

DUNCRAIG EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

STATEMENT

Duncraig Early Learning Centre believes in a proactive approach to safeguarding children from harm. This policy outlines the ways in which we have implemented safeguards into our policies, procedures, and practices to keep children in our care at Duncraig Early Learning Centre safe and well.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Child abuse: is any act, or failure to act, by a parent, caregiver, or other person of authority that has the potential to result in emotional or physical harm. to a child."(Parkerville, 2018)

Grooming: Is an individual persuading a child they have a special relationship with them, and inappropriately

- spending special time with a child
- giving gifts to a child
- showing special favours to one child but not others
- allowing the child to step out of boundaries or rules.
- testing and breaking of professional boundaries.

Reasonable grounds for belief: A belief may be formed when:

Behavioural an/or physical indicators and/or and abusive situation has been observed and/or

A disclosure from a child has been received and/or

Sufficient information from an adult or child has been received.

Vulnerable people are defined as a people aged under 18 or other individuals who may be unable to take care of themselves or are unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation.

THE FOUR TYPES OF ABUSE

Sexual abuse:

Sexual abuse is children and young people being exposed to inappropriate sexual activity; including involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral sex or penetrative sex); or witnessing sexual activity, either directly or through pornography.

The child is the subject of bribery, coercion, a threat, exploitation, or violence; or

The child has less power than another person involved in the behaviour; or

There is significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.

Emotional abuse: Is any act that results in the child suffering significant emotional deprivation or trauma, including suffering caused by exposure to family and domestic violence.

Physical abuse: Any non-accidental physical act inflicted upon a child that causes harm.

Neglect: Any serious act or omission that constitutes a failure to provide conditions essential for the healthy physical & emotional development of a child including lack of food, shelter, affection, supervision, education, untreated medical problems, and abandonment.

INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Type of abuse	Behavioural indicators	Caregiver indicators	Physical indicators
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes sexual acts inappropriate for age.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exposing the child to prostitution or	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bleeding or injuries, such as tears or bruising

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays sexualised behaviours. inappropriate for age (including sexually touching others/self). • Age-inappropriate knowledge of sex. • Disclosure of sexual abuse directly/indirectly. • Sudden fear, withdrawal from peers, personality change. 	<p>pornography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentional exposure of child to sexual behaviour of others • Child fears of being alone with a carer 	<p>to genitalia or anus.</p> <p>Discomfort in urinating or defecating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of a sexually transmitted infection. • Bed wetting/soiling
Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overly compliant, passive and undemanding behaviour. • Rocking, sucking thumbs. • Anti-social, destructive behaviour. • Reluctant to go home. • Compulsive lying/stealing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent bullying, insulting, criticism, rejection, belittling, teasing of the child • Experiencing abuse & domestic violence • Shows no love to child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech disorders • Failure to thrive. (without an organic cause) • Physically behind other children. • Eating hungrily or hardly at all
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wary of physical contact with adults. • Frightened of parent. • Resistance to going home. • Cannot explain injuries. • Child states physical harm from parent. • Child covered up with clothing, no matter the weather. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct admission that they fear they may injure the child. • Illogical or no account of the child's injuries. • Unconcerned about child. • Drug/alcohol abuse • Frequent Dr. visits. • Family history of violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any injury on a very young baby • Bite marks • Burns • Bruises to the body, welts, broken bones • Female genital mutilation • Ingestion of chemical, drugs or alcohol. • Child avoids physical contact
Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs of malnutrition • Begging, stealing, hoarding. of food. • Gorging when food is available • Alienated from peers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to provide adequate: food, shelter, clothing, medical attention, hygienic home conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor hygiene: matted hair, dirty skin, or body odour. • Untreated medical problems,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Says nobody is home to look after them. • Wear same clothes day, after day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaving child inappropriately without supervision • Alcohol or drug abuse in the home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent illness, sores, unhealing infections. • Being consistently without adequate supervision and at risk of injury or harm • Always seems tired - withdrawn, pale, thin, listless
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DIVISION OF ROLES AND RESPONSABILITIES

