



BUNBURY REGIONAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Child Protection and Child Safe Policy 2021



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1. Purpose

Bunbury Regional Community College (“BRCC” or “the College”) is committed to the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#) and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our students by providing a child-safe environment at our campuses. The College adheres to the mandatory reporting legislation as set out in the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (WA) and the *Children and Community Services Amendment (Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children) Act 2008*.

As a CARE School, BRCC enrolls students who are finding it difficult to be successful in mainstream schooling. For many of these students trauma has been, and often continues to be, a part of their lives. Many of these students have complex needs and the College must ensure that all College employees, and volunteers are well prepared and resourced to deal with those needs. All children have the right to feel safe and to be safe at school and in the wider community. Accordingly, the Principal, all College employees, and volunteers at BRCC have the responsibility and a Duty of Care to protect students from harm at the College; to support students who have been subjected to harm either at the College or beyond; and to help students to protect themselves from harm.

BRCC is committed to ensuring all incidents, disclosures or allegations of [child abuse](#) are reported immediately to the appropriate authorities and the child’s wellbeing is at the centre of any actions or decisions that may occur. The Principal, all teachers, and nurses at BRCC, either voluntary or paid, who form a belief based on reasonable grounds, of child sexual abuse during the course of their work are required by law to make a Mandatory Report to the Department of Child Protection and Family Support (DCPFS) immediately via the [online reporting system](#).

In addition to mandatory reporting, BRCC requires all college employees and volunteers, whether required by the legislation or not, who have formed a belief on reasonable grounds of any child abuse (sexual, physical, emotional/psychological, neglect, grooming or domestic violence), or who have had a student disclose child abuse directly to them or indirectly through a friend, to report this to the Principal immediately.

Every person working at or visiting the College is responsible for the care and protection of BRCC students. Under no circumstances is any College employee, Board Member, contractor, or volunteer to engage in any form of child abuse or behave in a way that could be seen as abusive behaviour as set out in this Policy. The College aims to promote a safe learning environment for students by:

- taking a zero-tolerance position to any form of child abuse
- providing information and direction for all College employees, volunteers, and others on how to recognise child abuse
- educating students about personal safety and protective behaviours
- assisting all College employees and volunteers to follow appropriate notification procedures when reporting alleged child abuse of students.

BRCC prohibits any form of child abuse, or any other type of harm to our students and are committed to acting in the students’ best interests and keeping them safe from harm. Each member of the College community has a responsibility to understand the important role they play to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all students underpins all that they do and is at the foundation of every decision that they make.

This policy has been developed to remind everyone in the College community of their duty of care and responsibility to protect our students’ safety and wellbeing at college, and during any College related activities.



BRCC may, from time to time, review and update this policy to take account of new laws and technology, changes to the College's operations and practices, and to make sure it remains appropriate to the changing education environment.

2. Scope

This policy provides information to all members of the BRCC Community, including the Principal, teachers, other school employees, contractors, and volunteers to assist them to appropriately manage any issues of child safety and protection in the event of incidents, disclosures, or allegations of child abuse against a student in the care of the College.

This policy is applicable to all adults in the BRCC community, including all staff, board member, volunteers, contractors, parents/carers, and applies in all of the College's environments, both physical and online, on college premises, or on any off-campus activities such as excursions of camps.

All College employees, Board Members, contractors, and volunteers must familiarise themselves with this policy document and act at all times in accordance with the provisions of this policy and the BRCC Code of Conduct.

Students aged 18 and over may attend BRCC but are legally considered adults and as such DCPFS does not have a child protection mandate for them. However, they can be considered potentially vulnerable and in need of specialist services, so BRCC continues to owe a duty of care towards them. Where a student is over the age of 18 and discloses or is the alleged victim of any type of abuse as outlined in this policy, the College will provide support to the student and contact the Police immediately for further investigation.

3. Definitions

Child – A child is defined in the *Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)* as a person who is under 18 years of age, and in the absence of positive evidence as to age, means a person who is apparently under 18 years of age. For the purposes of this policy the words 'child' and 'student' are used interchangeably.

Child Abuse – Is an act or omission which endangers a child's physical or emotional health or development. Child abuse can be a single incident, or more than one incident over time. See APPENDIX 1 for more information.

Contractors – People that are engaged by BRCC to undertake services at the College.

Disclosure – A disclosure is when a child tells someone that he or she feels unsafe or has been harmed. A disclosure can also be made by adults including parents/carers or any person in contact with the child, where that person reveals that they believe a child has been harmed, or is likely to be harmed.

Duty of Care is a duty under common law to ensure that reasonable care is taken to minimise the risk of harm to students while they are on the College premises during the hours when the College is open, and during College-related off-site activities.

Mandatory reporting – As defined in the *Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)*, the legal obligation of doctors, nurses/midwives, police officers, teachers and boarding supervisors who form a belief based on Reasonable Grounds of child sexual abuse during the course of their work, either voluntary or paid, are mandatory reporters (Mandatory Reporter(s)).

If Mandatory Reporters fail to report they may be fined and/or incarcerated. In Western Australia, the legislation covering Mandatory reporting of child



sexual abuse is the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (WA). This legislation focuses on child sexual abuse. Other forms of abuse (physical, emotional and neglect) should also be reported, but there is no penalty if a report is not made.

Mandatory Reporters - In Western Australia, the mandatory reporters of child sexual abuse are the following professions in both the government and non-government sectors:

- teachers;
- boarding supervisors;
- nurses;
- doctors;
- police officers; and
- midwives.

Non-Mandatory Reporters - Teacher assistants, education assistants, counsellors, youth workers and school psychologists and other employees. Reports by those employees who are not mandated are usually made to the Principal of the school.

Parent(s)/Carer(s) – A person who is the mother, father, stepfather, stepmother of the child; or at law has responsibility for the care, welfare and development of the child or is specified as the child's adoptive parent under the *Adoption Act 1994*.

Reasonable Grounds – A belief formed on reasonable grounds that a child has been abused or neglected may be based on but is not limited to:

Reports of abuse by a third part; and/or

A disclosure of information provided by a child or parent/carer; or

Observed evidence of physical and/or behavioural indicators (see Appendix 1)

Sexual abuse, in relation to a child, in relation to a child, includes sexual behaviour in circumstances where:

- (a) the child is the subject of bribery, coercion, a threat, exploitation or violence; or
- (b) the child has less power than another person involved in the behaviour; or
- (c) there is a significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.

Teacher means (a) a person who is registered under the *Teacher Registration Act 2012*; or (c) a person who provides instruction in a course that is (i) mentioned in the *School Education Act 1999* section 11B(1)(a), (b) or (e); and (ii) prescribed for the purposes of this definition; or (d) a person who instructs or supervises a student who is participating in an activity that is (i) part of an educational programme of a school under an arrangement mentioned in the *School Education Act 1999* section 24(1); and (ii) prescribed for the purposes of this definition.

