POLICY
SAFEGUARDING REPORTING

INTRODUCTION

Scotch College is committed to protecting the children and young people in its care. Accordingly, the School has developed this policy indicating an appropriate response to child abuse reports and allegations as a guide to all our people in meeting their responsibilities in this area. College personnel are required to report, and respond to any concerns about, or incidents of, child abuse or neglect towards children or young people in our care. Our personnel are required to respond to abuse or neglect perpetrated by personnel within our School or by other persons.

Scotch College will promote equity and respect diversity of the children and young people and their parents as part of our reporting policy. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and children and young people with a disability, LGBTQI+ children and young people, and children and young people who cannot live at home.

Scotch College takes seriously its responsibility to deliver an educational environment that is caring, nurturing and safe. The School's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy clearly articulates the commitment to establish and maintain an environment where the safety of every child is paramount.

We empower children by informing them of their rights and responsibilities and support them to speak up about any matters of importance to them, including if something goes wrong. We work to include, where appropriate, the input and participation of children and young people in decision making regarding any services or other matters affecting them.

This policy forms part of our zero-tolerance towards abuse and neglect of children and young people.

The purpose of the Reporting Policy is to ensure all instances, allegations, disclosures or reasonable concerns of abuse or neglect involving children and young people, are accurately reported and responded to in a consistent, timely and sensitive manner.

This policy also outlines the responsibility of personnel to report any concern with breaches or actions of other personnel within our School that contravene our policies and procedures, such as outlined in our Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Compliance with this policy ensures all incidents are reported and managed in a way that is responsive to the immediate circumstances of the incident, the rights of those involved and, wherever possible, any risks of recurrence are minimised.

This policy assists personnel to:

- recognise the different types of abuse and neglect
- respond to the immediate needs of individuals involved in an incident (including personnel)
- guide responses to allegations and matters of concern, including breaches of our Child Safety Code of Conduct
- follow our School's reporting procedures
- ensure their legal responsibilities when working with children and young people are upheld.

Our policies and procedures reflect child safe legislation and promote best practice and care for the children and young people within our School. Our safeguarding policies and procedures are authorised by the Scotch College School Council.

SCOPE

All personnel (teaching, non-teaching, casual, contractual, volunteers) are required to adhere to this policy and the procedures described, which must be read and acknowledged as part of the employment process or volunteer induction process.

This policy applies to all forms of abuse and neglect against a child or young person including sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, neglect, and experiencing or witnessing family violence (see Appendix 1 - Definitions Table).

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This policy document applies to all of the School's activities, services and programmes occurring in its online and physical environments. The application of this policy incorporates activity at the Hawthorn campus, including the Senior and Junior schools and the boarding precinct, all other external campuses owned by the School, all sporting events, camps and excursions, as well as special events conducted, organised or attended by the School.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All personnel within our School have a duty of care and, at times, a legal obligation, to ensure that 'reasonable steps' are taken to prevent harm to children and young people. All personnel are responsible for supporting a transparent culture, whereby any actions by personnel that go against our Child Safety Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, however minor, are reported and documented.

If our personnel fail to report instances, allegations, disclosures or concerns in relation to abuse or neglect of a child or young person – by personnel within our School or by others – we view such failure as a serious matter that, depending on the circumstances, may result in disciplinary action or be grounds for dismissal. Failure to report incidents of abuse, neglect or harm of children or young people may be classed as a criminal offence under state law.

Our personnel are obligated to report any information relating to:

- Incidents, allegations, disclosures or reasonable concerns in relation to abuse or neglect of a child or young person, either by personnel within our School or by others
- Any breaches or actions of other personnel within our School that contravene our policies and procedures, such as outlined in our Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Our policy prohibits all personnel from:

- discussing any concerns or allegations with unauthorised personnel – within or outside our School – such prohibition not being designed to limit, in any way, their rights and responsibilities to report their concerns or allegations, but rather as part of our School's commitment to ensuring privacy, confidentiality and natural justice
- making deliberately false, misleading or vexatious allegations.

All children and young people within our School are informed of our policy and provided with the support and mechanisms to feel empowered to speak up if they feel unsafe, hear something or see something that doesn't feel right. Our School upholds a child's rights to be heard, protected and supported.