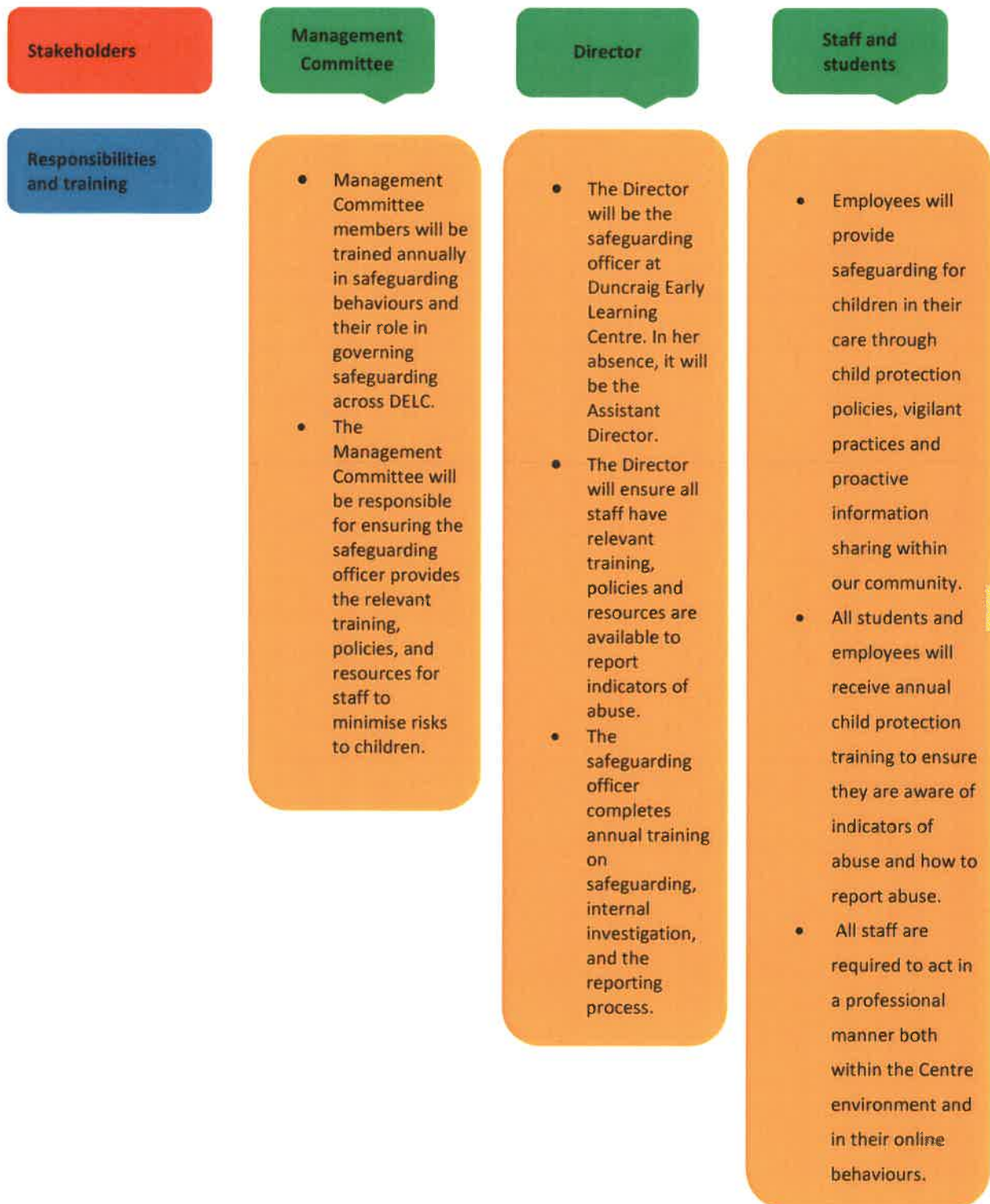
ROLES

Management Committee- Their role is to govern the service. To ensure the Safeguarding officer is fulfilling their obligations in ensuring children are safe by following the Safeguarding policy.

Director- The Director will be the Safeguarding officer. The Assistant Director will be responsible for this role, in the Director's absence. The Safeguarding officer will be responsible for ensuring the Safeguarding policy is being upheld during daily operations within the Centre.

Staff/ students/ parents- Their role is to identify and report any concerns using the guidelines set out in flow chart A3 below.

Flowchart A3: SAFEGAURDING- THE DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY



Reporting

The person (adult) who has formed the belief that child may have been, or is at risk of being, abused must make the confidential report. This ensures that the most accurate and reliable information is reported.

Please feel free to seek support and advice from the Director if needed.

Face-to-face verbal report, email, or telephone call.

Ph: 9246 2991 Email: Director@duncraigeic.org.au

Incident report details will be recorded in the incident records.

Who to?

Should you have concerns for the wellbeing of a child, please contact **Department of Communities, Child protection and Family Support-Crisis Care Unit- the Central Intake Team** on 1800 273 889 or email **cpduty@communities.wa.gov.au**.

To report a concern out of business hours please contact the **Department of Communities, Child protection and Family Support Crisis Care Unit- the Central Intake Team** on 9223 1111

What happens next?

Next Talk to the Director.

The Director is to:

- Notify the Education and Care Regulatory Unit of any allegation of abuse, neglect, or assault, of an enrolled child during a care session. The notification must be given within one working day after the day on which the allegation was made. After hours contact is to Crisis Care.
- Contact the Chairperson of the Management Committee
- Inform the broker and insurance company.
- Director to add each incident-to-incident register.