Volunteers – Unpaid people assisting with activities undertaken by the College.

4. Policy

Responsibilities

The Board

The BRCC Board is responsible for:

- Ensuring the *Principles for Child Safe Organisations* are adhered to, and the rights of young people are upheld.
- Setting and reviewing the College's mission, strategy and values which underpin its commitment to the providing a child-safe environment, safeguarding all students, and



- promoting practices that provide for safety and wellbeing of students.
- Overseeing and endorsing policies under which the Principal manages the College.
- Ensuring an appropriate risk-management framework, program and mitigation strategies are in place.
- Ensuring BRCC observes all registration standards and complies with all legislative requirements.
- Undertaking professional training covering the BRCC Code of Conduct and Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse, Child Protection and Grooming upon joining the Board and at least annually ([Standard 10.5](#)).
- Ensuring the Principal meets their responsibilities in relation to providing a child-safe environment, safeguarding all students, and promoting practices and curriculum that provide for safety and wellbeing of students at BRCC.

Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring:

- The *Principles for Child Safe Organisations* are adhered to, and the rights of young people are upheld.
- The College provides a Protective Behaviours curriculum that covers a comprehensive and age-appropriate personal safety component enabling students to recognise and report abuse, understand power in relationships, and develop protective strategies, including seeking help. ([Standard 10.6](#))
- BRCC provides a child-safe environment, safeguarding all students and promoting practices that provide for safety and wellbeing of students.
- Policies and procedures relating to child safety and wellbeing are child focused and culturally safe.
- College grounds and equipment are safe for student use.
- Staff have access to relevant school policies and procedures.
- Staff understand and comply with all policies and procedures.
- Appropriately qualified staff are recruited for all areas of the College.
- Rigorous recruitment processes, including all applicants being screened and holding a valid Working with Children Check and National Police Clearance (or proof of application) which are verified prior to commencement.
- All teaching staff hold a current Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia (TRBWA) registration.
- TRBWA registrations and Working with Children Checks are annually verified.
- New staff receive an induction program including, but not limited to, the BRCC Code of Conduct, Child Safe policy and child protection reporting requirements, Duty of Care, emergency procedures, as soon as practicable after commencing.
- All newly recruited staff have read, understood, and signed the BRCC Code of Conduct on Employment Hero.
- All staff and regular volunteers undertake professional training annually including, but not limited to, the Code of Conduct and Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse, Child Protection and Grooming ([Standard 10.5](#)).
- Regular volunteers and trainees receive an induction including the BRCC Code of Conduct, Child Safe policy, and emergency procedures before commencing.
- All student records are secured against inappropriate access.
- Staff complete relevant risk assessments are completed for planned student activities.
- Parents/carers are given the opportunity to update essential contact information.
- Parents/carers receive information about the Protective Behaviours curriculum, the Code of Conduct, the student code of conduct and when, how and whom to tell when they have concerns about grooming, child abuse or other behaviour which is not permitted by either code. ([Standard 10.8](#))



Human Resources Processes

The BRCC human resources practices ensure:

- There are comprehensive recruitment processes, including all applicants being screened and holding a valid Working with Children Check and National Police Clearance (or proof of application) are verified prior to commencement.
- All teaching staff hold a current Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia (TRBWA) registration at the time of employment.
- New employees will receive an induction program including, but not limited to, the BRCC Code of Conduct, duty of care, emergency procedures, child protection reporting requirements.
- All newly recruited employees have read, understood, and signed the BRCC Code of Conduct on Employment Hero.
- Regular volunteers and trainees will receive an induction including the BRCC Code of Conduct, Child Safe policy, and emergency procedures before commencing.
- All College employees receive appropriate training and supervision.
- All employment records are secured against inappropriate access.

BRCC Employees and Volunteers

All BRCC employees and volunteers are responsible for:

- A duty of care to the students.
- Being aware of and implementing all school policies and procedures.
- Knowing where to access information relating to the College's policies and procedures.
- Adhering to the *Principles for Child Safe Organisations* and to uphold the rights of young people.
- Completing an induction including, but not limited to, the BRCC Code of Conduct, Child Safe policy, child protection reporting requirements, Duty of Care, and emergency procedures, as soon as practicable after commencing.
- Reading, acknowledging, and adhering to the BRCC Code of Conduct.
- Providing adequate supervision to students.
- Ensuring any required registrations, WWCC, and annual training requirements are up to date.
- Completing relevant risk assessments when planning activities for students.
- Ensuring grounds and equipment are safe for student use.
- Providing appropriate medical assistance if required.
- Reporting any identified abuse or neglect in relation to a student to the appropriate person or Agency.

Response to Disclosure of Abuse or Neglect

If a student makes a disclosure of abuse or neglect, staff should be aware of the immediate needs of the student and know what to do in these circumstances. Younger children will rarely use adult language or specific terms when disclosing abuse, the language used will be at the developmental level of the child, so staff may not initially pick up the nuances of the disclosure.

Most disclosures are accidental, that is the child did not intend to disclose, and it is likely that the disclosure will only be partial. Staff should not attempt to elicit a full disclosure or ask direct questions. The student should be encouraged to speak freely, i.e. a free narrative, but staff should not try to direct the student down a particular path of thought.



Recommended ways to help manage disclosure

- Use 'protective interrupting' if a student begins to disclose in class or in a public area to protect them from sharing the information with too many other people.
- Acknowledge that you have heard them and stop them from disclosing any further.
- Be supportive and gently indicate that they might tell you about it in a quieter place.
- Calmly arrange to see them as soon as possible, in a situation away from other students.
- Establish clear limits on confidentiality by telling the student that a report will be made to a person who will be able to provide help and protection and that you will help them throughout the process.
- Put your own feelings aside and listen as if the information is not sensational.
- Provide reassurance that the student is believed that they were right to tell, and it was not their fault.
- Remain as objective as possible and do not make judgements about what has happened.
- Listen to students in an appropriate private location within the school, that is a place where the interactions can be observed but not heard by others.
- Be supportive and understanding.
- Be empathetic to student feelings; the student may be confused because of the relationship with the abuser; e.g.: loving parents shouldn't do abusive things.
- Acknowledge that it is difficult to talk about such things.
- Try to identify the student's immediate fears.
- Let the student tell the event in their own words; when reporting, do not paraphrase but try to be as accurate as possible.
- If you are unable to answer all the student's questions, it is OK to let them know.
- Once you have established that they have been harmed, or are at risk of being harmed, do not pursue the conversation any further. This is important to ensure that questions cannot be raised later about possible manipulation of the disclosure.
- Allow students the option of support during any agency interview and reassure them of the availability of continuing support.
- Document the conversation that you have had remembering as accurately as you can, the words and phrases used by the student to describe what has happened to them.
- Document the disclosure and subsequent discussion and actions.
- Explain what will happen next.
- Try and stay with the student after the disclosure to provide a sense of security until necessary steps have been taken to ensure their safety and support.

