

6.6.6 Child Protection Policy

Joondalup Family Centre is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children within the centre. Management, staff, and volunteers at the centre are aware of their roles and responsibilities regarding child protection. We aim to ensure that all educator at the centre are aware of current child protection laws and understand their obligations under these.

We believe it is our responsibility to ensure children are free from harm and abuse and are committed to protecting the physical, emotional and intellectual needs of all children at the centre.

Staff must report any concern they have for the following suspicions:

- Abuse – emotional, physical, sexual, psychological
- Neglect
- Domestic violence

Procedures:

Recruitment and training

Staff are required to hold a current Working with Children Check and a National Police Clearance to be employed at the centre.

Child protection training, in line with recognized authorities, will be undertaken by Educators/staff. This training will be updated at least every three years.

Reporting and documentation

Educators/staff are required to report any allegation of abuse, neglect or assault, including sexual assault to the nominated supervisor of the Educators/staff.

Allegations are to be discussed with the child's family and must not be discussed with the alleged perpetrator or any other person outside of the Educators/staff Service and Committee.

Whenever Educators/staff form a belief that a child may be at risk of child abuse or neglect, the concern must be reported to the nominated supervisor or may be reported directly to the Department for Child Protection. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that the reporting procedures are carried out and will provide appropriate feedback to the person who raised the concern that action has been taken.

The Nominated Supervisor (or senior staff as required) will document the disclosure, observation and concerns accurately and objectively using the **Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record form**. Educators/staff shall not discuss or take visual images of the child in question or investigate the suspicion themselves.

Informal discussion of any concerns should always occur with the Department for Child Protection, as family or other reports may have been received by the Department and the current concerns need to be documented to add to their evidence.

Educators/staff will maintain sensitivity and follow the organisation's **Confidentiality Policy**.

Version	Date	Review
6.3	30/06/2020	30/06/2021

Allegations against Centre staff or volunteers

All allegations of suspected abuse, neglect or violence against educators, staff or volunteers are to be treated in the same manner as allegations against other people. Reports will be made to the the Department for Child Protection where a child is being harmed with the appropriate support of the Nominated Supervisor. If the Nominated Supervisor is involved I the harm then the Approved Provider or most senior staff member will assist I notification.

Staff are required to hold a current Working with Children Check and a National Police Clearance to be employed at the centre.

Child protection training, in line with recognized authorities, will be undertaken by staff. This training will be updated at least every three years.

Staff must report any concern they have for the following suspicions:

- o Abuse – emotional, physical, sexual, psychological
- o Neglect
- o Domestic violence

Procedures:

Staff are to follow the following procedures in the case of suspicion of abuse or neglect, or an allegation against centre staff or volunteers:

Suspicion of harm

If educators have concerns about a child’s safety they will:

- Document their concerns in a non-judgemental and accurate manner as soon as possible. This should also include their own observations and details of any previous discussions with the parent or guardian
- Documentation should occur within 24 hours so the matter is still fresh I their mind and should include the date and place of suspicion, details of suspected harm, their signature and date of completion.

Allegation of harm

- The Nominated Supervisor will complete an **Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record** and notify the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of making the report to Child Protection. This needs to be done in a non-judgemental and accurate manner.
- Manager or Committee member will:
 - Provide appropriate support for any educator or staff member who has an allegation made against them.
 - Protect the identity of educators/staff members against whom unsubstantiated complaints have been made will be protected.
 - Review the person’s duties, and if they continue to interact with children, ensure they are appropriately supervised at all times.
 - Seek legal advice about restricting that person’s work activities if required.

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Disclosure of harm

A disclosure of harm occurs when someone, including a child, tells you about harm that has happened or is likely to happen. When this occurs, educators, staff, the Nominated Supervisors or Approved Provider will:

- Tell the child/person they have done the right thing in revealing the information but that they'll need to tell someone who can help keep the child safe.
- Only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter
- document as soon as possible so the details fresh including the time, date and place of the disclosure; 'Word for word' what happened and what was said, including anything they said and any actions that have been taken; Date of report and signature.
- Notifications of harm to relevant Authority.

The person making a notification of abuse or suspected abuse will make a record of the answers to the following:

- Name of person they spoke to.
- What the next step in the process is.
- What advice will be sent to confirm the report has been made.
- If there is any further action they need to take.

Informal discussion of any concerns should always occur with the Department for Child Protection, as family or other reports may have been received by the Department and the current concerns need to be documented to add to their evidence.

Pre-Kindy staff will maintain sensitivity and follow the organisation's **Confidentiality Policy**.

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