Outcome

An investigation will take place by the relevant government bodies to ensure the best outcome for the child.

MANDATORY REPORTING

In Western Australia, it is a legal obligation for designated professionals to report child sexual abuse to the Department of Communities - Child Protection and Family Support. All Australian jurisdictions have some level of mandatory reporting.

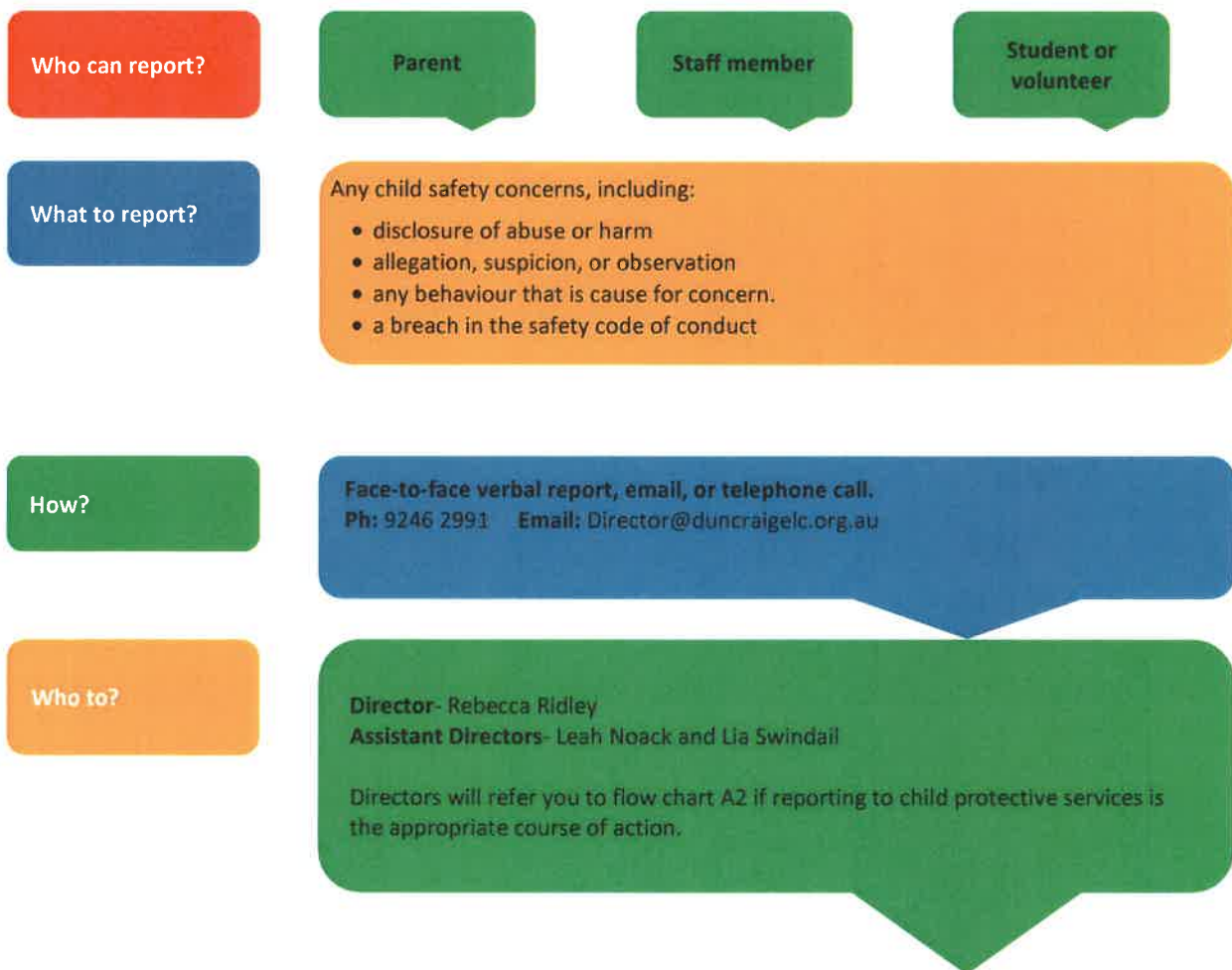
- doctors,
- nurses,
- midwives,
- teachers,
- police officers,
- boarding supervisors
- ministers of religion
- assessor appointed under section 125A the Act.

It is a legal requirement in Western Australia for: to report **all reasonable beliefs of child sexual abuse** to the Department of Communities - Child Protection and Family Support. On 1 January 2009, the legislation that governs mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse became part of the Children and Community Services Act 2004.

From 1st November 2024 all Early Childhood Educators will become mandatory reporters.