In adhering to this policy, personnel of Scotch College will promote equity and respect diversity of children and young people and their parents/care givers and inform children and young people of their rights to feel and be safe. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and children, young people with a disability, LGBTQI+ children, and children who cannot live at home. Our School upholds a family's right to have their safeguarding concerns resolved and done so in a culturally respectful and safe way.

The responsibility of each role in relation to the development and compliance of the Scotch College Safeguarding Reporting Policy is detailed on page 9.

All of our personnel are provided with our Safeguarding Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy that clearly detail the behavioural expectations of personnel around children and young people. Personnel are advised that any breaches, including minor breaches, of these policies are required to be reported.

It is all personnel's responsibility to consult with the appointed School Safety Officer, the Child Protection Officer and Risk Manager to identify and assess potential risks in ongoing programs and one-off activities. Personnel should consider the online, physical or psychological risks associated with activities, and develop and implement risk mitigation strategies to address those risks, in line with our School's Risk Management Policy.

Our School creates a safe environment for children and young people. Our personnel use strategies to support and encourage children and young people to practice safe behaviours amongst personnel and their peers, and speak up if they feel unsafe.

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KEY STEPS

There are four critical steps that everyone in our School must follow regarding all incidents, allegations, disclosures or reasonable concerns of abuse or neglect, or breaches of policy where appropriate:

1. Responding
2. Reporting
3. Sharing of Information
4. Supporting

1. Responding

Immediate responses include the care, support and communication actions that take place immediately following an incident to mitigate further harm and ensure the safety of children and young people, families, personnel and others.

Reduce the harm and risk of harm to those impacted by the incident including by:
- making the surroundings safe to prevent immediate recurrence of the incident, for example
  - removing potentially harmful person(s)
  - increase supervision of children and young people
  - move uninvolved children and young people away from incident
- moving to a safe place
- alerting others to risks that extend beyond the local environment, for example, other areas within the School
- calling emergency services such as Police, Fire Brigade or Ambulance if required

Provide immediate care and support to children and young people, families, personnel and others involved in the incident including addressing:
- physical well-being e.g. providing first aid or arranging medical treatment if a person suffers any harm or injury as a result of the incident; and
- emotional well-being (including psychological) e.g. arranging for coverage of duties and supervision facilitating access to counselling, debriefing and support for others involved in, witnessing or becoming aware of the incident.

Where possible, and acting on advice of relevant authorities (eg. police), preserve evidence in situations where allegations or suspicions of abuse and neglect has occurred. This can include;
- ensuring that the person who may have perpetrated the abuse and the child or young person who has been subject to the abuse remain in their clothing, or that the clothing is not washed and is sealed securely in a bag
- not cleaning or disturbing the area in which the abuse has occurred protecting any physical items such as weapons from being touched or removed.

Responding to a Disclosure/Allegation

When responding to a disclosure or allegation by a child or young person, personnel should respond by;
- listening to the allegation or disclosure supportively, without dispute
- clarifying the basic details, without seeking detailed information or asking suggestive or leading questions, guided by our School's online Incident Report Form.
- providing reassurance that the child or young person has done the right thing in telling you, is believed and the School will take immediate action in response to the disclosure / allegation.
- explaining to the child or young person that other people may need to be told, in order to stop what is happening. Do not promise to keep any information a secret.
- record notes as early as possible to ensure all information is captured before completing our School's online Incident Report Form. Notes taken can be attached to the form prior to submission.

In your responses you will need to consider the specific needs of the child or young person. Consider the unique qualities of a child including, for example, whether the child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, has a disability, identifies as LGBTQI+, has a culturally and linguistically diverse background, and/or is unable to live at home.

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Responding to a Breach of Policy or Procedure

Whether an incident and or disclosure / allegation does or does not include a breach of the Safeguarding Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, and even if no immediate response is required as identified above, it is still deemed an incident, and therefore required to be reported and documented as with all other incidents using the online Incident Report Form.

2. Reporting

Once the immediate response to the situation is completed, it is important to fulfill the internal and external reporting requirements.

