# **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE**

## POLICY STATEMENT:

MacGregor Primary School Out of Hours Care (the Service) is committed to providing a safe and secure environment that prioritises the well-being of children and staff under our supervision. As part of our dedication to child protection, this policy outlines our approach to safeguarding children from abuse and neglect. We operate in accordance with the "Child Protection and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect Policy" of the ACT Government and the Education and Care Services National Regulations.

*Definitions:*

*Child Abuse: Any form of physical, emotional, or sexual mistreatment or neglect of a child, including exposure to any behaviour that may harm their well-being.*

*Mandatory Reporting: The legal obligation to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.*

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

1. **Safety and Well-being:** The safety, security, and well-being of every child in our care are our highest priorities.
2. **Prevention and Awareness:** We are committed to preventing child abuse by promoting awareness and understanding among staff, children, and families.
3. **Mandatory Reporting:** All staff members are mandatory reporters and are required to report any suspected child abuse or neglect as per the legal obligations.
4. **Confidentiality:** All information related to suspected abuse or neglect will be treated with the strictest confidentiality, shared only with those directly involved in the reporting process.
5. **Supportive Environment:** We provide a supportive environment for children to disclose any concerns they may have, ensuring they feel safe and listened to.

## PROCEDURE:

**Staff Training and Awareness:**

* + All staff members are required to undergo regular training on identifying signs of child abuse or neglect.
  + Training includes familiarising staff with the procedures for reporting suspicions and maintaining confidentiality.

**Recognising and Responding to Concerns:**

* + Any staff member who suspects child abuse or neglect is obligated to report their concerns to the designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) within the service.

**Role of the Nominated Supervisor:**

* + The Nominated Supervisor will be available for support if a disclosure occurs, however, Educators **do not**  need to inform the Nominated Supervisor of a mandatory report being made.
  + The Nominated Supervisor can assist in an assessment that the reported concerns are liaised with external authorities to ensure the safety and protection of the child.

**Mandatory Reporting:**

* + If there is reasonable belief that a child is at risk of harm, has been abused, or neglected, the **all** educators will follow the guidelines outlined in the "Keeping children and young people safe" document to formally report the concerns to the appropriate authorities.

**Support and Communication:**

* + We provide appropriate support to the child involved, their family, and staff members affected by the reporting process.
  + We maintain open communication with relevant authorities and agencies to ensure the best possible outcomes for the child.

**CITATIONS:**

* Child Protection and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect Policy, ACT Government. Available at: [Link to policy](https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/corporate-policies/wellbeing/child-protection/child-protection-and-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect-policy)
* Education and Care Services National Regulations (ECSNR)
* Education and Care Services National Law (ECSNL)

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