

Section:	Children's Health and Safety		
Policy:	Child Protection Policy	Policy Number	2.1
Quality Area/s	2	Related Policies	
Last reviewed	Feb 2015; July 2016; Nov 19; June 2020; October 2020; April 2023	Next Review	2024
Modifications	April 2023; updated to reflect current regulations		
Relevant Legislation	Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011. Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 Section 84, 165		
Further Reading			

INTRODUCTION

Karuna Montessori School seeks to provide a nurturing and safe environment for children, not only in the classroom but also at home and in the wider community. As such, we are committed to maintaining the safety of children while they are in our care by carrying out the specific requirements of the relevant legislation. At Karuna Montessori, management, staff and volunteers will treat children with the utmost respect and understanding, we believe that:

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

This policy highlights the need for understanding the complexity if child abuse or risk of harm is suspected and emphasises that staff must take action.

1.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy sets out staff responsibilities for child protection and the processes that staff must follow in relation to child protection matters. This policy applies to all staff members, which includes employees, contractors and volunteers.

We understand our “duty of care” responsibilities is to protect children from all types of abuse, and adhere to our legislative obligations at all times. We aim to implement effective strategies to assist in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children. Our school will perform proficiently and act in the best interest of the child, assisting them to develop to their full potential in a secure and caring environment.

Staff members who fail to adhere to this policy may be in breach of their terms of employment.

1.2 KEY LEGISLATION

There are four key pieces of child protection legislation in New South Wales:

- the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (“Care and Protection Act”);
- the *Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012* (“WWC Act”);
- the *Children’s Guardian Act 2019* (“Children’s Guardian Act”)
- the *Crimes Act 1990* (“Crimes Act”).

1.3 Child Safe Scheme and the Child Safe Standards

The Child Safe Scheme gives the Office of the Children’s Guardian (OCG) additional powers to monitor and investigate how organisations implement the Child Safe Standards to support the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Under the Scheme, certain child-related organisations including in the Education, Early Childhood, Health and Youth Justice sectors, must implement the Child Safe Standards.

The Office of the Children’s Guardian is an independent statutory body that promotes the interests, safety and rights of children and young people in NSW. The core functions of the Office of the Children’s Guardian include administering Working With Children Checks, Reportable Conduct Scheme and implementation of the Child Safe Standards.

The Child Safe Standards are—

1. Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
2. Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved.
4. Equity is upheld, and diverse needs are taken into account.
5. People working with children are suitable and supported.
6. Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child focused.
7. Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training.
8. Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur.
9. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved.
10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe.

1.4 RELATED POLICIES

There are a number of other School policies that relate to child protection that staff members must be aware of and understand including (but not limited to):

- **Code of Conduct** - sets out information about the standards of behaviour expected of all staff members, contractors and volunteers of the School;
- **Work Health and Safety Statement** - identifies the obligations imposed by work health and safety legislation on the school and staff members;
- **Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Statement** - summarises obligations in relation to unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying;
- **Complaint Handling Procedures** – provides the steps taken by the school in addressing complaints.
- **Anti-bullying**

1.5 COMPLIANCE AND RECORDS

The Principal or their delegate monitors compliance with this policy and securely maintains school records relevant to this policy, which includes:

- register of staff members who have read and acknowledged that they read and understood this policy;
- working with children check clearance verifications;
- mandatory reports to the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), previously known as Family and Community Services; and
- reports of reportable conduct allegations, the outcome of reportable conduct investigations, and/or criminal convictions.

1. CHILD PROTECTION

The safety, protection and welfare of students is the responsibility of all staff members and encompasses:

- a duty of care to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent harm to students which could reasonably have been foreseen
- obligations under child protection legislation

2.1 CHILDREN PROTECTION CONCERNS

There are different forms of child abuse. These include:

1. Neglect
2. Sexual Abuse
3. Physical Abuse
4. Emotional Abuse

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

NEGLECT is the continued failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child with the basic things needed for his or her proper growth and development. Neglect can be a single incident or ongoing, and may be intentional or unintentional, the following is only a guide.

Some indicators of Neglect may include:

- denial of basics such as food, clothing, shelter;
- lack of medical and dental care or adequate supervision

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF NEGLECT

Signs in Children:

Physical

- low weight for age and/or failure to thrive and develop;
- untreated physical problems e.g. sores, serious nappy rash and urine scalds;
- poor standards of hygiene i.e. child consistently unwashed;
- poor or pale complexion and poor hair texture.

Behaviour

- extreme anxiety about being abandoned,
- which is not age-appropriate;
- extended stays at school, public places, other homes;
- child not adequately supervised for their age;
- scavenging or stealing food and focus on basic survival;
- extreme longing for adult affection;
- rocking, sucking, head-banging;
- says there is no caregiver.

Signs in Parents or Caregivers

- unable or unwilling to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, medical attention, safe home conditions.
- leaving the child without appropriate supervision.
- abandonment of child

SEXUAL ABUSE is when someone involves a child or young person in a sexual activity by using their power over them or taking advantage of their trust. Often children are bribed or threatened physically and psychologically to make them participate in the activity. Child sexual abuse is a crime.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Signs in Children:

Physical

- bruising or bleeding in the genital or anal area
- sexually transmitted diseases
- bruising to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs
- anorexia or over-eating
- adolescent pregnancy
- unexplained accumulation of money and gifts
- difficulty in walking or sitting.

Behaviour

- going to bed fully clothed
- unwilling to change clothes when needed
- child or child's friend telling you about it, directly or indirectly
- describing sexual acts
- sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate for the child's age
- aggressive behaviour or e.g. sudden return to bed-wetting or soiling
- self-destructive behaviour e.g. drug dependency, suicide attempts, self-mutilation
- child being in contact with a known or suspected perpetrator of a sexual assault
- persistent running away from home
- withdrawal, fantasy or infantile behaviour.

Signs in Parents or Caregivers

- exposing a child to prostitution or pornography or using a child for pornographic purposes
- intentional exposure of a child to sexual behaviour of others
- previous conviction or suspicion of child sexual abuse

PHYSICAL ABUSE is a non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child caused by a parent, caregiver or any other person. It includes but is not limited to injuries which are caused by excessive discipline, severe beatings or shakings, cigarette burns, attempted strangulation and female genital mutilation.