Staff must be careful that they:

- don't push for details or conduct an investigation. Other agencies have this responsibility;
- don't express judgement of the student, perpetrator or family;
- don't get angry, upset or show shock;
- don't ask questions that may make the child feel guilty or inadequate;
- don't ask leading questions, for instance 'Did Daddy hit you?';
- don't put words in students' mouths or interrogate as this could jeopardise the interviewing process of CPFS and Police;
- don't promise not to tell when there are clear limits on confidentiality;
- never make false promises;
- don't give a lecture about right and wrong;
- don't say 'forget it', 'you'll get over it' or other such minimalising statements;
- don't give excessive pity;
- respect the confidentiality of the disclosure and do not share the information with anyone other than the Principal and either the Department for Child Protection or the



Police. **This includes not engaging in general staffroom discussion about the disclosure.**

Staff must be aware that a disclosure can arouse within themselves strong feelings of shock, anger and helplessness. It is important to try and control these feelings and work through them after the disclosure. Even a hint of disbelief could cause a student to stop disclosing.

Procedures and Notification Steps

Step 1A: Physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect:

The teacher or nurse's observations or the student's disclosure should be discussed, in the first instance, with the Principal, or the College Director if it is not appropriate to discuss it with the Principal.

It is not the role of the teacher or nurse to investigate child abuse or neglect matters. They must report concerns to the Principal.

The teacher and Principal may wish to consult with the school psychologist or a member of the Non-Government Schools Psychology Service, the college nurse or a BRCC social worker.

Note: It is vital to remember that confidentiality is paramount, and that disclosure of this information should only be discussed with those in the school who are required to know.

Step 1B: Child sexual abuse – mandatory reporting:

In cases of suspected sexual abuse, the teacher or nurse is a mandated reporter and is required to make a report to the Department for Child Protection and Family Support through the Mandatory Reporting Service.

The Principal and other relevant staff are there to provide support if required. The teacher or nurse may advise the Principal of the report, but there should be no obligation on them to do so. The identity of the reporter is to remain confidential.

BRCC staff must not inform parents until they have sought advice from DCPFS or WA Police, so as not to hinder / impede a possible investigation.

Step 2

If, following a report, a parent/carer approaches the College to receive support for the student, it is recommended that any interview be conducted with a minimum of two (2) College members present (e.g. The Principal and one other) to provide support.

Note: It is important to remember that the focus of the meeting should be the welfare of the child.

In cases of child sexual abuse, the legislation provides protection for the person reporting. Disclosure of the reporter's identity or identifying information to parents/carers or any other party can incur a fine of \$24,000, and two-years' imprisonment.

IMPORTANT: To avoid interfering with any investigative process initiated by DCPFS or the Police, the Principal or teacher must seek advice from DCPFS or Police prior to informing the parent/carer of a concern of abuse or neglect.

Step 3

The Principal will arrange ongoing support for the teacher, the student and anyone else affected. The need for ongoing support is often necessary as the teacher will continue in their role with the student and the DCPFS's role may continue for an extended period of time.



Mandatory Reporting in Western Australia

Section 124A and s124B of the [Children and Community Services Act 2004](#) (WA) mandates that Doctors; nurses and midwives; teachers and boarding supervisors; and police officers must report sexual abuse if they have a belief on reasonable grounds that child sexual abuse has occurred or is occurring, where this belief is formed in the course of the person's work, whether paid or unpaid.

The report must be made as soon as practicable after forming the belief (s124B(1)(ii)). This is important as the earlier a report is received, the faster steps can be taken to protect a child, where this is necessary.

When a teacher or nurse at BRCC has formed a belief based on reasonable grounds (see *Appendix 1*), that child sexual abuse has occurred they must make a report to the Mandatory Reporting Service. In the first instance a verbal report should be made by calling **1800 708 704** and must be followed up with a written report as soon as possible.

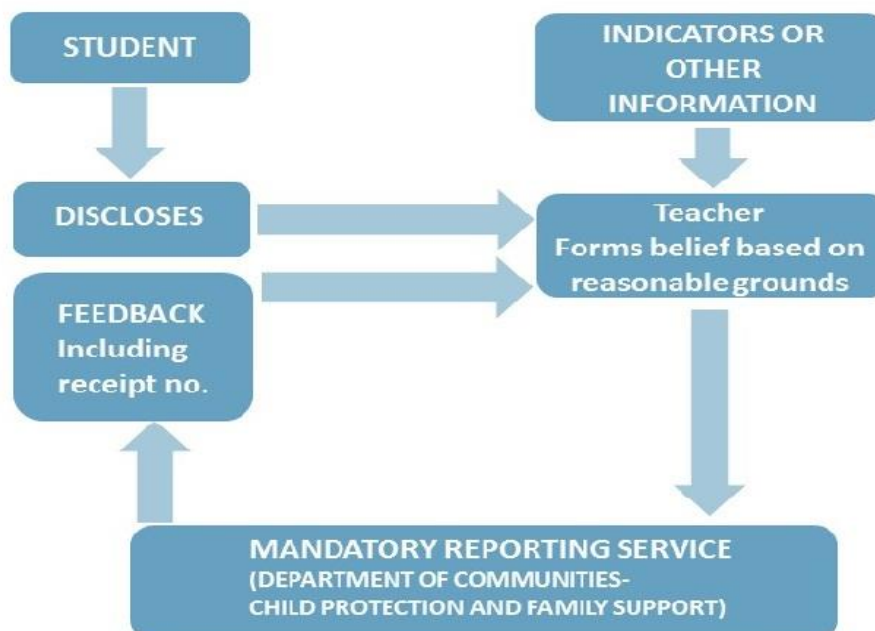
The teacher or nurse may advise the Principal of the report, but there should be no obligation on them to do so. The identity of the reporter is to remain confidential.

Mandatory reporters who fail to report a belief that a child is being sexually abused commit an offence under the Act which attracts a fine of up to \$6,000 [s124B(1)].

Due to the seriousness of child sexual abuse, a verbal report is the preferred method of reporting in the first instance. A verbal report enables the Mandatory Reporting Service to ask clarifying questions and gather as much information as possible to inform the assessment, and any future intervention and planning. However, all verbal reports must be followed by a written report [s124C(1)].

Mandatory Reporting Procedure Diagram

MANDATORY REPORTING PROCEDURE



How a mandatory reporter must make a report

A centralised Mandatory Reporting Service (MRS) has been established to receive all reports of child sexual abuse in Western Australia. This service is operational 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

To make a verbal report, mandatory reporters can telephone **1800 708 704** or the Department's Central Intake Team on **1800 273 889** or email CPDUTY@cpfe.wa.gov.au or contact one of the Country District Offices:

Bunbury: 80 Spencer St, Bunbury ph. (08) 9722 5000 or

Busselton: Unit 3, 8 Prince St Busselton ph. (08) 9752 5600.