Our personnel are required to report any reasonable concerns or instances of abuse or neglect (cases in which a child or young person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm from abuse or neglect) by any person immediately, or if that is not possible, no later than before ending that person's shift or session of work or volunteering with our School.

Personnel are also required to formally report any concerns about breaches of our School's policies and procedures by other personnel within our School.

It is not the role of personnel to investigate an allegation / concern. Personnel must continually report each new instance of suspicion of harm and / or breach of policy as they become aware, and seek advice from their manager when they are unsure.

Personnel should follow the guidance on the Incident Report Form to complete the form accurately and to the best of their ability. All reports must be documented fully and written factually and objectively. Clear and accurate reporting can assist to support any internal or external investigation which may be required after an incident.

Key Report Contacts	
Primary Key Internal Contact	Child Protection Officer
Alternate Key Internal Contact if the primary contact is not available or is subject to the complaint	Vice Principal Head of Junior School
Key External Contact	Department of Human Services Child Protection East Division Intake: 1300 360 391 Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team (SOCIT): Melbourne: (03) 8690 4056

Internal Reporting Requirements

The Safeguarding Incident Report Form is accessible online to all personnel. All personnel are trained in the reporting requirements, location and completion of forms and notification requirements and support available. All incidents including minor incidents must be recorded on the Safeguarding Incident Report Form that is forwarded to the Child Protection Officer, Vice Principal, Head of Junior School, Director of Human Resources, School Psychologists and Risk Manager.

In adherence to internal reporting requirements, personnel must report any safety or wellbeing concerns for a child or young person, and / or breach of policy and procedures to the Child Protection Officer, Vice Principal or Head of Junior School.

If a person does not feel comfortable making a report to the Child Protection Officer, Vice Principal or Head of Junior School or the incident involves one or more of these individuals, they must report their concern directly to the Principal.

All personnel are required to notify the Director of Human Resources if there are any changes to their WWCC status including if their WWCC has been revoked, suspended or an application for WWCC (initial or renewal) has been declined.

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A Safeguarding Incident Report Form should be completed as soon as possible following an incident by the attending personnel and signed off by the Child Protection Officer. Reports must include:

- details of the person/s involved
- date, time, location of the incident/disclosure/allegation
- incident type and how incurred
- what was said, and relevant factual information without assumptions (where possible, noting the exact words used by the person making the allegation / disclosure)
- actions taken including treatment

The Child Protection Officer in consultation with the Vice Principal or Head of Junior School is responsible for:

- ensuring the immediate response was sufficient and taking any further action needed
- assessing and categorising the incident / breach of policy as Low, Medium, High, Critical
- ensuring a Safeguarding Incident Report Form is completed correctly
- notifying the Principal where required
- providing confirmation to the reporter that all required steps have been completed to manage the incident as necessary. Where appropriate, the reporter should continue to be updated as the incident is further managed, until closed off, whilst maintaining privacy and confidentiality obligations.

Incidents rated High and Critical must be reported to the Principal immediately. In the case of critical incidents, the Principal may establish a Critical Incident Response Team comprised of Managers for the affected program/s and personnel with responsibility for Human Resources, Communications, Police/Child Protection Liaison, and Risk Management. The Critical Incident Response Team's role is to ensure that immediate responses are coordinated and effective and to deploy resources to support this end. The Critical Incident Response Team is a central point for supporting responses to incidents and in managing and collecting information on incidents.

External Reporting Requirements

In addition to our internal reporting process, our School has external reporting requirements to fulfil, including legal reporting obligations. This includes reporting to the Police, child protection authorities, the Commission for Children and Young People, other relevant government bodies including any professional bodies and / or accrediting/regulatory bodies. All incidents that require external authority notification must be reported to the Principal. External notifications required by School policy and governing legislation must be initiated by the Child Protection Officer, Principal, Vice Principal, Head of Junior School, or a School Psychologist.