Injuries include bruising, lacerations or welts, burns, fractures or dislocation of joints.

Hitting a child around the head or neck and/or using a stick, belt or other object to discipline or punishing a child (in a non-trivial way) is a crime.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE**Signs in Children****Physical**

- bruising to face, head, or neck; other bruising and marks which may show the shape of the object that caused it, e.g. belt buckle, hand print

- lacerations and welts
- explanation of injury offered by the child is not consistent with the injury
- adult bite marks and scratches
- abdominal pain caused by ruptured internal organs, without a history of major trauma
- unusual or regular fractures of bones, especially in children under three years' old;
- unusual burns and scalds (including cigarette burns)
- drowsiness, vomiting, fits or retinal haemorrhages, which may suggest head injury
- multiple injuries or bruises
- swallowing of poisonous substances, alcohol or other harmful drugs
- dislocations, sprains, twisting
- general indicators of female genital mutilation, which could include: having a special operation, difficulties in toileting, and reluctance to be involved in sport or other physical activities where the child was previously interested.

Behaviour

- constant fatigue, listlessness or falling asleep in class
- alcohol or drug abuse
- frightened of parents
- afraid to go home
- reports injury.

Signs in Parents and Caregivers

- explanation of injury offered by the parent is not consistent with the injury
- a parent or caregiver says that they fear injuring their child
- family history of violence
- history of their own maltreatment as a child
- frequent visits with their child or children to health or other services with unexplained or suspicious injuries, swallowing of non-food substances or with inner complaints

EMOTIONAL ABUSE can result in serious psychological harm, where the behaviour of their parent or caregiver damages the confidence and self-esteem of the child or young person, resulting in serious emotional deprivation or trauma.

Although it is possible for 'one-off' incidents to cause serious harm, in general it is the frequency, persistence and duration of the parental or carer behaviour that is instrumental in defining the consequences for the child.

This can include a range of behaviours such as excessive criticism, withholding affection, exposure to domestic violence, intimidation or threatening behaviour.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE

All types of abuse and neglect harm children psychologically, but the term 'emotional abuse' applies to

behaviour which destroys a child's confidence.

Signs in Children

Physical

- Speech disorders
- Delay in physical development. Behaviour
- constant feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves
- inability to value others
- habit disorders (sucking, biting rocking)
- lack of trust in people
- lack of people skills necessary for daily functioning
- extreme attention-seeking behaviour
- other behavioural disorders, e.g. bullying, disruptiveness, aggressiveness
- exposure to domestic violence
- suicide threats or attempts
- persistent running away from home.

Signs in Parents or Caregivers

- constant criticism, belittling, teasing of a child, or ignoring or withholding praise and attention
- excessive or unreasonable demands
- persistent hostility and severe verbal abuse, rejection and scapegoating

Cumulative Impact: is a series of acts or omissions that, when viewed together, may establish a pattern of risk of significant harm.

Psychological harm is where: A child/young person appears to be experiencing psychological/emotional distress and is a danger to self or others as a consequence of the behaviour by a parent, carer or significant figure in a child's life.

Danger to Self or Others: A child/young person is demonstrating suicidal or self-harming behaviours. A child/young person is a danger to self or others and the reporter does not know whether the parent/carer behaviours contributed now or in the past.

Relinquishing Care: Parent/carer states they will not or cannot continue to provide care for a child under the age of 16 or a young person over 16 and they are unable to make an informed decision (temporarily or permanently). Child/young person is in voluntary care for longer than legislation allows

Unborn Child: You are concerned for the welfare of an unborn child.

Parental reports: are made when there are reasonable grounds to suspect (before the birth of a child) that the child may be at risk after his/her birth. A report is warranted when the child was the subject of

pre-natal report and the birth mother of the child did not adequately engage successfully with support services to eliminate, or minimise the risk factors that gave rise to the report.

Witnessing Domestic Violence/Carer Concern is also a form of abuse. When children witness domestic violence they usually believe that they have caused it.

Domestic violence is a violation of human rights. It is the use of violence and abuse by one person to gain and maintain power over another person with whom they are in a close personal or family relationship. Domestic violence can include physical, psychological, emotional, sexual and financial abuse (such as restricting access to finances). It can also include acts of social control (isolating from family, friends and community), stalking, intimidation and harassment. Living in a household with family or domestic violence can place children and young people at risk of both serious physical and psychological harm.

2.2 CHILD WELLBEING CONCERNS

Child wellbeing concerns are safety, welfare or wellbeing concerns for a child or young person that do not meet the mandatory reporting threshold, risk of significant harm in section 5.1.2.

2.3 STAFF MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Key legislation requires reporting of particular child protection concerns. However, as part of the school's overall commitment to child protection all staff are required to report any child protection or child wellbeing concerns about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person to the Principal.

If the allegation involves the Principal, a report should be made to the President.

2. TRAINING

3.1 THE SCHOOL

To fulfill our responsibilities of promoting and enhancing the safety and welfare of children at Karuna, our school will:

1. Provide access to ongoing training and development
2. Inform and consult with parents and encourage the participation of families in child protection issues
3. Establish supporting procedure for fulfilling mandatory reporting obligations
4. Monitor, evaluate and review our Child Protection Policy and procedures.
5. Review policy and procedures at the beginning of every year.

3.2 STAFF MEMBERS

All staff members, including casual staff, and volunteers must participate in an annual child protection training day and any additional training, as directed by the Principal. At the beginning of every academic year on the Monday of the first week prior to the commencement of Term 1 (usually around the 27th January), a day will be set aside for a full staff development meeting. Following the in house Child Protection training day, staff will sign Annual Child Protection training declaration form on completion of the training (Page 27). The training complements this policy and provides information to staff about their legal responsibilities related to child protection and school expectations, including:

- mandatory reporting
- reportable conduct
- working with children check, and
- professional boundaries.

If a staff member is unable to attend the reserved training, an alternative training date will be made to ensure all staff are adequately trained in Child Protection annually.

The Administrator will retain all signed copies of the Child protection training declaration in staff files, and on computer drive as well as the Child Protection Policy folder kept in locked filing cabinet.