For other country offices see

http://mandatoryreporting.dcp.wa.gov.au/Pages/DCP_District_Offices.aspx

Verbal reports must be followed by a written report as soon as possible.

Written reports

A written report must follow a verbal report as soon as practicable, preferably within 24 hours. It is an offence to fail to provide a written report after lodging a verbal report and such a failure carries a maximum penalty of \$3,000 [s124C(1)].

A form for mandatory reporters - *Mandatory Report - Sexual Abuse* can be completed [online](#) through the Department for Child Protection and Family Support mandatory reporting website at: <http://mandatoryreporting.dcp.wa.gov.au/Pages/Home.aspx>. The form can also be downloaded from the website.

When making a report, in good faith, about possible child sexual abuse, a mandatory reporter does not breach any employment related duty of confidentiality, professional ethics or standards and will not have engaged in unprofessional conduct [s129].

Section 124C states that a written report may, but need not be in a form, approved by the CEO. However, the same section also specifies what information a report is to contain.

A report is to contain:

- (a) the name and contact details of the reporter;
- (b) the name of the child or, if the child's name cannot be obtained after reasonable inquiries, a description of the child;
- (c) if, or to the extent, known to the reporter —
 - (i) the child's date of birth;
 - (ii) information about where the child lives;
 - (iii) the names of the child's parents or other appropriate persons as defined in section 41(1);
- (d) the grounds for the reporter's belief that the child has been the subject of sexual abuse or is the subject of ongoing sexual abuse;
- (e) (ea) if, or to the extent, known to the reporter —
 - (i) the name of any person alleged to be responsible for the sexual abuse;
 - (ii) the person's contact details;
 - (iii) the person's relationship to the child;
- (f) any other information that is prescribed.

Where a teacher has formed a belief that the child is at imminent risk of being abused, they should consider calling the Western Australian Police first, through the 000 or the 131 444 numbers.

Note: This does not fulfil the legal obligation to report a child sexual abuse belief and the individual who has formed the belief should then make an Mandatory Report (MR), which can be completed through the following link:

<https://mandatoryreporting.dcp.wa.gov.au/Pages/MakeaReport.aspx>



Processing of the Report

Once the report has been lodged, the Mandatory Reporting Service will assess the immediate risk to the child and determine the need for further child protection assessment and investigation. A copy of the report is sent to the WA Police. The police determine if they need to be involved on a case-by-case basis.

The mandatory reporter will receive a feedback letter advising them of the DCPFS District Office to which the report has been referred. It is important to note that all reports are actioned by DCPFS, but it may not be the response that the reporter expects. Principals may discuss ongoing concerns with DCPFS and are encouraged to maintain clear lines of communication with the District Office.

If new information becomes available to the reporter, this information should be submitted to DCPFS. If a new concern or belief is formed, a new Mandatory Report should be submitted.

Confidentiality and Legal Protection

The identity of the reporter is required to be kept confidential, except in limited and very specific circumstances. Section 124F(2) protects a reporter's identity from being disclosed. This includes information where a reporter's identity could be deduced. (s124A) Disclosure of a reporter's identity carries a maximum fine of \$24,000, and 2-years' imprisonment.

There are exceptions where disclosure of a reporter's identity is permitted. In such cases, consideration will be given to ensuring the reporter's safety has been taken into account. Examples of when a reporter's identity may be revealed include:

- The Mandatory Reporting Service must send a copy of every written report to the WA Police.
- The WA Police may need to reveal a reporter's identity in order to investigate or prosecute a suspected offence.
- A Department for Child Protection officer may need to reveal the reporter's identity when certain child protection, family law or adoption proceedings are taking place.
- The reporter may have provided written permission for their identity to be disclosed.

A mandated reporter who is normally governed by a code of confidentiality or secrecy, professional ethics, standards or principles of conduct (e.g. Doctor/patient) is protected from a breach of this code if they are making a report in good faith. The legislative requirements of the Act override internal school policies, professional codes or confidentiality requirements.

A mandated reporter is also protected from liability. If a report is made in good faith, they will not incur any civil or criminal liability by making a report.

Further information is available at https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/sites/default/files/publication-documents/2006_mandatory_reporting_of_child_abuse_and_neglect.pdf

Non-Mandatory Reporting

Any person is lawfully entitled to make a report if they are concerned for a child's welfare, even if they are not required to do so as a mandatory reporter. Anyone making a voluntary (non-mandated) report is also protected with regard to confidentiality and immunity from legal liability.

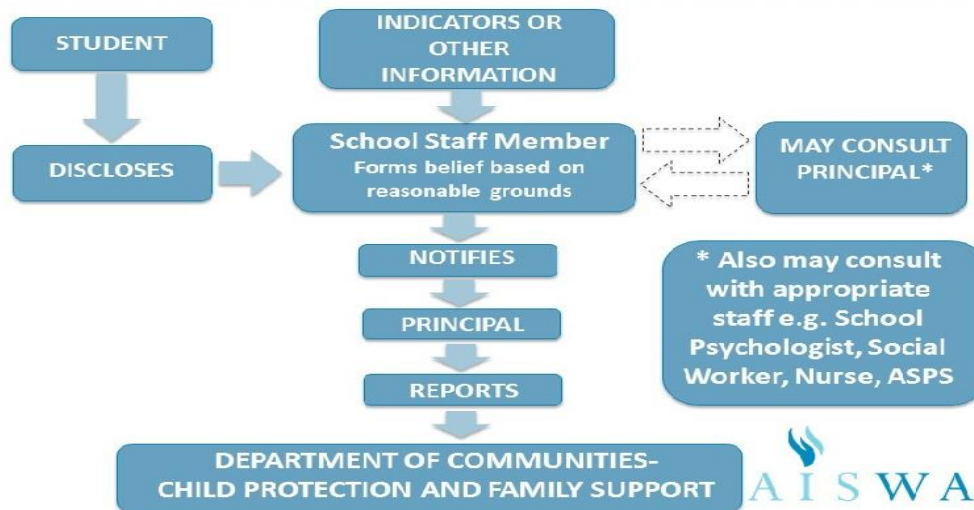
The person's observations or the student's disclosure should be discussed, in the first instance, with the Principal, or the College Director if it is not appropriate to discuss it with the Principal.



Staff must report any concerns to the Principal. The person may wish to consult with the school psychologist or a member of the Non-Government Schools Psychology Service, the BRCC College nurse or a BRCC social worker.

