

Policies & Procedures



Child Protection

Introduction

At St Peter's Woodlands Grammar School we provide a safe, inclusive, dynamic learning environment where students are empowered to achieve their maximum learning potential. We aim to foster the total development of each child academically, physically, spiritually and emotionally. As such we are also committed to providing care and protection for all our students whilst they are at school or engaged in school activities.

We believe that children, as vulnerable members of society, have the right to be protected and to feel safe at all times.

Positive and supportive relationships between school and home, parent and child, student and student, teacher and student are important factors in providing the sort of environment where appropriate conditions of safety can exist.

It is acknowledged that children can and do suffer from neglect and abuse, physical, emotional and sexual, and that education and care programs can play a significant role in their prevention.

Preventative Practices

1. The School's Policies, including the Child Protection Policy, are available to everyone in the school community and changes are notified.
2. Students, parents, volunteers and school employees are encouraged to raise concerns.
3. All employees and relevant volunteers are required to notify any reasonable concerns to the relevant government authorities.
4. Employees must notify the Principal of any situation where there is ongoing concern about the School's duty of care to a student; or to notify the Chair of the School Council should the concern relate to the conduct of the Principal. Employees are not required to inform the Principal that they have made a mandatory report.
5. Students, parents and volunteers are encouraged to direct allegations about any inappropriate action of an employee to the Principal, or to the Chair of the School Council should the allegation be about the Principal.
6. The School promotes models of behaviour between school personnel and students based on mutual respect and consideration.
7. Risks are identified and appropriate procedures adopted.
8. Volunteers are made aware of their responsibilities.
9. Clear boundaries of behaviour are in place and reflected in the Volunteers, Camps and Outdoor Education, Sport and other relevant policies.
10. Responding to Abuse and Neglect (RAN) training is provided for all employees, and appropriate volunteers, at the School's expense. All suspicions on reasonable grounds of abuse or neglect are to be reported promptly to the relevant Government authority by the employee or volunteer concerned.
11. The Principal provides support to employees who make mandatory notifications.
12. The Principal and the Assistant Principals are the key contact people on any student protection concerns.
13. Appropriate checks are undertaken prior to appointing employees and engaging contractors, consultants or others who may have individual contact with students.
14. Links are maintained with police, the relevant Government authority, and other schools as appropriate.
15. Dispute and Grievance procedures are in place.
16. The Principal will, from time to time, check to ensure that the School's student protection procedures are followed.
17. The School's teaching and learning program will include Protective Behaviours Training at all year levels.
18. The School will comply with all legislative requirements on student protection including the following:

Children's Protection Act, 1993
Children's Services Act, 1985 and regulations
Education Act, 1972 and Regulations

Protective Practices for Staff and their Interactions with Children and Young People, 2011

Rights and Responsibilities of Mandated Notifiers

- It is the personal responsibility of a mandated notifier to report suspected abuse – it is not the responsibility of their supervisor, principal or employer.
- The notifier does not have to be able to prove that abuse has occurred.
- It is not necessary or the notifier to know the identity of the alleged perpetrator to make a notification.
- The notification should be accompanied by a statement, which may be verbal, of the observations, information opinions upon which the suspicion is based.
- The notifier is immune from civil liability for reporting suspicions in good faith.
- The notifier is entitled to feedback about the way the notification is being dealt with by the relevant government authorities.
- If a mandated notifier does not notify when appropriate, they may be prosecuted.
- The identity of the notifier will not be disclosed unless the disclosure is made in the course of 'official duties' to another person acting in the course of 'official duties' (eg police acting in the matter of a criminal prosecution) or where the court deems the identity of the notifier is evidence which has critical importance to the proceedings, or when the notifier has consented to the release of their name.
- The Principal reasonably expects to be advised about any significant concerns about the welfare of a student, especially when the concerns relate to possible inappropriate behaviour by a School employee or volunteer.

Grounds for notifying suspected abuse or neglect

A mandated notifier is obliged to notify the relevant Government authority when they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child/young person has been abused or neglected.