All new staff members must read this policy and sign the acknowledgement that they have read and understood this policy as part of the induction process. New staff members will be sent on child protection training prior to commencing employment. All training sessions will be booked with an appropriate NESA approved Child Protection training provider, for example CELA, AIS, Peak Training, for the new staff member/s.

It is the responsibility of the Administrator to keep a record of all training for each staff member. This record will detail: Name, Date of training, training name, provider, accreditation and expiry date. The Administrator is responsible for registering staff in appropriate training course and is also responsible for identifying expiry of child protection training and organising all staff to undertake Child Protection Training when necessary. Staff are to provide completion certificate post training to the Administrator. The certificate is to be sighted by the Principal and kept on staff file as well as a scanned copy on computer staff records and a copy kept in the Child Protection folder kept in locked files in Principals office.

Any changes to legislation will be added in this policy and staff will be informed of changes at the next staff meeting (held monthly). The Administrator will ensure staff sight new legislation and sign acknowledgment of reading and understanding on PG 27 of this policy.

3. WORKING WITH CHILDREN

The WWC Act protects children by requiring a worker to have a working with children's check clearance or current application to engage in child related work. Failure to do so may result in a fine or imprisonment.

The Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) is responsible for determining applications for a Working with Children Check clearance (WWCC clearance). It involves a national criminal history check and review of reported workplace misconduct findings. The result is either to:

- grant a WWCC clearance (generally valid for 5 years)
- refuse a WWCC clearance (further applications cannot be made for 5 years)

In addition, the OGC may impose an interim bar on engaging in child related work for both applicants and WWCC clearance holders.

WWCC clearance holders are subject to ongoing monitoring by the OGC.

4.1 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

4.1.1 Staff members

Staff members who engage in child-related work and eligible volunteers (including those volunteers working in the school) are required to:

- hold and maintain a valid, current WWCC clearance;
- not engage in child-related work at any time that they are subjected to an interim bar or a bar;
- report to the Principal if they are no longer eligible for a WWCC clearance, the status of their WWCC clearance changes or are notified by the OGC that they are subjected to a risk assessment; and
- notify the OGC of any change to their personal details within 3 months of the change occurring. Failure to do so may result in a fine.
- Ensure their WWCC is renewed 3 months prior to expiry.

It is an offence for an employee to engage in child-related work when they do not hold a WWCC clearance or if they are subject to a bar.

NOTE: We are registered with temp agency Pulse – Child Care Crew. If we need to use a temp for relief purposes we will request a copy of their WWCC and their DOB so that the school can verify these details.

All volunteers are required to:

- be aware and follow the expectations of conduct expressed in the school staff Code of Conduct.

- apply for a free Volunteer WWCC through the OCG. This applies only to volunteers who are in contact with children through a reading program, gardening program or other program as specified by the Principal.
- As Volunteers only serve maximum 3 years, there is no need for them to renew their WWCC. If they serve longer, Administration reference WWCC staffing table and inform volunteer of requirement to update their WWCC. Ensure Volunteers WWCC is renewed 3 months prior to expiry.

4.1.2 The Principal

The Principal will:

- Oversee the Administrator who will obtain a WWCC number from all prospective staff and verify CLEARED status online via the Kids Guardian website, prior to commencement of employment. All volunteers to the school must also provide a WWC volunteer number to the school for verification. This must be obtained before the staff member/volunteer can begin working at the school.
- Oversee the Administrator keeps a record of the above CLEARED status of each child-related worker's WWCC clearance; as well as expiry date and applicants date of birth and date of last verification, on 'living' Staff WWCC Summary table and keep a hardcopy in the CPP Folder. If status is not cleared refer 4.2.3 of this policy.
- Ensure that the school will only employ or engage child-related workers or eligible volunteers who have a valid WWCC clearance prior to commencement and during volunteer work; and
- advise the OCG of the findings they have made after completing a reportable conduct investigation, including whether they have made a finding of reportable conduct. A finding of reportable conduct in relation to sexual misconduct, a sexual offence or a serious physical assault must be referred to the OCG's Working with Children Check Directorate (WWCC Directorate). It is an offence for an employer to knowingly engage a child-related worker who does not hold a WWCC clearance or who has a bar.
- Oversee the Administrator will keep records for the duration of the employment of the staff member and archive WWCC records onsite for seven (7) years.
- Oversee the Administrator to email staff at the beginning of each Term if their WWCC is expiring within 3 months to commence renewal process. In order to facilitate this action, a reminder can be found on file 'Start of Term checklist' and an item has been added to monthly Staff Meeting Agenda that staff must check their WWCC expiry dates and commence renewal process if expiry within 3 months.
- Oversee the Administrator undertake annual WWC verification checks on current staff and volunteers. This will take place at the start of each school year in the first week of Term 1. The records and results will be updated and stored along with historical checks and kept on computer file as a 'living' Staff WWC Summary table. A hard copy of all WWC verification checks

will also be kept as a hard copy in the Child Protection Policy Folder and relevant staff folder kept in the locked filing cabinet in the Principal's office.

4.2 WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK CLEARANCE

A Working with Children Check ("WWCC") clearance is authorisation under the WWC Act for a person to engage in child-related work.

4.2.1 Child-related work

Child-related work involves direct contact by the worker with a child or children and that contact is a usual part of and more than incidental to the work.

Child-related work includes, but is not limited to work in the following sectors:

- early education and childcare including education and care service, child-care centres and other child care;
- schools and other educational institutions and private coaching or tuition of children;
- religious services;
- cleaning sector;
- residential services including boarding schools, homestays more than three weeks, residential services and overnight camps;
- transport services for children including school bus services, taxi services for children with disability and supervision of school road crossings; and
- Counselling, mentoring or distance education not involving direct contact.

Child-related work includes, but is not limited to work undertaken by the following persons:

- Parent volunteers
- Cleaners
- Bus drivers
- Performers
- Occupational Therapist/Speech Therapist etc
- Lutheran Church members

Volunteers, cleaners, therapists and performers are required to hold a valid WWCC.