Non-Mandatory Reporting Diagram

NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE – CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT (NON-MANDATORY REPORT)



Code of Conduct

Bunbury Regional Community College is dedicated to providing a child-safe environment that safeguards all students and is committed to promoting practices which provide for the safety, wellbeing and welfare of its students.

BRCC expects all College community members including staff, volunteers, students, visitors and contractors to share this commitment.

College staff are in a unique position of responsibility and authority and must make every effort to make sure that BRCC provides a child safe environment. Teachers in particular are of primary importance when it comes to detecting abuse and preventing abuse from occurring.

The Code of Conduct details the standards of behaviour expected of all BRCC employees and is available to all staff on Employment Hero. A copy is available on request to the HR Manager or to the School Administrator.

Key Points from the Code of Conduct:

Principle 5 Maintain professional relationships between employees and students

Employees need to treat the College's students with courtesy and respect and provide an environment that encourages the students to do the same.

As a College employee, you are expected to always behave in ways that promote the safety, welfare and well-being of children and young people. You must actively seek to prevent



harm to children and young people, and to support those who have been harmed.

While not all employees are required to manage and supervise students, it is important for all College employees to understand and observe the College's child protection policies.

The detection and prevention of grooming behaviour is a vital consequence of complying with this principle. – see below for more information on “grooming behaviours”.

How to Comply

Supervision of students

- 1. Do not be alone in an enclosed space with a student. Where you are left with the responsibility of a single student you should ensure that this is in an open space in view of others. Where this is not possible or practical it should be discussed with your supervisor and/or the Principal.*
- 2. Do not drive a student in your car unless you have specific permission from your supervisor and/or the Principal and permission from the parent/carer to do so, recorded in SEQTA. In the event of an emergency you should exercise discretion but then report the matter to your supervisor.*
- 3. If you wish to conduct a private conversation with a student you should consider the time and venue carefully to avoid placing yourselves in a vulnerable situation. It is preferable to leave the door open. You should not locate yourself between the students and the door.*
- 4. Only take items directly from students in circumstances where concern exists for the safety of the student or others and your own safety is not jeopardised by this action*

Physical contact with students

- 1. You must not impose any form of degrading punishment on a student in the course of your professional duties. Degrading punishment is any punishment which is incompatible with respect for human dignity, including corporal punishment and non-physical punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the student. Refer to the College's Pastoral Care Policy.*
- 2. When physical contact with a student is a necessary part of the teaching/learning experience you must exercise caution to ensure that the contact is appropriate and acceptable. You should seek reassurance from the student before making contact or asking for a volunteer if necessary to demonstrate a particular activity.*
- 3. For students with a disability the management of toileting needs should be included in the student's individual management plan.*
- 4. When congratulating a student, a handshake, fist pump, high five or similar are acceptable as long as the student is comfortable with this action. Kissing and hugging of students is not acceptable.*
- 5. Assessing a student who is injured or ill may necessitate touching the student. Always advise the student of what you intend doing and, if they are conscious, seek their consent.*
- 6. Sometimes in ensuring duty of care you may be required to restrain a student from harming him or herself or others using reasonable force. Any such strategy must be in keeping with the College's behaviour management practices or individual student management plans. You should report and document any such incidents.*



Relationships with students

1. *You must not have a romantic or sexual relationship with a student. It is irrelevant whether the relationship is homosexual or heterosexual, consensual or non-consensual or condoned by parents or caregivers. You are reminded of:*

- a) the law prohibiting sexual relations with a person under the age of consent (16 years); and*
- b) the law prohibiting sexual relations between a teacher and his or her student under the age of 18 years.*

2. *You must not develop a relationship with any student that is, or that can be interpreted as having a personal rather than a professional interest in a student. An overly familiar relationship with any student (including any adult student) that you are responsible for teaching, tutoring, advising, assessing, or for whom you provide pastoral or welfare support raises serious questions of conflict of interest, trust, confidence, dependency, and of equality of treatment. Such relationships may also have a negative impact on the teaching and learning environment for other students and colleagues and may carry a serious reputational risk for the College.*

3. *If you consider that a student is being overly familiar, seeking to establish a personal relationship with you or has developed a 'crush' on you, you should report your concerns to your supervisor and/or the Principal as soon as possible so that a plan be developed to manage the situation effectively and sensitively.*

4. *At all times when speaking with students care must be taken to use appropriate language. You must always treat students with respect and without favouritism. There is no place for sarcasm, derogatory remarks, inappropriate familiarity or offensive comments.*

5. *You may, as part of your pastoral care role, engage in discussion with students. This is entirely appropriate. However you must be cautious about making personal comments about a student or asking questions that probe your own or a student's sexuality or relationships. You must not hold conversations with a student of an intimately personal nature where you disclose information about yourself.*

6. *You must not:*

- a) invite students to your home;*
- b) visit students at their home; or*
- c) attend parties or socialise with students, unless you have the express permission of the Principal and the child's parents or care giver.*

7. *You must not engage in tutoring or coaching students from the school without the express permission of the Principal.*

8. *You must not invite students to join your personal electronic social networking site or accept students' invitations to join their social networking site (see Section 6 - Appropriate use of electronic communication and social networking sites).*

9. *You must not give gifts to students. You should also carefully consider your position before accepting any gift from a student or a parent (see Section 10 - Declaring gifts, benefits and bribes).*

10. *Wherever practical, you should avoid teaching or being involved in educational decisions involving family members or close friends. Where it is not practical to avoid such situations completely, another member of staff should make any significant decisions relating to the student's assessments and have those endorsed by a supervisor.*



11. You should be aware of, and sensitive to, children with culturally diverse or indigenous backgrounds and cultural practices that may influence the interpretation of your behaviour.

You must be aware of and comply with the College's Child Protection Policy and Child Safe Policy.

Grooming Behaviours

Grooming in a child protection context refers to deliberate actions undertaken to engage in sexual activity with a child. It differs from sexual abuse in that it is primarily a preparatory activity occurring before abuse occurs but is continued during and after the abuse to ensure the safety of the groomer.

Grooming is a subtle, gradual, and escalating process of building trust with a child and those around the child, both children and adults, with the express purpose of the sexual gratification of the perpetrator and generally involves engaging in sexual activity with the child. It is deliberate and purposeful and occurs both before and after the abuse. Abusers may groom children and supporting adults for weeks, months, or even years before any sexual abuse actually takes place. The grooming may occur in person or via cyber media.

In the early stage, a committed offender will employ grooming behaviour and because it is so subtle and gradual the child may not be aware of the actual abuse when it occurs and that it is wrong or harmful. The grooming occurs not only with the child but also with those supporting networks around the child which might act as a deterrent or protective element. The perpetrator will invest significant energy and patience to minimise the risk of detection and exposure.

The groomer will employ manipulation, guilt, shame, bribery, coercion or exploit low self-esteem to psychologically manipulate the child, and as a result the child becomes increasingly dependent on the groomer and increasingly alienated from protective elements including possible sources to disclose to.