Reasonable grounds to notify suspected abuse may include the following:

- When a child/young person tells you he or she has been abused;
- When someone else tells you (perhaps a relative, friend, neighbour or sibling of the child/young person);
- A child/young person tells you he or she knows someone who has been abused (a child/young person could possibly be referring to himself or herself);
- And, importantly, when your own observation of a particular child/young person's behaviour and/or injuries, or your knowledge of children/young people generally leads you to suspect that abuse is occurring.

If the mandated notifier is unsure whether they have a suspicion on reasonable grounds to notify, it is appropriate to consult with the relevant Government authority by calling the Child Abuse Report Line Telephone 131478.

Checklist for Mandated Notifiers when making a mandatory report

It is not essential that Mandated Notifiers have all the information contained on this list before making a report. However the more information that is provided to the Child Abuse Report Line, the better informed the response will be to the child/ren of concern.

Identification Details relating to the child, siblings and parents:

- Full name (including any other surnames they are known by).
- Date of birth / age.
- Current address; contact number.
- School.
- Ethnicity, ie Aboriginal, Kinship group, non-English speaking.
- Alleged perpetrator's name, age, address, relationship to the child/ren, current whereabouts.
- Current whereabouts of the child who is, or children who are, of concern.
- Details of when the next expected contact with the alleged perpetrator will occur (if they are not living together).

Notifier Details:

- Full name, job title (if applicable); agency name or address; contact number.
- Relationship of Notifier to the child/ren of concern.
- What type of contact does the Notifier have with the family and how frequently?
- Is the Notifier working with the child or the family? If so, in what capacity?

Details of Concerns:

- Specific details about the allegations:-
- If the child disclosed: what did s/he say and what was her/his emotional presentation?
- Who saw or heard what and when?
- Size and location of injuries, if any, with descriptions of any bruising.
- Has the child been seen by a Doctor? If so, provide the name and contact number.
- Describe any caregiver behaviour that is of concern, including how often and how severe.
- Describe any behaviour by the victim(s) that is of concern, including how often it occurs.

Other Details:

- Are the parents separated?
- If any Family Court orders are in place, what do they relate to?
- If the custodial/non-custodial parent has a partner, provide her or his name.
- What is known about the functioning of the family
 - domestic violence
 - drug/alcohol use or abuse
 - violence to people outside of the family
 - relevant health factors
 - extended family or other support networks
 - child care arrangements
 - nature of involvement with any agencies
 - mental health problems
 - physical or intellectual disability

Before Concluding the Call:

- What prompted you to call today? (if this is not already obvious).
- Are caregivers aware a report is being made?
- Have you as the Notifier, given any expectations of action to the child?
- What action are you expecting the relevant government authority to take?

Aboriginal Children

On calling the Child Abuse Report Line, Notifiers will be asked if the matter involves an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child or family. If so, the Notifier will be put through to Yaitya Tiramangkotti, the Aboriginal team that works alongside the Child Abuse Report Line, to ensure the child/ren and family receive the most culturally appropriate response. (Extract from: Govt of South Australia, Guidelines for Mandated Notifiers)

Other Policies

Other School policies and procedures which are relevant to Child Protection are:

- Behaviour Management
- Bullying and Harassment
- Emergency Procedures
- First Aid
- Information Communication Technology Rules for use of internet and email)
- Information Communication Technology Usage (Staff)
- Critical Incident Policy
- Camps and Outdoor Education
- Guidelines for School Excursions
- Privacy
- Drugs
- Grievance Procedures for Parents
- Employment of new staff
- Volunteers

Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive. Students frequently show indicators from more than one category and the examples listed are not necessarily exclusive to a single category of abuse. Any of these indicators may suggest that a student is being abused, neglected or at risk of harm; however, indicators should be considered in the context of the student's age, medical and developmental history, and capabilities. In addition, they may be indicators of mental illness, substance abuse and domestic violence within families.

