempting to contact the child's family and emergency contacts.

In some cases, the Principal may decide to drive the child home to establish contact with the family. It is advisable in some circumstances to ask a staff member to accompany the Principal. For example, a male Principal taking home a young child should ask a female staff member to accompany them.

If the school is unable to make any contact with the child's family, the Principal should contact the Duty Officer of the Department for Child Protection and explain it as an emergency.

9. Allegations of Abuse

Any allegations be they by a former student, or the parent or guardian of a former student, about child sexual abuse at the school occurring before 2009, must be reported to the Department for Child Protection and Family Support is to be informed immediately.

10. Victimisation

The victimisation of staff, students, parents and guardians for making an allegation of any nature that is within Casa Mia Montessori School's Policies is forbidden. This stands true regardless of whether the allegation is unfounded.

11. Breaches of the Staff Code of Conduct

Any actual breaches to the Staff Code of Conduct in relation to Child Protection, or where there are reasonable grounds to suspect grooming, must be reported by the governing body to the Director General using the Critical and Emergency Incident form, located on the Department of Education Services website: <http://des.wa.gov.au/>.

12. Related documents, forms and information sources

12.1 Refer to Child Protection AISWA

- 12.1 Children and Community Services Act 2014
- 12.2 Children and Community Services Amendment (Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children) Act 2008
- 12.3 School Code of Conduct – annual acknowledgment
- 12.4 Archive Policy and Procedures
- 12.5 Reporting and processing a Breach of Privacy flow chart

- 12.6 Annual Permission for use of photographs and videos etc
- 12.7 Major and Minor Incident report procedures