4.2.2 Application/Renewal

An application or renewal can be made through Kids Guardian website or its replacement agency. The process for applying for and renewing a WWCC clearance with the OCG involves a national police check and a review of findings of misconduct. If the OCG grants or renews a WWCC clearance the Applicant will be issued with a number which is to be provided to the School. The School Administrator will log onto the OCG to check the Applicants status prior to their commencement at the school. The

application must be verified as CLEARED. Once Cleared, the applicant can engage in child related work. The Working with Children Check Staff Summary is to be updated accordingly see 4.1.2. If the application is refused, see 4.2.3.

4.2.3 Refusal/Cancellation

The OCG can refuse to grant a working with children check clearance or cancel a WWCC clearance. The person is then restricted from engaging in child-related work and not able to apply for another clearance for five years. Employers are notified by the OGC and instructed to remove such persons from child-related work. Administrator will ensure 'living' Summary document is amended accordingly, and update persons files accordingly.

4.2.4 Interim bar

The OCG may issue an interim bar, for up to 12 months, to high risk individuals to prevent them from engaging in child-related work while a risk assessment is conducted. If an interim bar remains in place for six months or longer, it may be appealed to the Administrative Decisions Tribunal.

Not everyone who is subject to a risk assessment will receive an interim bar; only those representing a serious and immediate risk to children.

4.2.5 Disqualified person

A disqualified person is a person who has been convicted, or against whom proceedings have been commenced for a disqualifying offence outlined in Schedule 2 of WWC Act. A disqualified person cannot be granted a working with children check clearance and is therefore restricted from engaging in child related work.

4.3 Ongoing monitoring

The OCG will continue to monitor criminal records and professional conduct findings of all WWCC clearance holders through a risk assessment process.

4.3.1 Risk assessments

A risk assessment is an evaluation of an individual's suitability for child-related work.

The OCG will conduct a risk assessment on a person's suitability to work with children when a new record is received which triggers a risk assessment. This may include an offence under Schedule 1, pattern of behaviour or offences involving violence or sexual misconduct representing a risk to children and findings of misconduct involving children.

4.4 PROCESS FOR REPORTING TO OCG

4.4.1 The school

Independent Schools are defined as a reporting body by the WWC Act.

The School is required to advise the OCG of the findings they have made after completing a reportable conduct investigation, including whether they have made a finding of reportable conduct. A finding of reportable conduct in relation to sexual misconduct, a sexual offence or a serious physical assault must be referred to the OCG's WWCC Directorate. Information must also be referred internally to the OCG's WWCC Directorate if it meets the threshold for consideration of an interim WWCC bar, as per Section 17 of the WWC Act, pending a formal risk assessment.

The School may also be obliged to report, amend or provide additional information to the OCG as outlined in the WWC Act and the Children's Guardian Act.

4.4.2 Finding of misconduct involving children

The School will report any finding of reportable conduct to the OCG.

When informing an employee of a finding of reportable conduct against them, the School should alert them to the consequent report to the WWCC Directorate in relation to sustained findings of sexual misconduct, a sexual offence or a serious physical assault.

The WWC Act enables a person who has a sustained finding referred to the OCG to request access to the records held by the school in relation to the finding of misconduct involving children, once final findings are made. The entitlements of a person to request access to information in terms of section 46 of the WWC Act is enlivened when a finding of misconduct involving children has been made.

4.4.3 Other information

The school may also be required to provide information to the OCG that is relevant to an assessment of whether a person poses a risk to the safety of children or the OCG's monitoring functions.

4. MANDATORY REPORTING

The Care and Protection Act provides for mandatory reporting of children at risk of significant harm. A child is a person under the age of 16 years and a young person is aged 16 years or above but who is under the age of 18, for the purposes of the Care and Protection Act.

Under the Care and Protection Act mandatory reporting applies to persons who:

- in the course of their employment, deliver services including health care; welfare, education, children's services and residential services, to children; or
- hold a management position in an organisation, the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of services including health care, welfare, education, children's services and residential services, to children, are mandatory reporters.

All teachers are mandatory reporters. Other staff members may also be mandatory reporters. Any

queries about whether other staff members are mandatory reporters should be directed to the Principal. The Mandatory Reporting Policy should be read, understood and declared annually by all staff members including casuals at the first full staff meeting of the year. See Attachment 2.

5.1 REPORTS TO DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES AND JUSTICE (DCJ) SERVICES

A mandatory reporter must, where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child (under 16 years of age) is at risk of significant harm, report to the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) as soon as practicable. The report must include the name, or a description, of the child and the grounds for suspecting that the child is at risk of significant harm.

In addition, the school may choose to make a report to the DCJ where there are reasonable grounds to suspect a young person (16 or 17 years of age) is at risk of significant harm and there are current concerns about the safety, welfare and well-being of the young person.

In the independent school sector a mandatory reporter will meet their obligation if they report to the Principal in the School. This centralised reporting model ensures that a person in the school has all of the information that may be relevant to the circumstances of the child at risk of significant harm and addresses the risk of the school not being aware of individual incidences that amount to cumulative harm.

5.1.1 Reasonable grounds

'Reasonable grounds' refers to the need to have an objective basis for suspecting that a child or young person may be at risk of significant harm, based on:

- first hand observations of the child, young person or family
- what the child, young person, parent or another person has disclosed
- what can reasonably be inferred based on professional training and / or experience.

'Reasonable grounds' does not mean a person is required to confirm their suspicions or have clear proof before making a report.

5.1.2 Significant harm

A child or young person is 'at risk of significant harm' if current concerns exist for the safety, welfare or well-being of the child or young person because of the presence, to a significant extent, of any one or more of the following circumstances:

- the child's or young person's basic physical or psychological needs are not being met or are at risk of not being met,
- the parents or other caregivers have not arranged and are unable or unwilling to arrange for the child or young person to receive necessary medical care,
- in the case of a child or young person who is required to attend school in accordance with the Education Act 1990 —the parents or other caregivers have not arranged and are unable or

unwilling to arrange for the child or young person to receive an education in accordance with that Act,

- the child or young person has been, or is at risk of being, physically or sexually abused or ill-treated,
- the child or young person is living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence and, as a consequence, the child or young person is at risk of serious physical or psychological harm,
- a parent or other caregiver has behaved in such a way towards the child or young person that the child or young person has suffered or is at risk of suffering serious psychological harm,
- the child was the subject of a pre-natal report under section 25 of the Care and Protection Act and the birth mother of the child did not engage successfully with support services to eliminate, or minimise to the lowest level reasonably practical, the risk factors that gave rise to the report.