Plausible deniability is part of the strategy that the groomer employs to ensure that staff don't take seriously the possible disclosures of a child. This is a deliberate strategy employed to maintain the secrecy of the abuse, so that the abuse is concealed and to ensure the silence of the child.

The groomer will exploit vulnerabilities of the protective elements around the child, including parents and family circumstances, organisational and systemic weaknesses. Groomers are very adept at identifying anomalies, boundary ambiguities, and the lack of systemic awareness; at deflecting attention from their own actions and intentions.

While distinguishing between appropriate intent and inappropriate intent is very difficult, particularly for a child, it is essential that BRCC staff and all school community members have very clear expectations and boundaries around behaviours so that there can be rigorous accountability when dealing with students.

BRCC is committed to increasing understanding around providing a safe environment for students and adults to challenge existing practice; to be able to raise concerns around unprofessional behaviour; and to have a shared understanding of what a safe school is.

Grooming behaviour with children may include, but is not limited to:

- 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 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;
- 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.

Grooming behaviour with adolescents may include additional strategies, such as:

- identifying with the adolescent. The abuser may appear to be the only one who understands him/her;
- displaying common interests in sports, music, movies, video games, television shows, etc;
- recognising and filling the adolescent’s need for affection and attention;
- giving gifts or special privileges to the adolescent;
- allowing or encouraging the adolescent to break rules (e.g., smoking, drinking, using drugs, viewing pornography);
- communicating with the adolescent outside of the person’s role (e.g., teacher, or coach). This could include, for example, texting or emailing the teen without the parents’ knowledge.

In addition to grooming the child, the groomer will use deflection strategies to remain unchallenged. Some of these strategies may include where the perpetrator:

- 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; and
- positively represents child to others so as to be perceived as someone who would never harm the child.

Preventing or interrupting the Grooming process

Schools and other organisations unfortunately can provide a vast array of opportunities for groomers to enact the grooming process. Some abusers have a particular preference for children within particular age bands and some studies have shown that groomers will take child focussed employment principally to get access to a particular cohort of children.

BRCC holds all staff members accountable to the BRCC Code of Conduct and to their Duty of Care to students. Any observed breaches of the Code of Conduct should be reported to the Principal or College Director. Any reports made in good faith will be protected from any victimisation or other adverse consequences.

Challenging boundary crossings and violations is one of the most accessible strategies to combat grooming behaviour.

Employees, other professionals and volunteers, and others, are required to have very clear understandings of the expectations around interactions with students and processes for reporting concerning behaviours.

In the event that an employee is investigated for behaviours considered to be grooming, BRCC is obligated to report this to both the Director General of the Department of Education and the TRBWA. ([Standard 7](#))



Online exploitation

The internet is one of the main sources of communication for young people today. The popularity of various social media as well as chat rooms, discussion groups and interactive games makes them a very attractive place for predators as they can remain virtually anonymous whilst participating in a range of pedophilic activity. There are significant concerns in this area, and schools, parents and students need to be informed consumers of this space.

The *Criminal Code Amendment (Cyber Predators) Act 2006* is the legislation in Western Australia that protects children under the age of 16, or that the offender believes is under the age of 16, from an adult who uses electronic communications with the intent to procure the child to engage in sexual activity; or to expose the child to any indecent matter.

Teaching staff should review the following websites for promoting safety awareness in the College:

- The Office of the Children's e-safety Commissioner <https://www.esafety.gov.au>
- <https://www.thinkuknow.org.au/>
- Australian Federal Police: <https://www.afp.gov.au/>.

How to report Cyber based concerns

If you think a child is in immediate danger, call Triple Zero (000).

This section provides information and facilities to help you report inappropriate, harmful or criminal activities that **occur online or via a mobile device**.

 Report	<u>Report online child sexual exploitation</u> Report inappropriate sexual behaviour towards a child.
 Report	<u>Report inappropriate content</u> Report internet content which you believe is prohibited or inappropriate.
 Report	<u>Report cybercrime</u> Report cybercrime to the Australian Cybercrime Online Reporting Network (ACORN).
 Report	<u>Report cyberbullying</u> Report cyberbullying of adults to ACORN or children to the eSafety commissioner.

Complaints

The receipt of a complaint or allegation of child abuse, including but not limited to sexual abuse, committed against a student – (a) by a staff member or another student; or (b) by another person on the school premises or during a school-related activity; whether the abuse is alleged to have occurred recently or in the past, is a reportable incident under [Standard 7](#). The Director General of the Department of Education will be notified within 48 hours of the incident being reported.



5. Related Legislation and Policies

Children and Community Services Act 2004

Children and Community Services Amendment (Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children) Act 2008

Criminal Code Act (1913)

Criminal Code Amendment (Cyber Predators) Act 2006 (changes to s204B of The Criminal Code)

Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004.

Registration Standards for Non-Government Schools

Standard 10 – Child Abuse Prevention

Standard 9 – Complaints

Standard 7- Critical and Emergency Incidents

Other parts of the *Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools 2020* (Registration Standards Guide) which assists the College to comply with the Registration requirements, in particular Chapter 2 (Registration Standards) and Chapter 4 (Levels of Care).

Relevant BRCC policies and documents.

Staff Recruitment Policy and Procedures

Staff Induction Policy and Procedures

Staff Code of Conduct

Staff Professional Development and Performance Management Policy

Complaints Policy

Duty of Care Policy

Pastoral Care and Behaviour Management

Risk Management Policy

6. Review Date

This policy was submitted to the Governing Council for endorsement and is due for review annually.

7. Contact BRCC

Web <http://www.brcc.org.au/contact/>

Email principal@brcc.org.au

Phone 6724 6971

Bunbury Campus: Level 1/16 Victoria Street, Bunbury

Busselton Campus: 50 Albert St, Busselton WA 6280

Approval Process	New Policy or Amendment	Minor Amendment or review
First approved by Governing Council	December 2016	November 2017
Reviewed	July 2021	
Approved by Governing Council	August 2021	
Next Review	July 2022	



Appendix 1

Definition of Child Maltreatment

Child maltreatment refers to any non-accidental behaviour by adults or children that is outside the norms of conduct and entails a substantial risk of harm to a child or young person. The behaviours may be intentional or unintentional. ([AIFS-What is child abuse and neglect](#))

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

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

Descriptions of these indicators have been taken from the Department for Child Protection document "[Identifying and responding to child abuse and neglect – A Guide for Professionals](#)".

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.

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.

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.



Neglect

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

Note 1:

Child abuse and neglect, through the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, is defined as maltreatment done by a person who has responsibility to care for a child. However, it is very important to note that the definitions of child maltreatment mentioned can be used to describe some of the behaviour that can occur in schools by one child to another. While the treatment of such behaviour may be dealt with through other school policies such as Bullying and Behaviour Management, the victim of that 'bullying' may display some of the physical and behavioural indicators as those described in the next section of this document. These events should be treated seriously by the school with the aim to help both parties.