Mandatory Reporting

Mandatory reporting requirements are the legal obligations of specified professionals (including teachers) to report incidents of child abuse and /or neglect where they have reasonable belief that abuse has, or is likely to, occur. If the incident meets mandatory reporting thresholds or if unsure, personnel within our School who are Mandatory Reporters must, as soon as practicable and before the end of the shift, notify the Child Protection Officer and the Principal that a report is to be made to the prescribed child protection authority of their suspicion and its basis. Incidents involving personnel within our School or others (i.e., family members) must be reported to child protection authorities.

The above does not preclude other non-mandated individuals from making a report to the child protection authority or the police if they have reasonable concerns for the safety and wellbeing of a child.

Criminal Offences under Mandatory Reporting

It is a criminal offence for a mandated reporter to fail to report abuse where they have a reasonable belief that abuse has, or is likely to, occur.

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Failure to protect is likewise a criminal offence. The offence applies where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation. A person in a position of authority in the School will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.

Reportable Conduct

The Reportable Conduct Scheme requires our School to notify the Commission for Children and Young People if there is an allegation of 'reportable conduct' made against one of its personnel, including employees, casual employees, Council members, contractors, sub-contractors, volunteers or authorised carers.

Reportable conduct is the mistreatment of a child or young person, or misconduct by personnel within our School, including contractors and personnel from partner organisations, which breaches the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and / or Safeguarding Code of Conduct. This includes, but is not limited to, a sexual offence, sexual misconduct, ill-treatment, neglect, assault, and behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child.

Under legislation, the Principal is the person who is primarily responsible for our School's compliance with the Reportable Conduct Scheme. Where there is an allegation involving a member of our School's personnel, the Principal will consider if such conduct contravenes the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and / or Code of Conduct and act in accordance with the Scheme, this policy and our School's Incident Management Policy.

Should the allegation be against the Principal, the Chair of the School Council will be responsible for ensuring all internal and external reporting obligations are met.

Reporting to the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF)

As a Safeguarding Children Accredited School by the ACF, reports must be made to the ACF by completing the Child Abuse Incident - ACF Report Form as follows:

    i. All critical incidents to be verbally reported to ACF within 24 hours; and

    ii. Any allegations of child abuse or neglect, that involves School personnel within 28 days of the incident in accordance with the requirements of the Safeguarding Children Program.

Reports to the ACF will be made by our Child Protection Officer.

3. Sharing of Information

Confidentiality and Privacy

Our School maintains the confidentiality and privacy of all concerned (including the alleged perpetrator), except if doing so would compromise the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person and/or the investigation of the allegation.

After an incident has been reported and where appropriate, the information sharing process with child/young person, their families and involved personnel will begin as soon as reasonably possible. The process will be adapted to fit the needs of any child/young person, family and personnel, and the requirements of any investigation processes.

Where police and/or child protection are involved, our School will provide the authorities with information about the incident to assist them in their investigations through the office of the Principal.

Where personnel are involved in breaches of the Safeguarding Code of Conduct or Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, The Principal and Director of Human Resources will advise on internal communications regarding action taken, if appropriate.

If the incident has reached the threshold to report to external agencies, our School will consult with the relevant child protection authority / police through the office of the Principal to determine what information can be shared with parents / care givers. This can include;

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- Not contacting the parents / care givers in circumstances where it is alleged they have been engaged in the abuse, or the child is a mature minor and does not wish their parent/care giver to be contacted.
- To contact the parents / care givers and provide agreed information as soon as possible.

Police and/or child protection will be consulted about the disclosing of information to any child/ young person, their families and personnel.

The decision to share information will consider:

- whether the ongoing safety of those involved in or impacted by the incident is compromised by the sharing or non-sharing of information
- the advice of police and child protection (care will be taken not to compromise their investigations)
- the rights of those impacted by the incident to privacy, confidentiality, procedural fairness and a presumption of innocence in accordance with School policies and employment law, and
- the need (of those potentially impacted by the incident) to know of the incident

4. Supporting

It is important to address the support needs of those impacted by the incident including considerations of cultural safety for:

- the child/young person and their family (this includes any specific support needs for those from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse, or person with a disability background; LGBTQI+, or a child or young person who is unable to live at home);
- other children or young people as witnesses to the incident
- personnel who witness and/or reported the incident
- any personnel against whom a complaint is made, for example, offering professional counselling
- other personnel impacted by the incident

It is further important to make clear to all other personnel who are aware of the incident that:

- any allegation does not mean the person is guilty, and that the allegation will be properly investigated and will include the right to 'procedural fairness'
- they are not to discuss the matter with any person, except as directed by police, child protection authorities and/or the Principal and only in direct relation to investigation of the allegation.