What is meant by 'significant' in the phrase 'to a significant extent' is that which is sufficiently serious to warrant a response by a statutory authority irrespective of a family's consent.

What is significant is not minor or trivial and may reasonably be expected to produce a substantial and demonstrably adverse impact on the child or young person's safety, welfare or well-being.

The significance can result from a single act or omission or an accumulation of these.

5.3 PROCESS FOR MANDATORY REPORTING

5.3.1 Staff members

Staff members must raise concerns about a child or young person who may be at risk of significant harm with Principal as soon as possible to discuss whether the matter meets the threshold of 'risk of significant harm' and the steps required to report the matter.

However, if there is suspected criminal activity or immediate danger to the child or young person and Principal or next most senior member of staff is not contactable staff members should contact the Police and/or the Child Protection Helpline (13 21 11) directly and then advise the Principal or next most senior member of staff at the school as soon as possible.

Staff members are not required to, and must not, undertake any investigation of the matter. Staff members are not permitted to inform the parents or caregivers that a report to DCJ has been made.

Staff members are required to deal with the matter confidentially and only disclose it to the persons referred to above or as required to comply with mandatory reporting obligations. Failure to maintain confidentiality will not only be a breach of this policy but could incite potential civil proceedings for defamation

5.3.2 The school

In general, the Principal will report these matters to DCJ and, where necessary, the police. This is supported by DCJ in accordance with best practice and principles.

5.4 PROCESS FOR REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT STUDENTS

5.4.1 Staff members

While the Care and Protection Act outlines a mandatory reporter's obligation to report to DCJ concerns about risk of significant harm. However, to ensure centralised reporting all staff members are required to report any concern regarding the safety, welfare and wellbeing of a student to the Principal. Staff members who are unsure as to whether a matter meets the threshold of 'risk of significant harm' should report their concern to the Principal regardless.

Staff members are required to deal with all reports regarding the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a student with confidentiality and only disclose it to the Principal and any other person the Principal nominates.

5. REPORTABLE CONDUCT

Section 29 of the Children's Guardian Act 2019 requires the Heads of Entities, including non-government schools in New South Wales, to notify the OCG of all allegations of reportable conduct and convictions involving an 'employee' and the outcome of the School's investigation of these allegations. Under the Children's Guardian Act 2019 allegations of child abuse only fall within the reportable conduct jurisdiction if the involved individual is an employee of the relevant entity at the time when the allegation becomes known by the Head of Entity (Principal).

Reportable Conduct:

- involves a child (a person under the age of 18 years) at the time of the alleged incident; and
- involves certain defined conduct as described in the Act (see below).

The Office of the Children's Guardian:

- must keep under scrutiny the systems for preventing reportable conduct by employees of non-government schools and the handling of, or response to, reportable allegations (including allegations which are exempt from notification) or convictions;
- must receive and assess notifications from non-government schools concerning reportable conduct or reportable convictions;
- is required to oversee or monitor the conduct of investigations by non-government schools into allegations of reportable conduct or reportable convictions;
- must determine whether an investigation that has been monitored has been conducted properly, and whether appropriate action has been taken as a result of the investigation;

- may directly investigate an allegation of reportable conduct or reportable conviction against an employee of a non-government school, or the handling of or response to such a matter (eg arising out of complaints by the person who is the subject of an allegation); and
- may investigate the way in which a relevant entity has dealt with, or is dealing with, a report, complaint or notification, if the OCG considers it appropriate to do so.

6.1 REPORTABLE CONDUCT

Under the Children's Guardian Act 2019 *reportable conduct* is defined as:

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

Reportable conduct does not extend to:

- conduct that is reasonable for the purposes of the discipline, management or care of children, having regard to the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the children and to any relevant codes of conduct or professional standards; or
- the use of physical force that, in all the circumstances, is trivial or negligible and the circumstances in which it was used have been investigated and the result of the investigation has been recorded in accordance with appropriate procedures; or
- conduct of a class or kind exempted from being reportable conduct by the Children's Guardian Act under section 30.

6.1.1 Definitions

The following definitions relate to *reportable conduct*:

- **Sexual offence:** an offence of a sexual nature under a law of the State, another State, a Territory, or the Commonwealth, committed against, with or in the presence of a child, such as:
 - sexual touching of a child;
 - a child grooming offence;

- production, dissemination, or possession of child abuse material.

Definitions of 'grooming', within child protection legislation, are complex. Under the Crimes Act, grooming or procuring a child under the age of 16 years for unlawful sexual activity is classed as a sexual offence. The Crimes Act (s73) also extends the age of consent to 18 years when a child is in a 'special care' relationship. Under Schedule 1(2) of the WWC Act, grooming is recognised as a form of sexual misconduct. The Children's Guardian Act 2019 and this Child Protection Policy reflect these definitions within the context of the Reportable Conduct Scheme (Division 2).

An alleged sexual offence does not have to be the subject of criminal investigation or charges for it to be categorised as a reportable allegation of sexual offence.

- **Sexual misconduct:** conduct with, towards or in the presence of a child that is sexual in nature (but not a sexual offence). The Act provides the following (non-exhaustive) examples:
 - descriptions of sexual acts without a legitimate reason to provide the descriptions;
 - sexual comments, conversations or communications;
 - comments to a child that express a desire to act in a sexual manner towards the child, or another child.

Note – crossing professional boundaries comes within the scope of the scheme to the extent that the alleged conduct meets the definition of sexual misconduct. That is, the conduct with, towards or in the presence of a child that is sexual in nature (but is not a sexual offence).

- **Assault:** an assault can occur when a person intentionally or recklessly (ie. knows the assault is possible but ignores the risk):
 - applies physical force against a child without lawful justification or excuse – such as hitting, striking, kicking, punching or dragging a child (actual physical force); or
 - causes a child to apprehend the immediate and unlawful use of physical force against them – such as threatening to physically harm a child through words and/or gestures regardless of whether the person actually intends to apply any force (apprehension of physical force)
- **Ill-treatment:** is defined as conduct towards a child that is:
 - unreasonable; and
 - seriously inappropriate, improper, inhumane or cruel.
 - Ill-treatment can include a range of conduct such as making excessive or degrading demands of a child; a pattern of hostile or degrading comments or behaviour towards a child; and using inappropriate forms of behaviour management towards a child.