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

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 could be represented by:

- broken bones or unexplained bruises, burns, or welts in various stages of healing;
- the child or young person 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;
- 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;



- repeated presentations of the child to health services with injuries, ingestions or minor complaints (this could also be an indicator of Factitious Disorder by proxy, a rare expression of physical and emotional abuse);
- the child or young person is unusually frightened of a parent or carer, or is afraid to go home;
- the child or young person reports intentional injury by their parent or carer;
- arms and legs are kept covered by inappropriate clothing in warm conditions;
- ingestion of poisonous substances including alcohol or drugs;
- the avoidance of physical contact by the child (particularly with a parent or carer).

Sexual abuse could be represented by:

- sexualised behaviours inappropriate to their age (including sexually touching other children and themselves);
- knowledge of sexual behaviour inappropriate to their years;
- disclosure of abuse either directly or indirectly through drawings, play or writing that describes abuse;
- pain or bleeding in the anal or genital area with redness or swelling;
- fear of being alone with a particular person;
- a child or young person implying that he/she is required to keep secrets;
- the presence of sexually transmitted disease;
- sudden unexplained fears;
- enuresis and/or encopresis (bed-wetting and bed soiling).

Emotional or Psychological abuse could be when:

- the parent or carer constantly criticises, threatens, belittles, insults, or rejects the child or young person with no evidence of love, support, or guidance;
- the child or young person exhibits extremes in behaviour from overly aggressive to overly passive;
- delayed physical, emotional, or intellectual development;
- compulsive lying and stealing;
- high levels of anxiety;
- lack of trust in people;
- feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves;
- eating hungrily or hardly at all;
- 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.

Neglect may be:

- signs of malnutrition, begging, stealing or hoarding food;
- poor hygiene: matted hair, dirty skin or severe body odour;
- unattended physical or medical problems;
- the child or young person states that no one is home to provide care (inadequate supervision, failure to ensure safety);
- child or young person appears constantly tired;
- frequent lateness to school or absence from school;
- inappropriate clothing, especially inadequate clothing in winter;
- alcohol and/or drug abuse present in the household;
- frequent illness, low grade infections or sores;
- Hunger.



Myths about Child Abuse and its Prevalence

An accurate understanding of the dynamics underlying child abuse is important because the impact of any form of abuse on the victim can be life changing.

Common outcomes associated with abuse include drug abuse, suicide, eating disorders, low self-esteem, psychosomatic illness and self-mutilation.

There are many myths about sexual abuse. Some of the common ones are:

- sex between children and adults is not damaging if it is in the context of a loving relationship;
- it is not the abuse which causes the problem but the effects of the intervention by others;
- those abused turn into abusers;
- children frequently lie about sexual abuse;
- sexual abuse is more common in lower socio-economic areas and families;
- only men sexually abuse children;
- sexual abusers are readily identified by 'normal' people.

The following myths pertaining to sexual and other forms of abuse relate particularly to schools:

- There will not be a problem here because all the volunteers/employees are female.
- There will not be a problem here because the young people come from privileged backgrounds and will complain if there is an issue of abuse.
- If we get the selection procedures right, we will eliminate the possibility of abuse.
- We use Police Clearances and Working with Children Checks here so we are covered.
- It is one of the other children's parents/brothers/sisters to whom I am entrusting the child/ren, so it will be OK.
- We did not need to screen Mr Smith because he is a friend of the teacher, president etc.
- My workers, volunteers and casuals are youth themselves so there is no risk.
- We are pretty good at identifying people here who are a bit 'odd'.

Grooming

Physical Indicators:

- unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile phone) or expensive habits (alcohol, smoking and/or drugs)
- going missing or absconding with the purpose to be elsewhere
- child has developed a special relationship with an adult that is secretive
- child is receiving favours or gifts from that adult that is inappropriate or is heard to brag about their special relationship with others
- child and adult are meeting in secluded or secret places outside of normal interactions
- overly defensive of anyone accessing personal forms of media and electronic devices
- an adult or child is manufacturing opportunities to be alone together
- an adult is testing or ignoring professional boundaries or rules with one particular child or group

Behavioural Indicators:

- disengagement with school, by truancy or exclusion
- unusual association with older men or women
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual)
- involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or



situations

- self-harming, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault
- adult or child is displaying unwanted physical touch of a tactile or sexual nature, for example, face to face hugging or touching of the body without permission
- engagement in offending, high risk behaviour or criminal activity
- seen at known places of concern
- contact with known perpetrators.

Domestic Violence

Child Abuse and domestic violence co-exist. Children are in a position of great risk of suffering by being exposed to domestic violence. Domestic violence is an abuse of power by one party against another, either during a relationship or after separation within the confines of a domestic or family situation.

The effects of witnessing chronic or extreme domestic violence between Parents/Carers can be just as debilitating as any other forms of Child Abuse.

The abuse of power most commonly manifests as physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse or threats of abuse or damage to property and/or goods.

Children in households with domestic violence are not just 'witnessing' trauma; they are involved in various ways in the violent incident

Trauma of a domestic nature creates additional harm because it overwhelms the child's developing sense of coping mechanisms.

Children living with violence and abuse have feelings of helplessness, fear of death or abandonment; and live in a state of constant alertness.

Physical and/or behavioural indicators - Adolescent students (12 – 17 years)

- exhibit acting out behaviour, e.g. school truancy, early sexual activity or substance use
- experience school performance problems
- exhibit poor interpersonal skills, e.g. lack of respect for others, intolerance of difference and lack of empathy
- respond aggressively or be withdrawn
- be depressed and anxious
- develop psychosomatic/physical symptoms
- exhibit quick temper and explosive behaviour
- be unable to accept responsibility and blame others for their behaviours
- be disconnected from others, be mistrustful, or defensive
- have low self-esteem.

Given the strong co-existence between child abuse and domestic violence, staff, Board Members, volunteers, and contractors will act if they have genuine concerns, based on Reasonable Grounds, that abuse or neglect may be occurring.



Appendix 2

Training Modules

DCPFS provide a Mandatory Reporting Training Program online at <http://mandatoryreporting.dcp.wa.gov.au/Pages/Training%20Modules.aspx>

This Mandatory Reporting Training Program will help you:

- understand the mandatory reporting legislation
- recognise and respond to sexual abuse
- make a mandatory report.

Other Resources

Australian Institute of Family Studies

CFCA Resource Sheet – June 2020

https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/sites/default/files/publication-documents/2006_mandatory_reporting_of_child_abuse_and_neglect.pdf

Department of Communities

The Department for Child Protection is the state government department responsible for issues specifically related to the protection of children, including the handling of abuse and neglect cases.