Physical Abuse

<p>Physical Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruises • Burns • Hair missing in tufts • Lacerations and abrasions (especially to the eyes, lips, gums and mouth) • Missing or loosened teeth • Self-mutilation • Welts 	<p>Behaviour Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of adults • Frequent absences, with or without explanation from parents/caregivers • Guarded or evasive answers to questions about the causes of the obvious injury • Injuries that are not consistent with a child's explanation of them • Disclosure of abuse directly to an adult or indirectly to a friend • Fear of going home
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Emotional Abuse

<p>Physical Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression • Eating disorders (anorexia or bulimia) • Lethargy or fatigue • Symptoms of stress • Evidence of drug abuse or dependence • Wetting, soiling, smearing • Psychosomatic complaints 	<p>Behaviour Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressive or delinquent behaviour • Attempted suicide • Excessively compliant or passive behaviour • Excessive shyness or withdrawal • Low self-esteem • Fire setting • Truancy or school avoidance • Deliberate harming of animals • Poor peer relationships
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Sexual Abuse

<p>Physical Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruises or bleeding from external genitalia, vagina or anal regions • Blood stained underwear • Pregnancy or fear of pregnancy • Signs of pain, itching or discomfort in the genital area • Urinary tract infections 	<p>Behaviour Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure of involvement in sexual activity directly to an adult, indirectly to a friend or in a disguised way eg 'I know a person who...' • Inappropriate expressions of affection • Inappropriate interest in sexual matters • Evidence of sexual themes in artwork, stories or play • Possession of pornographic materials • Promiscuity, exposure or sexual behaviour towards others • Use of sexual language inappropriate for child's age • Reluctance to change clothes in front of others • Wearing of inappropriate clothing • Fear states eg Anxiety, depression obsessively neat, socially withdrawn, or overly compliant behaviour • Poor peer relationships • Inability to concentrate in school
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Neglect

<p>Physical Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abandonment • Poor hygiene • Lack of adequate or suitable clothing • Inadequate nutrition • Lack of medical or dental care • Constant fatigue • Developmental delays • Untreated sore, boils or lice • Lack of adequate supervision 	<p>Behaviour Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falling asleep in school • Poor school attendance or alternatively always attends school, even when sick • Poor academic performance • Steals or begs for food or eats food from bins • Dull, apathetic appearance • Engages in vandalism • Engages in sexual misconduct • Uses drugs or alcohol • Early arrival at school or reluctance to leave
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Photography

Rationale

The word photography is used in this policy to include traditional photographs and digital images of any kind, still or moving.

For many years photography has contributed both profoundly and superficially to our culture. It plays a significant role in commerce, entertainment and communication; it is commonplace in our homes and it is an important element of school life.

At SPW we feel it is vital that achievements are recognised and that student's feel valued, proud and happy. Photography is a useful tool within school and it is employed routinely in many ways, for example record keeping, displays, teachers' lessons and the children's own work. Photographs are also used for newsletter, website and other publications.

We are, however, sensitive to the wishes and rights of parents who may have concerns about the uses of such images.

This policy has been written with reference to the Protective Practices Guidelines 2011.

Taking Photos and Video

School

All parents are asked to give their consent for photography of their child upon enrolment. A database is kept of children whose photos must not be used for marketing purposes. Photographs will not be taken of children when they are vulnerable – upset, hurt or in a state of undress.

Parents

It is expected that:

- Parents wishing to take photographs or videos do not detract from the performance of the students involved.
- Parents wishing to take photographs or videos do not disrupt the enjoyment of other parents
- Parents respect the 'right to privacy' of other individuals
- Images will be accessed and enjoyed by family members only (ie they do not appear on TV programmes or the internet etc)
- Parents follow the policies of external venues (ie other schools, sports halls, swimming pools etc)

Use and storage of Photographs and Video

- Class photographs are held for reference in the Front Office and archived after use.
- Individual photos are embedded in the administration package and are used to identify children for medical purposes.
- Photographs taken as records of events or for educational purposes may be displayed around the school.
- When we publish children's names we only publish first name and surname initial.
- Photographs are used for the School Magazine.
- Photographs are not exchanged with anyone outside school, or removed for private use by any employee or volunteer.
- It may be necessary for staff to take photographs home when working on presentations or portfolios (this work can be too time consuming to be completed during school hours). Staff treat this privilege respectfully, complying with Child Protection Guidelines, ensure that these photos of students are not used for any other purpose, are not distributed to anyone and are deleted as soon as the task is completed.

Website

Photographs of children are used minimally and anonymously on our website. Individual parents are informed. Parents reserve the right to have any photograph of their child removed from the website.