- **Neglect:** defined as a significant failure to provide adequate and proper food, supervision, nursing, clothing, medical aid or lodging for a child that causes or is likely to cause harm - by a person who has care and/or has responsibility towards a child.
- Neglect can be an ongoing situation of repeated failure by a caregiver to meet a child's physical or psychological needs, or a single significant incident where a caregiver fails to fulfill a duty or obligation, resulting in actual harm to a child where there is the potential for significant harm to a child. Examples of neglect include failing to protect a child from abuse and exposing a child to a harmful environment.
- Behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child is conduct that is intentional or reckless (without reasonable excuse), obviously or very clearly unreasonable and which results in significant emotional harm or trauma to a child.

For a reportable allegation involving psychological harm, the following elements must be present:

- An obviously or very clearly unreasonable or serious act or series of acts that the employees knew or ought to have known was unacceptable, and
- evidence of psychological harm to the child that is more than transient, including displaying patterns of 'out of character behaviour', regression in behaviour, distress, anxiety, physical symptoms or self-harm, and
- an alleged causal link between the employee's conduct and the significant emotional or psychological harm to the child.
- Reportable allegation is an allegation that an employee has engaged in conduct that may be reportable conduct.

Reportable conviction means a conviction (including a finding of guilt without the court proceeding to a conviction), in NSW or elsewhere, of an offence involving reportable conduct.

- Employee of an entity includes:
 - an individual employed by, or in, the entity
 - a volunteer providing services to children
 - a contractor engaged directly by the entity (or by a third party) where the contractor holds, or is required to hold, a WWCC clearance for the purposes of their work with an entity; and
 - a person engaged by a religious body where that person holds, or is required to hold, a WWCC clearance for the purposes of their work with the religious body.

Head of entity includes:

- An individual employed by the school in the position of Principal/Teacher

PSOA Person Subject Of the Allegation

6.2 PROCESS FOR REPORTING OF REPORTABLE CONDUCT ALLEGATIONS OR CONVICTIONS

6.2.1 Staff members

Any concerns about any other employee engaging in conduct that is considered inappropriate, or reportable conduct, or any allegation of inappropriate, or reportable conduct made by the employee or about the employee themselves must be reported to the Principal. Where it is uncertain if the conduct is reportable conduct but is considered inappropriate behaviour, this must also be reported.

Staff members must also report to Principal when they become aware that an employee has been charged with or convicted of an offence (including a finding of guilt without the court proceeding to a conviction) involving reportable conduct. This includes information relating to the employee themselves.

6.2.2 Parents, carers and community members

Parents, carer and community members are encouraged to report any conduct that is in their view inappropriate, reportable or criminal conduct to the Principal or their delegate. All such reports will be dealt with in accordance with the schools Complaint Handling procedures.

6.2.3 Head of Entity (Principal)

If the allegation involves the Principal, the staff member must report to President.

Any concerns about the Head of Entity (Principal) engaging in conduct that is considered inappropriate, or reportable conduct, or any allegation of inappropriate, or reportable conduct made by the employee about the Head of Entity (Principal) must be reported to the President of the Executive Committee. Where it is uncertain if the conduct is reportable conduct but is considered inappropriate behaviour this must also be reported.

Staff members must also report to President when they become aware that the Head of Entity (Principal) has been charged with or convicted of an offence (including a finding of guilt without the court proceeding to a conviction) involving reportable conduct. This includes information relating to the Head of Entity (Principal) themselves.

6.2.4 The school

The Principal, as the Head of Entity under the Children's Guardian Act 2019, must:

- Ensure specified systems are in place for preventing, detecting and responding to reportable allegations or convictions

- Submit a 7-day notification form to the OCG within 7 business days of becoming aware of a reportable allegation or conviction against an employee of the entity (unless the Head of the Entity has a reasonable excuse),
The notification should include the following information:
 - (a) that a report has been received in relation to an employee of the School, and
 - (b) the type of reportable conduct, and
 - (c) the name of the employee, and
 - (d) the name and contact details of School and the Head of Entity, and
 - (e) for a reportable allegation, whether it has been reported to Police, and
 - (f) if a report has been made to the Child Protection Helpline, that a report has been made, and
 - (g) the nature of the relevant entity's initial risk assessment and risk management action,
- The notice must also include the following, if known to the Head of Entity:
 - (a) details of the reportable allegation or conviction considered to be a reportable conviction,
 - (b) the date of birth and working with children number, if any, of the employee the subject of the report,
 - (c) the police report reference number (if Police were notified),
 - (d) the report reference number if reported to the Child Protection Helpline,
 - (e) the names of other relevant entities that employ or engage the employee, whether or not directly, to provide a service to children, including as a volunteer or contractor.
- Maximum penalty for failure to notify within 7 business days — 10 penalty units.

6.3 PROCESS FOR INVESTIGATING AN ALLEGATION OF REPORTABLE CONDUCT

The Principal ensures that the following steps are taken to investigate a reportable allegation.

6.3.1 Initial steps

Once a reportable allegation against an employee is received, the Principal is required to:

- determine whether it is a reportable allegation;
- the OCG or the Police need to be notified (ie, if reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of significant harm or a potential criminal offence). If they have been notified, seek clearance from these statutory agencies prior to the school proceeding with the reportable conduct investigation;
- notify the child's parents (unless to do so would be likely to compromise the investigation or any investigation by the OCG or Police);

- notify the OCG within 7 business days of receiving the allegation;
- carry out a risk assessment and take action to reduce/remove risk, where appropriate; and
- provide an initial letter to the Employee Subject Of The Allegation (ESOA) advising that an allegation of reportable conduct has been made against them and the School's responsibility to investigate this matter under Section 34 of the Children's Guardian Act 2019; and
- investigate the allegation or appoint someone to investigate the allegation.