Records and Documentation

All Safeguarding Incident Report Forms will be recorded and maintained on the online system. Reports will be regularly reviewed by the Child Protection Officer, Vice Principal and/or Head of Junior School to ensure the effectiveness of actions taken and to identify areas for improvement.

Our Child Protection Officer will oversee the administration of completed Safeguarding Incident Report Forms and any other documentation relating to the allegation and subsequent action.

To prevent access by unauthorised persons, our School stores any documentation associated with an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child or young person and breaches of policy by having:

- hard-copy documentation digitized to electronic format
- all electronic documentation stored in a password-protected secure system.

We maintain and regularly monitor records of Incident Reports as part of our Incident Management processes to ensure that they are responded to effectively in accordance with this policy and that requirements for reporting to external authorities are complied with.

Communication and Training

We communicate our Reporting Policy and its requirements to children, young people and their families and our personnel.

Our School ensures all new personnel are informed and supported to understand our School's safeguarding policies and procedures, including the practices detailed in this Reporting Policy.

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Copies of this Policy and our School's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct are provided directly to personnel, they are also publicly accessible.

Our School provides training and guidance relating to an individual's safeguarding responsibilities and offers opportunities to seek clarity in relation to the commitments and behavioural expectations set out in our safeguarding policies.

We provide regular ongoing training of our personnel in relation to how keeping children and young people safe will be fulfilled, including training regarding children and young people's rights, voices and participation and cultural safety.

Monitoring and Review

This document will be reviewed at least every three years, in consultation with stakeholders. Some circumstances may trigger an early review, this includes, but is not limited to, legislative changes, School changes, incident outcomes and other matters deemed appropriate by the School Council and Principal. Records are retained to document each review undertaken. Such records may include minutes of meetings and documentation of changes to policies and procedures that result from a review.

Supporting Resources

Appendix 1 Definitions
Appendix 2 Key Indicators of Abuse
Appendix 3 Categories of Incidents

Related Policies and Documents

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
Child Safety Code of Conduct
Safeguarding Incident Management Policy

Related Frameworks and Legislation

Our Policy complies with relevant legislation and frameworks.

- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020
- Australian Human Rights Commission National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) (and amendments 2021) incorporating the Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme

Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibilities of each role in relation to the development, implementation and compliance with the Scotch College Safeguarding Reporting Policy are detailed over;

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Position	Responsibility
School Council	• Authorise this policy • Receive reports on specified categories of incidents
School Council through its Risk Committee	• Provide oversight and endorsement of this policy • Receive reports on specified categories of incidents, provide support and advice as appropriate, and utilise data to inform School incident and risk management strategies
School Executive	• Implement policies and procedures across the School • Ensure personnel have access to and understand this policy and related procedures • Ensure all managers/supervisors have access to support, advice and resource to understand and implement this policy and related procedures • Report Reportable Conduct • Establish CIRT Term in response to Moderate and Critical Incidents • Initiate external reporting
Director of Human Resources, Chief of Staff and Child Protection Officer	• Review and update this document and supporting resources in consultation with relevant stakeholders • Provide training and advice in the application of policy and procedures • Assist with messaging across School if required
Child Protection Officer, Vice Principal, Head of Junior School, Director of Human Resources, Risk Manager	• Ensure this policy and related procedure is followed and implemented • Receive and manage incident reports • Assess each situation reported and notify appropriate personnel of the incident as indicated on this policy • Responsible for the response and recovery coordination of an incident • Report to the Critical Incident Response Team where required • Provide support and advice in the application of this policy
Personnel	• Awareness of and compliance with this policy and related procedure. • Immediately control any situation including liaising with key stakeholders, obtaining and documenting details of the incident • Complete incident report form and escalate to the Child Protection Officer