Their website contains some excellent material for professionals, parents and friends. Of particular interest is the information on 'identifying and responding to child abuse and neglect – a guide for professionals'. To access The Department for Child Protection website click on this link: <https://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Pages/Home.aspx>.

For sexual abuse reports, the Mandatory Reporting Service must be contacted through one of the following means:

Firstly by phone: Telephone: 1800 708 704

The lodge a written mandatory report using the Department's secure [Mandatory Reporting Web System \(MRWeb\)](#). Or Download the form and send it to:

Email: mrs@dcp.wa.gov.au

Fax: 1800 610 614

Post: PO Box 8146, Perth BC, WA 6849

This unit is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for make a report or to raise concerns.

Details regarding mandatory reporting can be obtained through www.mandatoryreporting.dcp.wa.gov.au

To contact CPFS for assistance with a specific case that does not involve sexual abuse, the school will need to speak to the Duty Officer at the local office, available during office hours.

WA Police Service Child Abuse Investigation Unit

If the matter is urgent and the safety of a child is at risk, call 000. If you are a victim of child abuse or paedophilia, or if you have information about someone else being abused, you should contact police on **131 444**.



You can also report child abuse to the Child Protection Squad on **9492 5444**, email them on Child.Abuse.Investigation@police.wa.gov.au, or you can ring Crime Stoppers on **1800 333 000** or go to your local police station.

WA Police Cyber Predator Team can be contacted on 9492 5444 or complaints can be lodged on the WA Police Website www.police.wa.gov.au.

The websites below contain information on cyber predators that for both parents, teachers and students may find informative:

www.esafety.gov.au

www.thinkuknow.org.au

www.acma.gov.au

www.constablecare.org.au

www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com

www.netalert.net.au

After Hours Assistance

Child Abuse Services WA - Telephone: 9223 1111 / 1800 199 008

Crisis Care - Telephone: 9223 1111 / 1800 199 008 (a 24-hour telephone service for people in crisis and needing urgent help).

The National Association of the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN)

NAPCAN is an Australian organisation that seeks to resource and network child welfare professionals and practitioners working to prevent child abuse and neglect from happening before it starts, through the provision of parenting brochures, training, support networks and information. To visit their website use this link: www.napcan.org.au.

CHILDSAFE ORGANISATIONS WA:

<https://www.cryp.wa.gov.au/our-work/resources/child-safe-organisations/>

HELPLINES:

Parenting Line - Telephone: 9272 1466 / 1800 654 432

Family Helpline is a free confidential telephone counselling and information service for families with relationship difficulties. Telephone: 9223 1100 / 1800 643 000

Men's Domestic Violence Helpline provides a free telephone, referral and counselling service for men to help them change their violent behaviour toward female partners. Telephone: 9223 1199 / 1800 000 599

Women's Domestic Violence Helpline provides a free 24-hour telephone support and counselling service for women experiencing family and domestic violence. Telephone: 9223 1188 / 1800 007 339

Child Health and Community Health Services - Refer to the White Pages for contact details of local Child Health Centres.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services - Telephone: 1800 220 400 – 24-hour



mental health advice line

Disability Services Commission - Telephone: 9426 9200 / 1800 998 214

Kids Helpline is a free and confidential telephone counselling service for 5- to 25-year-olds in Australia available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Telephone: 1800 551 800

Sexual Assault Resource Centre Counselling Line offers a free, 24-hour emergency service for people aged 13 or over who have been sexually assaulted or sexually abused recently (within the last two weeks). Telephone: 9340 1828 / 1800 199 888

Lifeline Australia offers a service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can provide information about other support services, if required. To contact Lifeline Australia call 13 11 14.



Appendix 3

GUIDELINE 1 - Responding to disclosures of Child Abuse

School Staff, Board Members, contractors, and volunteers need to be aware of the immediate needs of students making disclosures and to respond accordingly.

The student may not have ever disclosed the abuse to anyone before and may be highly anxious when doing so. It is important to note that staff cannot agree to a student's demands for confidentiality or requests that parents, police or other agencies not be informed when the welfare or safety of the student or other students may be threatened.

What do to or say

It is important that you:

- let the student tell the event in his or her own words.
- establish clear limits on confidentiality, e.g. 'What you say to me will not leave this room unless you say something that involves you being hurt or hurting someone else, then I will need to inform the Principal and possibly your Parent/Carer.'
- listen to the student in a private location within the College.
- listen attentively and show empathy to the student's feelings.
- acknowledge that it is difficult to talk about such things and be supportive and understanding.
- try to identify the student's fears; but do not put words in their mouth.
- accept what is said and keep in mind that only the minimum of information is required before reporting potential abuse or neglect.
- reassure the student that by telling them they are doing the right thing.
- are calm and non-judgemental, conceal any facial expression that may result from what the student is saying.
- tell the student that a report will be made to the Principal who will provide protection.
- allow the student the option of support during any agency interview.
- reassure the student of the availability of continuing support from the College.
- document the disclosure and subsequent discussions and actions.
- explain what will happen next and make every effort to stay with the student until necessary steps have been taken to ensure the safety and support of the student.
- use 'Protective Interrupting' if a student begins to disclose in class or in a public area, acknowledge that the student has been heard and stop them from disclosing any further where others may overhear, and arrange to talk in a less public place.

What not to do or say

It is important that you do not:

- blame the student – abuse is never the child's fault.
- push the child for details or conduct an investigation, understanding that other agencies have this responsibility.
- express judgement of the student, perpetrator or family.
- get angry, upset or display shock.
- put words in the student's mouth or interrogate them, understanding that this could jeopardise the interviewing process of the DCPFS or the Police.
- promise not to tell – you may need to advise others to get help to protect the student.
- give a lecture about right and wrong.
- say 'forget it', 'you'll get over it' or other such minimising statements.
- make promises about non-disclosure that can't be kept (i.e. 'Tell me and I will not tell anyone').
- give excessive pity;
- engage in general staff room discussion or gossip about the disclosure.



Protective Interrupting

If a student discloses in a classroom, group environment or online you should take the following steps:

1. Interrupt the student by acknowledging them and preventing further disclosure e.g. 'Thank you, it sounds as though you have something important to talk about, why don't we have a chat at recess?'
2. Be supportive and gently indicate that the child can talk in a more private situation.
3. Quietly arrange to see the child as soon as possible.
4. Listen attentively in a private location within the School and reassure the child that telling was the right thing to do.
5. Follow the BRCC Child Protection Reporting Policy and Procedures.

Additional Support

College employees, Board Members, and volunteers should be aware that a disclosure could elicit strong feelings of shock, anger and helplessness.

As it is important to understand these feelings, BRCC will provide an opportunity for these to be worked through after the disclosure.

Support is available from the College's EAP Service, Principal or Senior Social Worker.