6.3.2 Investigation principles

During the investigation of a reportable allegation the School will:

- follow the principles of procedural fairness;
- inform the ESOA of the substance of any allegations made against them, at the appropriate time in the investigation, and provide them with a reasonable opportunity to respond to the allegations;
- make reasonable enquiries or investigations before making a decision;
- avoid conflicts of interest;
- conduct the investigation without unjustifiable delay;
- handle the matter as confidentially as possible; and
- provide appropriate support for all parties including the child/children, witnesses and the ESOA.

6.3.3 Investigation steps

In an investigation the Principal or appointed investigator will generally:

- interview relevant witnesses and gather relevant documentation;
- provide a letter of allegation to the ESOA;
- provide the ESOA with the opportunity to provide a response to the allegations either in writing or at Interview;
- consider relevant evidence and make a preliminary finding in accordance with the OCG guidelines;
- inform the ESOA of the preliminary finding in writing by the Head of Entity and provide them with a further opportunity to respond or make a further submission prior to the matter moving to final findings;
- consider any response provided by the ESOA;
- make a final finding in accordance with the OCG guidelines;
- decide on the disciplinary action, if any, to be taken against the ESOA;

- if it is completed, send the final report to the OCG within 30 days after having received the allegation, as per section 36 of the Children’s Guardian Act 2019.
- should the final report be unfinished within 30 days, the Head of Entity must provide, at minimum, an interim report to the OCG within 30 days of having received the allegation, as per section 38 of the Children’s Guardian Act 2019.
- Submission of an interim report must include;
- a reason for not providing the final report within 30 days and an estimated time frame for completion of the report.
- specific information, including (if known); the facts and circumstances of the reportable allegation; any known information about a reportable conviction; action taken since the OCG received a notification about the reportable allegation or reportable conviction; further action the Head of Entity proposes to take in relation to the reportable allegation or reportable conviction; including if the Head of Entity proposes to take no further action; the reasons for the action taken and the action proposed to be taken or the reasons for the decision to take no further action; other information prescribed by the regulations; and
- be accompanied by copies of documents in the School's possession, including transcripts of interviews and copies of evidence.

The steps outlined above may need to be varied on occasion to meet particular circumstances. For example, it may be necessary to take different steps where the matter is also being investigated by the DCJ or Police.

A ESOA may have an appropriate support person with them during the interview process. Such a person is there for support only and as a witness to the proceedings and not as an advocate or to take an active role.

6.4 RISK MANAGEMENT THROUGHOUT AN INVESTIGATION OF A REPORTABLE CONDUCT ALLEGATION

Risk management means identifying the potential for an incident or accident to occur and taking steps to reduce the likelihood or severity of its occurrence.

The Principal is responsible for risk management throughout the investigation and will assess risk at the beginning of the investigation, during and at the end of the investigation.

6.4.1 Initial risk assessment

Following a reportable allegation against an employee the Principal conducts an initial risk assessment to identify and minimise the risks to:

- the child(ren) who are the subject of the allegation;
- other children with whom the employee may have contact;

- the ESOA;
- the School, and
- the proper investigation of the allegation.

The factors which will be considered during the risk assessment include:

- the nature and seriousness of the allegations;
- the vulnerability of the child(ren) the ESOA has contact with at work;
- the nature of the position occupied by the ESOA;
- the level of supervision of the ESOA; and
- the disciplinary history or safety of the ESOA and possible risks to the investigation.

The Principal will take appropriate action to minimise risks. This may include the ESOA being temporarily relieved of some duties, being required not to have contact with certain students, being asked to take paid leave, or being suspended from duty. When taking action to address any risks identified, the School will take into consideration both the needs of the child(ren) and the ESOA.

A decision to take action on the basis of a risk assessment is not indicative of the findings of the matter. Until the investigation is completed and a finding is made, any action, such as an employee being suspended, is not to be considered to be an indication that the alleged conduct by the employee did occur.

6.4.2 Ongoing risk assessment

The Principal will continually monitor risk during the investigation including in the light of any new relevant information that emerges.

6.4.3 Findings

At the completion of the investigation, a finding will be made in relation to the allegation and a decision made by the Principal regarding what action, if any, is required in relation to the ESOA, the child(ren) involved and any other parties.

6.4.4 Information for the ESOA

The ESOA will be advised:

- that an allegation has been made against them (at the appropriate time in the investigation); and
- of the substance of the allegation, or of any preliminary finding and the final finding.

The ESOA does not automatically have the right to:

- know or have confirmed the identity of the person who made the allegation; or

- be shown the content of the Office of the Children’s Guardian notification form or other investigation material that reveals information provided by other employees or witnesses.

The WWC Act enables a person who has a sustained finding referred to the OCG to request access to the records held by the school in relation to the finding of misconduct involving children, once final findings are made. The entitlements of a person to request access to information in terms of section 46 of the WWC Act is enlivened when a finding of misconduct involving children has been made.

6.4.5 Disciplinary action

As a result of the allegations, investigation or final findings, the School may take disciplinary action against the ESOA (including termination of employment).

In relation to any disciplinary action the school will give the ESOA:

- details of the proposed disciplinary action; and
- a reasonable opportunity to respond before a final decision is made.

6.4.6 Confidentiality

It is important when dealing with allegations of reportable conduct that the matter be dealt with as confidentially as possible.

The School requires that all parties maintain confidentiality during the investigation including in relation to the handling and storing of documents and records.

Records about allegations of reportable conduct against employees will be kept locked in the office and will be accessible by the Principal.

No employee may comment to the media about an allegation of reportable conduct unless expressly authorised by the Principal to do so.

Staff members who become aware of a breach of confidentiality in relation to a reportable conduct allegation must advise the Principal.

6. CRIMINAL OFFENCES

In 2018 the Crimes Act was amended to adopt recommendations of the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*. The new offences are designed to prevent child abuse and to bring abuse that has already occurred to the attention of the police.

7.1 Failure to protect offence

An adult working in a school, therefore all staff members, will commit an offence if they know another adult working there poses as serious risk of committing a child abuse offence and they have the power to reduce or remove the risk, and they negligently fail to do so either by acts and/or omissions.

This offence is targeted at those in positions of authority and responsibility working with children who turn a blind eye to a known and serious risk rather than using their power to protect children.

7.2 Failure to report offence

Any adult, therefore all staff members, will commit an offence if they know, believe or reasonably ought to know that a child abuse offence has been committed and fail to report that information to police, without a reasonable excuse. A reasonable excuse would include where the adult has reported the matter to the Principal and is aware that the Principal has reported the matter to the police.