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Term	Definition
Bullying	Bullying involves the inappropriate use of power by one or more persons over another less powerful person or group and is generally an act that is repeated over time. Bullying has been described by researchers as taking many forms which are often interrelated and include: Verbal (name calling, put downs, threats); Physical (hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting); Social (ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating); and/or Psychological (spreading rumours, stalking, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions).
Child or young person	Child - a person under the age of eighteen years. A student who has attained the age of 18 is considered a young person while enrolled at the School
Emotional or psychological abuse	Emotional or psychological abuse occurs when a child does not receive the love, affection or attention they need for healthy emotional, psychological and social development. Such abuse may involve repeated rejection or threats to a child. Constant criticism, teasing, ignoring, threatening, yelling, scapegoating, ridicule and rejection or continual coldness are all examples of emotional abuse. These behaviours continue to an extent that results in significant damage to the child's physical, intellectual or emotional wellbeing and development.
Family Violence	Family violence occurs when children are forced to live with violence between adults and towards children in their home. It is harmful to children. It can include witnessing violence or the consequences of violence. Family violence is defined as violence between members of a family or extended family or those fulfilling the role of family in a child or young person's life. Exposure to family violence places children and young people at increased risk of physical injury and harm and has a significant impact on their wellbeing and development.
Grooming	Grooming is a term used to describe what happens when a perpetrator of abuse builds a relationship with a child with a view to abusing them at some stage. There is no set pattern in relation to the grooming of children. For some perpetrators, there will be a lengthy period of time before the abuse begins. The child may be given special attention and, what starts as an apparently normal display of affection, such as cuddling, can develop into sexual touching or masturbation and then into more serious sexual behaviour. Other perpetrators may draw a child in and abuse them relatively quickly. Some abusers do not groom children but abuse them without forming a relationship at all. Grooming can take place in any setting where a relationship is formed, such as leisure, music, sports and religious activities, or in internet chatrooms, in social media or by other technological channels.
Harm	Harm to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by: physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; sexual abuse or exploitation; a single act, omission or circumstance; and a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.
National criminal history record check	Involves identifying and releasing any relevant Criminal History Information (CHI), subject to relevant spent convictions/non-disclosure legislation and/or information release policies
Neglect	Neglect is the persistent failure or deliberate denial to provide the child with the basic necessities of life. Such neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, adequate supervision, clean water, medical attention or supervision to the extent that the child's health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed. Categories of neglect include physical neglect, medical neglect, abandonment or desertion, emotional neglect and educational neglect. The issue of neglect must be considered within the context of resources reasonably available.
Personnel	All who work for the School whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, including; employees, casual employees, volunteers, Council and Council committee members and contractors.
Physical abuse	Physical abuse occurs when a person subjects a child to non-accidental physically aggressive acts. The abuser may inflict an injury intentionally or inadvertently as a result of physical punishment or the aggressive treatment of a child. Physically abusive behaviour includes (but is not limited to) shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning, excessive and physically harmful over-training, and kicking. It also includes giving children harmful substances such as drugs, alcohol or poison. Certain types of punishment, whilst not causing injury can also be considered physical abuse if they place a child at risk of being hurt. Physical abuse also includes threats to physically harm.
Reasonable belief	A reasonable belief is more than suspicion. There must be some objective basis for the belief. However, it is not the same as having proof and does not require certainty. For example, a person is likely to have a reasonable belief if they observed the conduct themselves, heard directly from a child that the conduct occurred, or received information from another credible source (including another witness).
Reasonable steps	Personnel may breach a duty of care towards a child or young person if they fail to act in the way that a reasonable or diligent professional would have acted in the same situation. In relation to suspected child abuse, reasonable steps may include (but are not necessarily limited to): acting on concerns and suspicions of abuse as soon as practicable, seeking appropriate advice or consulting with other professionals or agencies when the unsure of what steps to take, reporting the suspected child abuse to appropriate authorities such as Police or Child Protection, arranging counselling and/or other appropriate support for the child, providing ongoing support to the child and sharing information with other personnel who will also be responsible for monitoring and providing ongoing support to the child or young person.
Sexual abuse	Sexual abuse occurs when an adult or a person of authority (e.g. teacher) involves a child in any sexual activity. Perpetrators of sexual abuse take advantage of their power, authority or position over the child or young person for their own benefit. It can include making sexual comments to a child, engaging children to participate in sexual conversations over the internet or on social media, kissing, touching a child's genitals or breasts, oral sex or intercourse with a child. Encouraging a child to view pornographic magazines, websites and videos is also sexual abuse. Engaging children to participate in sexual conversations over the internet is also considered sexual abuse.
Sexual exploitation	Sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where offenders use their power, (physical, financial or emotional) over a child or young person, or a false identity, to sexually or emotionally abuse them. It often involves situations and relationships where children and young people receive something (food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money etc.) in return for participating in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can occur in person or online, and sometimes the child or young person may not even realise they are a victim.