THE REPORTING PROCESSES –

Flowchart A2: INCIDENT REPORT INVESTIGATION



What happens next?

The Director will:

- Document report on the incident register
- Offer support to all parties.
- Where appropriate, the Director will begin an investigation by interviewing relevant parties and witnesses.
- Seek advice from the Management Committee Chairperson regarding engaging HR services as needed.
- Notify CPS and ACECQA if appropriate.
- Notify broker and insurance company if appropriate.

Outcome

Investigation: outcome decided; relevant parties notified of outcome of investigation; policies, procedures updated where necessary.

Flowchart A4: THE CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING PROCESS

Who can report?

Parent

Staff member

Student or volunteer

What to report?

- Behavioural an/or physical indicators and/or and abusive situation has been observed and/or
- A disclosure from a child has been received and/or
- Sufficient information from an adult or child has been received.

Call 000 if a child is in immediate danger.

How?

The person (adult) who has formed the belief that child may have been, or is at risk of being, abused must make the confidential report. This ensures that the most accurate and reliable information is reported.

In addition, report to the Director.
Face-to-face verbal report, email, or telephone call.
Ph: 9246 2991 Email: Director@duncraigelc.org.au

Who to?

Should you have concerns for the wellbeing of a child, please contact the Central Intake Team on **1800 273 889** or email **cpduty@communities.wa.gov.au**.
To report a concern out of business hours please contact the Crisis Care Unit on **9223 1111**
Reports can also be made directly via this link - <https://mandatoryreportingweb.communities.wa.gov.au>

What happens next?

You will be asked the following:

- details about the child/young person and family
- the reasons you are concerned
- the immediate risk to the child
- whether or not the child or family has support
- what may need to happen to make the child safe?
- your contact details, so that the officer can call you to obtain further information if required or to provide feedback.

Outcome

An investigation will take place by the relevant government bodies to ensure the best outcome for the child.

RECRUITMENT SAFEGAURDING

- All perspective employees, students and volunteers will have a formal interview.
- The employee interview questions include questions about the applicant's knowledge of safeguarding of children.
- We require 2 previous employers to provide references regarding suitability for the advertised position. The employee reference questions ask referees about applicants' knowledge of safeguarding.
- DELC provides a job description with duties and responsibilities outlined within. One expectation is that each employee will provide safeguarding for children in our care through child protection policies, vigilant practices and proactive information sharing within our community.
- The Assistant Director ensures every staff member has a Working with Children Check card within the prescribed time limit, which is to be renewed every 3 years.
- All employees are provided orientation and induction training.
- Initial 3-month trial periods.
- All employees, students and volunteers will have read, acknowledged, and signed the Duncraig code of conduct and safety code of conduct ahead of starting work at the Centre.

SUPERVISION

- All educators to be given the supervision procedure that will be displayed in every room.
- Performance appraisals to occur annually with supervision meetings being held at regular intervals throughout the year.

- Trial period and supervision on commencement at Centre.
- Where possible, new and relief staff will do the middle shift so there is always someone to supervise them.
- Limit opportunities for staff to be alone with children.
- Glass windows and doors are available for people to look through at any time. Every window must be completely uncovered by posters, curtains, or paint.
- Students, volunteers, and tradesman will never be left alone with children.
- Except in emergencies, staff should not leave the Centre alone with individual children.

TRAINING

- Safeguarding measure-Every September staff receive in person, child protection training facilitated by Early Childhood Australia. The training covers all areas of abuse, warning signs to look out for and the correct methods for reporting suspected abuse. The aim of the training is to ensure our current practices are up to date and we are being proactive in our efforts to protect children from harm.
- Staff starting after our annual child protection training, will be required to provide proof of having completed child protection training within the last 12 months.
- All staff will receive a copy of the Safeguarding policy upon commencement of employment. All current staff will receive training on the current policy and take place in the annual policy review each year,
- All training records will be kept on both individual staff files and by the ECT as proof of professional training.
- Quarterly discussions will be held at staff meetings about the Safeguarding policy and child protection.

ACCESS OF INFORMATION

- All families are welcome to view all policies at any point in time. Policies are in the foyer. Parents are shown this upon enrolment and reminded of this in newsletters throughout the year.
- The Safeguarding policy will be available on our website and is given to each family upon enrolment.
- All families will have access to the reporting process with the relevant flowcharts being readily available in the Centre foyer-**Flowchart A2-** Incident reporting and **Flowchart A4-** Child protection reporting, on display in Centre foyer always.

POLICY INTRODUCED: November 2023

NEXT REVIEW: November 2024

NAME Marta Kazani POSITION Chair Person

SIGNED 

NAME Leah Noack POSITION Director

SIGNED 

To be read in conjunction with the child protection policy and the safety code of conduct procedure.

Reference- Child Australia presentation training slides 2023.