

POLICY

POLICY 7: CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT & CHILD PROTECTION

OVERARCHING PERSPECTIVE:

Perspective: Quality Services
Policy: Services and Programs

POLICY:

Children have a right to be protected from abuse and neglect. The interest of the children must be paramount at all times, including when intervention occurs to protect them.

Our Village Family Childcare Service staff and Educators are not mandated under current legislation to report suspected child abuse. However, it is recognised that all persons working with children have a moral responsibility and duty of care to report child abuse and neglect.

SCOPE:

This document applies to all Educators, Families, Coordination Unit Staff, Volunteers and Students of Our Village Family Childcare Service.

RATIONALE:

To ensure the joint protocol between the Department of Human Services Child Protection, the Department of Education and Training and Licensed Children's Services and Victorian schools is implemented in order to protect children from significant harm resulting from abuse or neglect.

PROCESS:

- Coordination Unit staff and/or Educators will take immediate action to ensure that a notification to Victorian Department of Human Services Child Protection, wherever they have any reasonable ground to suspect that a child in their care may be at risk of harm from abuse or neglect.
- Notification will take place when an Educator or Coordination Unit Manager forms a belief, on reasonable grounds, that a child has suffered, or may be at risk of suffering harm from abuse or neglect.
- This belief may be formed when;
 - a disclosure is made to the Educator/staff member by the child that she / he has been physically or sexually abused;
 - someone else, such as a relative, friend/acquaintance or sibling or parent of the friend of the child, tells the Educator/staff member that the child has been abused;
 - the Educator/staff member observations of the child's behaviour or knowledge of the children leads him or her to believe the child has been abused;
 - the Educator/staff member observes signs or indicators of the abuse.

- The Educator may either notify DHS Child Protection Services directly of their concern and advises the Coordination Unit of this action or immediately contact the Manager. In the latter case, the Manager will immediately contact the Child Protection Services office and asks to speak to the Intake Worker regarding making a notification.
- The Child Protection, Intake Worker will take the details and inform the Manager of the proposed course of action. This may involve the Intake Worker re-contacting the Manager at a later time.
- In all cases involving suspected sexual abuse or serious physical abuse, DHS Child Protection Services will contact the Police and they will jointly plan what action, if any, to take. The Manager and/or CEO may also contact the Police to seek additional advice.
- DHS Child Protection Services is responsible for arranging any interviews of the child in the Family Childcare setting. It is accepted that Child Protection Services will liaise with the Manager.
- The Manager will not inform the child's parents prior to contacting DHS Child Protection Services. DHS Child Protection Services are responsible for determining when, and by whom, the parents will be informed of the notification.
- DHS Child Protection Services is responsible for informing any other parties as appropriate of their involvement with the child.
- The Manager is responsible for informing the Chief Executive Officer, SCH and Department of Education and Training according to existing SCH procedures.
- The DHS/Department of Education and Training/Children's Services protocol (see below) should be used wherever required to confirm or clarify arrangements. All parties to the protocol have a responsibility to implement and adhere to the protocol.

APPENDIX:

Sunbury Community Health . Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting Work Instruction

DEFINITIONS:


REFERENCES:

- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Human Services . Department for Child Protection, *Protecting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People*, May 2010, State of Victoria
- Education and Care Services National Regulations, 2011 . Regulation 168

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- Provision of information, assistance and training to family day care Educators - 34
- Engagement & Registration of FDC Educator - 13
- Visitors to FDC Residences & Venues - 47
- Assessment, Approval and Re-assessment of FDC Residences - 2
- Drug and Alcohol - 11
- Fit and Proper Assessment of FDC Educators, Assistants and Adults Residing at the FDC Premises - 32
- (SCH) Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting Work Instruction
- (SCH) Duty of Care Policy

This box to be completed after final draft has been approved.

Issue Date:	November 2016	Previous Review(s):	May '10, Oct '11, Jul '15
Issue Number:	Four (4)	Next Review:	November 2019
Owner:	Manager, Family Day Care	Signed in accordance with Deed of Delegation: <div style="text-align: right;">1/12/2016</div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> X  </div> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> Marcus Bosch General Manager, Child, Youth & Family Services Signed by: Marcus Bosch	