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APPENDIX 2 - KEY INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Abuse	Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
Physical	• unexplained cuts, abrasions, bruising or swelling • unexplained burns or scalds, cigarette burns • rope burns or marks on arms, legs, neck, torso • unexplained fractures, strains or sprains; dislocation of limbs • recurrent injuries • bite marks • mouth and dental injuries • ear or eye injuries • disclosure of physical threats being made • consistent sickness/nausea from potential poisons • covering themselves with clothes inappropriate to weather conditions	• avoidance of particular staff, fear of a particular person • sleep disturbances • changes in behaviour (e.g. unusual mood swings, uncharacteristic aggression) • changes in daily routine, changes in appetite • unusual passivity, withdrawal • self-harm, suicide attempts • inappropriate explanations of how injuries occurred • excessive compliance to staff • Rough handling
Sexual	• direct or indirect disclosure of abuse or assault • trauma to the breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs • difficulty walking or sitting • pain or itching in genital and/or anal area; bruising, bleeding or discharge • self-harm, abuse, suicide attempts • torn, stained or blood-stained underwear or bedclothes • sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy • unexplained money or gifts • recurrent pain on passing urine or faeces	• sleep disturbances • changes in eating patterns • inappropriate or unusual sexual behaviour or knowledge • changes in social patterns • sudden or marked changes in behaviour or temperament • anxiety attacks, panic attacks, clinical depression • refusal to attend usual places (e.g. work, school, respite) • going to bed fully clothed • excessive compliance to staff • inappropriate or excessive masturbation
Psychological	• speech disorders • in the case of a child, lags in physical development, failure to thrive • injuries sustained from self-harm or abuse • suicide attempts • anxiety attacks	• self-harm or self-abusive behaviours • challenging/extreme behaviours • excessive compliance to staff • very low self-esteem, feelings of worthlessness • clinical depression • marked decrease in interpersonal skills • extreme attention-seeking behaviour
Neglect	• physical wasting, unhealthy weight levels • poor dental health • food from meals left on face and/or clothes throughout the day • dirty, unwashed body and/or face, body odour • person always wearing the same clothes • ill-fitting and/or unwashed clothes • person is always over- or underdressed for the weather conditions • food is consistently poor quality, insufficient, inedible and/or unappetising • persistent illnesses without appropriate medical treatment • suffering persistent infestations such as scabies or headlice • disclosure of being left alone for long periods of time that are inappropriate to age or maturity	• constant tiredness • persistent hunger • unexpectedly poor social/interpersonal skills • signs of loss of communication and other skills • staff member, service provider, carer or support person consistently fails to bring the person to appointments, events, activities • person is persistently denied opportunities to socialise with others in the community • excessively clingy or fearful
Family Violence	• eating and sleeping difficulties • concentration problems • inability to play constructively • clinginess • defiant behaviour • rebelliousness • temper tantrums • cruelty to pets • physical abuse of others • avoidance of peers • dropping out of school • academic failure • delinquency/offending • eating disorders • substance misuse • depression • suicide ideation	• fearfulness • numbing • increased arousal • adjustment problems • developmental delay • physical complaints • overly compliant behaviour • withdrawal • loss of interest in social activities • self-harm • poor school performance • use of controlling behaviours • distrust of adults • violent behaviours • violence toward a parent/care giver (particularly their mother) • early pregnancy

Safeguarding Reporting Policy
POL107

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