ATTACHMENTS

The following documents are attached to this policy:

1. Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record
2. Mandatory Reporting Policy & Declaration
3. Sample staff meeting agenda

REFERENCES

- NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) Services - www.community.nsw.gov.au
- The Office of the Children's Guardian (formerly the NSW Commission for Children and Young People) www.kids.nsw.gov.au
- Department of Premier and Cabinet – Keep Them Safe www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au

Further details of obligations of employers can be found in the *Information for Employers* guidelines and/or *Information for reporting bodies* factsheet developed by the OCG found at www.kids.nsw.gov.au

CONTACT INFORMATION

Child Protection Helpline: **13 2111**

Link2Home Homelessness: **1800 152 152**

Domestic Violence: **1800 656 463**

Attachment 1

INCIDENT, INJURY, TRAUMA AND ILLNESS RECORD

(Circle relevant type of record)

Child details

Surname: Given names:

Date of birth: / / Age:

Room/group:

Incident/injury/trauma/illness details

Incident/injury/trauma

Circumstances leading to the incident/injury/trauma:

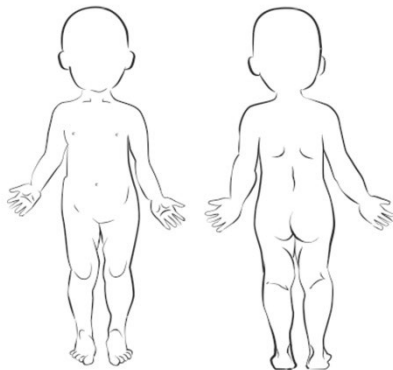
Products or structures involved:

Location: Time: am/pm Date: / /

Name of witness:

Signature: Date: / /

Nature of injury sustained:



- Abrasion, scrape
- Bite
- Broken bone / fracture
- Bruise
- Burn
- Concussion
- Cut
- Rash
- Sprain
- Swelling
- Other (please specify)

Illness

Circumstances surrounding child becoming ill, including apparent symptoms:

.....
.....
.....

Time of illness: am/pm Date of illness: / /

Action Taken

Details of action taken, including first aid administration of medication:

.....
.....

Medical personnel contacted: Yes / No

If yes, provide details:

.....
.....

Details of person completing this record

Name: Signature:

Time record was made: am/pm Date record was made / /

Notifications (including attempted notifications)

Parent/guardian: Time: am/pm Date: / /

Director/teacher/coordinator: Time: am/pm Date: / /

Regulatory authority (if applicable): Time: am/pm Date: / /

Parental acknowledgement:

I

(name of parent/guardian)

have been notified of my child's incident/injury/trauma/illness.

(Please circle)

Signature:

Date: / /

Additional notes / follow up:

Attachment 2

Karuna Montessori School's Mandatory Reporting Policy

Mandatory Reporting responsibilities of all adults in the school community apply when there is:

- Reasonable grounds to suspect risk of significant harm, and
- Grounds arise during or from a person's work.

There must be some reasonable basis for the concerns and mandatory reporting responsibilities do not apply to situations a person becomes aware of outside their work.

Note: An individual can make a report at any time, regardless of whether they are a mandatory reporter.

Risk of significant Harm is defined in s23 of the Act. The Act states there must be current concerns for the safety, welfare and well-being of the child. Concerns may also be about the likelihood of future harm occurring. There must be one or more of:

- s.23(a) basic physical or psychological needs not met
- s.23(b) parents unwilling or unable to arrange necessary medical care
- s.23(c) physical or sexual abuse, or ill-treatment
- s.23(d) living with domestic violence, (consequence is being at risk of serious psychological harm)
- s.23 (e) parents' behaviour resulting in or risk of serious psychological harm.

Reportable Conduct is the term commonly used to describe different types of maltreatment on a child or young person. It includes:

- assault (including sexual assault)
- ill-treatment
- neglect and exposing the child or young person to behaviour that might cause psychological harm

NSW Interagency Guidelines for Child Protection Intervention, 2000 edition

Under The *Children and Young persons (Care and Protection) Act, 1998*, a **child** is a person under 16 years of age and a **young person** is a person aged 16 or above but under 18 years of age. Under the *Commission for Children and Young People Act*, a **child** is a person under 18 years of age.

Reporting

Reasonable Grounds to Suspect: An employee of Karuna Montessori School who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or young person is, or that a class of children or young persons are, at risk of significant harm must report this to the Principal or the Principal's nominee.

Reasonable grounds to suspect includes:

- disclosure by a child about themselves;
- disclosure by another;
- a cluster of indicators.

What to Report:

Staff must report:

- all types of reportable conduct/neglect; and
- all situations where it is considered there is a risk of significant harm

How to Report:

Report through the Principal or the Principal's nominee.

If the Principal decides not to report to ACECQA then:

- the Principal must inform the School personnel involved,
- the School personnel must report to ACECQA if they still consider there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm.

School Reporting Procedure:

- 1) The Principal will contact the ACECQA helpline providing the required details about the child or young person and family composition, caller's details and caller's concerns and reasons for the call. It can be helpful to have the person who first identified the risk of harm present when the helpline is contacted and actively involved in the reporting process.
- 2) The Principal will inform the member of staff who identified the risk of significant harm whether a mandatory report has been made or not.

Karuna Montessori School Staff Knowledge of Mandatory Reporting

All staff who have direct contact with students are informed of their legal responsibilities and obligations, as well as the process that the school has in place related to mandatory reporting. This is done at the initial staff meeting of each school year and/or at the time of their induction as a new staff member.

- 1) The school requires all staff to read this policy and declare they have read and understand its contents.
- 2) The policy is given to new staff members at the time of employment
- 3) A staff member's declaration is kept on file and must be renewed each year.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I _____,

- have read, understood and agree to comply with the terms of this Child Protection Policy including the Mandatory Reporting Policy and understand my obligations under the Children’s Guardian Act 2019.
- have undertaken child protection introduction and annual refresher.
- have been informed of an understand recent changes to the Child Protection Policy.

Name:

Position:

Signature:

Date:

Signed in the presence of:

Name:

Position:

Signature:

Date: