



Sathya Sai College

CHILD PROTECTION

Guideline

The SSC culture is grounded in five universal values: **Love, Peace, Truth, Right Conduct and Non-Violence**. It is an integral part of our philosophy to provide a safe and supportive environment in which students are secure and which minimizes any risk of harm. Students thrive academically, emotionally, socially and spiritually in such an environment. Refer to appendix for summary and overview of guidelines for action of value.

Included in our obligation to protect children is proactive planning, protective intervention, and where appropriate, the reporting of suspected risk of harm or neglect from either within the school, or from outside of school in the wider community.

The secret nature of child abuse can only be overcome by vigilant staff trained in the recognition of the symptoms and having an awareness of their obligatory (mandated) reporting duty.

The Principal of SSC as HOA (Head of Agency) will ensure that the school's policies, procedures and guidelines (as outlined below) will meet its legislative obligations in relation to child protection.

As HOA, the Principal will ensure that staff are trained in this area and will focus on prevention by developing a module for students in the KLA - PDPHE as part of our curriculum.

For further definition and relevant child protection legislation see [New South Wales Interagency Guidelines for Child Protection Intervention](#) and [Making a Difference Recognizing and Notifying Child Abuse and Neglect](#).

There are three key pieces of child protection legislation in New South Wales:

- a) the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (NSW) (the **Care and Protection Act**);

- b) the *Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012* (NSW) (the **WWC Act**);
and
- c) the *Ombudsman Act 1974* (NSW) (the **Ombudsman Act**).

Summary and Overview of Child Protection Guidelines

VALUE	GUIDELINES FOR ACTION
<p style="text-align: center;">LOVE</p>	<p>We value our students and their right to feel safe. We provide a loving, safe and protective environment for them at school.</p> <p>We protect them, where we can, from harm occurring outside of the school environment.</p> <p>We empower them to develop strategies to keep themselves safe.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">PEACE</p>	<p>There will be a sense of peace when one feels safe and protected.</p> <p>Full knowledge, understanding, acceptance and implementation of the Schools Child Protection Policy will promote a feeling of security, safety and Peace in the school</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">TRUTH</p>	<p>School staffs are legally and morally mandated to keep children safe at school, and to act on any threat to safety from within the school.</p> <p>As ‘mandated reporters’ school staff also have a responsibility to recognize and report suspected harm to students, (both from inside and outside of the school environment.)</p> <p>The children have the right to feel safe all the time. We will ensure they can know themselves better to recognize their own body signals for when they are not feeling safe, and to speak out to seek safety and reinstate a feeling of peace.</p> <p>We will ensure the children understand their responsibility not to threaten others or to cause them to feel unsafe.</p>

<p>NON-VIOLENCE</p>	<p>The school has a focus on non-violence and right action at all levels – physical, mental, emotional and spiritual.</p> <p>The Wellbeing and Discipline policy reflects this, with stringent guidelines and sanctions against bullying (violence) at any of these levels.</p> <p>The Protective Behaviours Program will be introduced to parents and staff and through the KLA - PDPHE to the students. This program empowers us into a more explicit culture of non-violence, with emphasis on the ‘right to feel safe’, the opportunity to choose to ‘risk on purpose’ and the responsibility not to threaten the safety of others.</p> <p>We emphasise the importance of speaking up for safety and non-violence.</p> <p>Processes for managing disagreements and conflicts in a non-violent fashion are developed and will be explicitly taught – e.g. communication and clarification skills, peer mediation, conflict resolution etc.</p>
<p>RIGHT ACTION</p>	<p>All care will be taken to ensure the school is a safe and protective environment for all students, staff, volunteers and authorized visitors.</p> <p>School personnel will model promotion of the ‘right to feel safe’ and the responsibility to ensure they do not make others feel unsafe in any way.</p> <p>All environmental threats to safety will be dealt with appropriately within as short a time as possible.</p> <p>All threats to safety within the school (e.g. harassment and bullying) will be dealt with as outlined.</p> <p>In compliance with both legal and moral guidelines, risk of harm to students (from inside and outside of the school environment) will be appropriately dealt with – including external reporting as required.</p>

Risk of harm procedures

The *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* provides the following definition.

“Child or young person is at risk of harm, if current concerns exist for the safety, welfare or well-being of the child or young person because of the presence of any one or more of the following circumstances:

- (a) The child’s or young person’s basic physical or psychological needs are not being met or are at risk of not being met,*
- (b) The parents or other caregivers have not arranged and are unable or unwilling to arrange for the child or young person to receive necessary medical care,*
- (c) The child or young person has been, or is at risk of being physically or sexually abused or ill-treated,*
- (d) The child or young person is living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence and, as a consequence, the child or young person is at risk of serious physical or psychological harm,*
- (e) A parent or other caregiver has behaved in such a way towards the child or young person that the child or young person has suffered or is at risk of suffering serious psychological harm.*

Note: Physical or sexual abuse may include an assault and can exist despite the fact that consent has been given.”

Reportable behaviour

Child abuse includes physical or sexual assault, ill treatment or neglect or exposing or subjecting a child to behaviour which psychologically harms a child.

Other reportable behaviour includes accessing child pornography, and other illegal activities.

Physical Assault is defined as;

- An act committed on or towards a child, **and**
- Involves either the application of force to a child **or** an act that causes a child to think that immediate force will be used on them, **and**
- It is either **hostile** or **reckless** (a reckless act is one where a person would reasonable foresee the consequence of or likelihood of inflicting injury or fear, and ignores the risk)

Physical assault can include: pushing, shoving, punching, hitting – slapping, throwing objects and threatening behaviour (verbal or action)

Principal's Action and Reporting responsibilities

Having received information regarding 'reportable behaviour', the Principal will then clarify and take the appropriate action as per the guidelines below. (See **Flowchart, Appendix**)

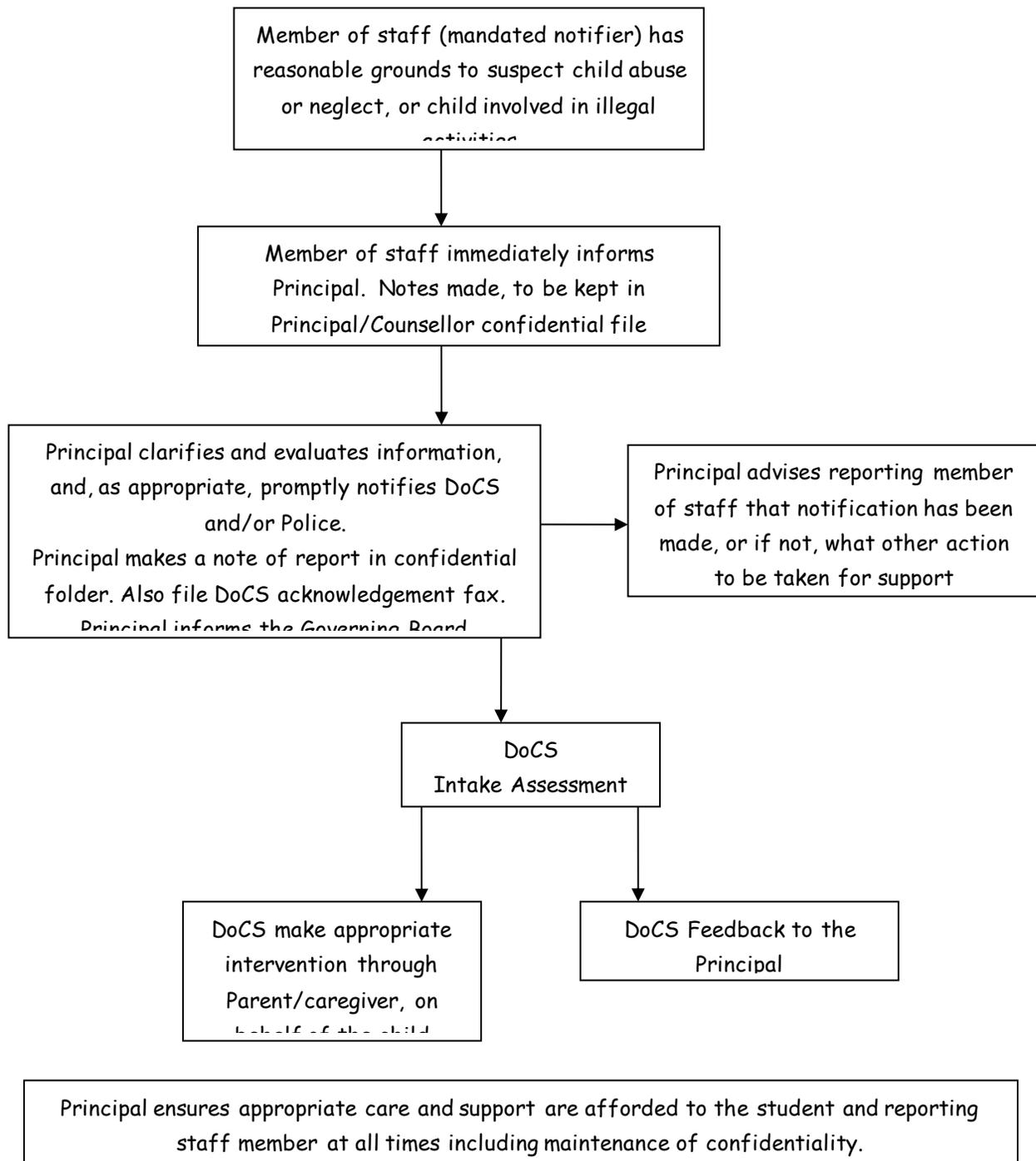
In certain cases, an **accredited** investigator from within the school may be required to undertake investigation of the allegations of reportable conduct.

When investigating any case involving child abuse or neglect, SSC chooses to follow the "*Recommended Protocols for Internal Investigative and Disciplinary Proceedings*" drawn together by the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) NSW and the NSW / ACT Independent Education Union.

The Ombudsman oversees investigations, monitors progress, and considers the appropriateness of investigative steps and disciplinary outcomes. The Ombudsman receives all relevant documents and may take over a case.

Mandated Reporting - Flowchart

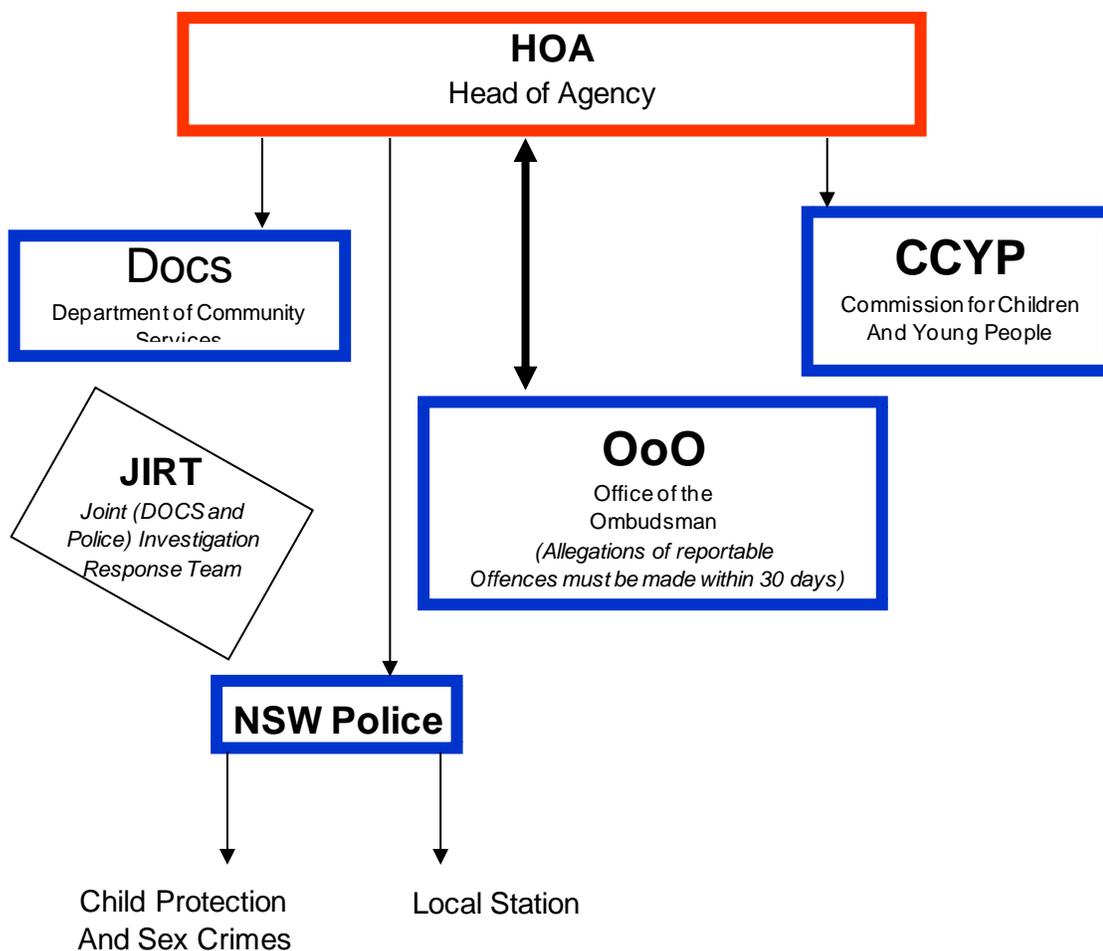
MANDATED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED RISK OF HARM FROM OUTSIDE OF THE SCHOOL (HOME OR WIDER ENVIRONMENT)



Child Protection – NSW Govt Agencies

NSW Govt Agencies Involved In Child Protection

School Authority



Note: Principal is the HoA in SSC

Complaint/Allegation/Evidence Against a member of staff

Assess

(AIS advice)
(Board of Governors)

Professional Matter?
Teaching & Learning?

Allegation or Likelihood
of Reportable Conduct

Not
Reportable

Reportable

Deal with it as an
internal matter
Report to the Board of
Governors

Reporting of all
reportable conduct
allegations' regarding an
employee is mandatory

Reportable Allegation

Mandatory
reporting of
any form
of abuse

DoCS/Police

RA
Risk Assessment

Ombudsman
*To oversight agrees to ensure reported
action
OR 1. Watch only
Or 2. Monitor*

Proceeding

Not
Proceeding

**School
Investigates**

Unless
False
Vexatious
Misconceived
Not Reportable Conduct

School
Reports

Sustained or not
Sustained?
Disciplinary action?

**Commission
For Children and Young People**
(Working with Children Checks)

Record as:
1. Employee poses a risk to children
2. No risk, but there was an allegation

