



Serpentine Jarrahdale  
Grammar School

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Student Protection Policy</b>
<b>DES Requirement</b>	
<b>DES Standard</b>	<b>Standard 12 – Child abuse prevention</b>
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## **1. POLICY:**

This policy recognises that Serpentine Jarrahdale Grammar School (SJGS) has a responsibility to ensure that its students have a right to be safeguarded: as a child safe organization. SJGS recognises that the safety of children in its care is paramount, and this Policy promotes the care and protection of its students.

### **1.1 Policy Statement:**

SJGS recognises that it is responsible for the care and protection of its students. As such, it is committed to ensuring that the safety, health, welfare and wellbeing of its students are maintained at all times when they are in the care of SJGS, its teachers, staff and volunteers.

This Policy aims to:

- a) promote a safe learning environment for students;
- b) provide information and direction for teachers, staff, volunteers and others to recognise abuse, grooming and neglect;
- c) assist staff, volunteers and others to follow appropriate notification procedures when reporting alleged abuse, grooming and neglect.

### **1.2 Purpose:**

SJGS recognises that:

- a) all students have a right to be protected from harm or injury;
- b) it has a special responsibility to protect its students when they are on SJGS premises and at all times when they are under the care of SJGS, teachers, staff and volunteers;
- c) it has a responsibility to intervene when, on reasonable grounds, it believes that the welfare of a student may be at risk outside SJGS.

This Policy puts in place procedures to assist staff and volunteers to:

- a) spot/identify suspected physical or emotional abuse, neglect and grooming;
- b) assess risks likely to occur as a result of suspected abuse, grooming and neglect;
- c) manage the suspected physical or emotional neglect, abuse and grooming, and the associated risks.

### **1.3 Underlying Principles:**

Serpentine Jarrahdale Grammar School:

- a) acknowledges that protecting students from harm and injury is fundamental to maximising the students' personal and academic potential;
- b) recognises that the safety and protection of its students is paramount and has priority over all other interests;
- c) expects its students to show respect towards teachers, staff and volunteers at SJGS and to comply with safe practices those adults implement;
- d) requires its teachers, staff, volunteers, parents, subcontractors and visitors to ensure that, at all times, their behaviour towards, and relationships with, students reflect proper standards of care and do not breach SJGS's policies or employment requirements, or the law;
- e) values the dignity and rights of individuals;
- f) acknowledges that students have a right to feel safe and secure while at SJGS and at all times when participating in SJGS activities (both on and off campus);
- g) will address the various forms of abuse, grooming and neglect of its students through:
  - o curriculum;
  - o complementary policies and procedures;
  - o work practices;
  - o its work with its community and the community at large;
  - o cooperation with public authorities in resolving reported instances of the various forms of alleged abuse, grooming and neglect.

### **1.4 Statement of Responsibilities:**

The SJGS Principal, all SJGS employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors have a duty of care to SJGS's students. This relates primarily to maintaining the student's dignity and

safeguarding the student physically and emotionally while the student is at SJGS or involved in SJGS-related activities.

Moreover, SJGS, as a socially responsible and values-driven agency and member of the wider community, also has a duty of care to its students at other times when it becomes aware of, or suspects, a student's abuse, grooming and / or neglect.

At all times, SJGS will act to safeguard the wellbeing of its students.

### **1.5 Scope**

This policy includes employees, students, parents, subcontractors and visitors to SJGS or school events.

## **2. BACKGROUND:**

### **2.1 General:**

SJGS is committed to the wellbeing of its students including their intellectual, physical, social and emotional development.

SJGS recognises the fundamental right of students to be protected from neglect and from physical, emotional or sexual maltreatment whether at home, at SJGS or in the wider community.

Everyone working at SJGS needs to be able to recognise the indicators of abuse, grooming and neglect in order to take appropriate action. Given students' extensive time commitment when studying and participating in other activities run by SJGS, its staff are particularly well placed to observe these indicators. It is widely accepted that the presence of one type of abuse or neglect within an environment may be a strong indicator of other types of abuse or neglect within the same environment.

The Western Australian community expects schools to provide a safe, secure and friendly environment for learning. It also expects Principals to take every available course of action to ensure that students are protected from abuse, grooming and neglect.

At SJGS, the staff are trained/equipped to have the knowledge and skills to provide high standards of care and protection for students. As part of this, the staff encourage and support students to develop a range of life skills, including protective behaviours, to respond appropriately to abuse, grooming and neglect.

SJGS's 'Keeping Safe' curriculum materials provide students with the opportunity to develop the essential knowledge, attitudes, and skills that will enable them to manage their personal safety. The knowledge, attitudes and skills that students acquire assist them in taking responsible action to avoid and deal effectively with abuse, grooming and violence, and are taught as an integrated part of comprehensive, ongoing SJGS programs and committed pastoral care.

SJGS staff are in a position of special trust with respect to the students in their care. Legislation recognises this position of authority and trust, and accordingly the law provides greater penalties for those who abuse their special position and harm those who depend on them.

This policy document explains the action to be taken by staff to protect its students in circumstances where abuse, grooming and neglect is suspected; or when allegations of maltreatment, bullying, assault or grooming are made against employees, students or other people in the SJGS community.

### **2.2 Student Disclosures of Abuse and Neglect:**

It is not always easy for students to recognise or disclose abuse and neglect. They will usually only do so with great hesitation. They may have been coerced, bribed or threatened into secrecy or they may feel that they are to blame for what is occurring. They may be very fearful of being blamed, of other people's reactions and of the consequences that disclosure

will have for everyone involved. Students are likely to feel guilty because the abuse or neglect occurred, because they told another person before telling a parent/caregiver or because of issues over 'dobbing in' the parent/caregiver or friend. Conversely, students may feel relieved and hopeful that the abuse or neglect will stop.

A disclosure may be accidental or intentional.

If intentional, students will have made a decision to tell someone about the abuse or neglect and may be better prepared; however, this will not ease the burden of feelings and trauma associated with disclosure. They may hint or tell only part of the story to gauge the staff member's reaction before disclosing more fully. If accidental, students will not be prepared. Such a disclosure could occur in a class or in a group with other students present. In this case the staff member will use the strategy of 'protective interruption' (See Guideline 3).

### **2.3 Related Documents:**

This policy is related to, is informed by, and is to be read in conjunction with the:

- SJGS Staff Code of Conduct
- Teacher-Student Professional Boundaries: A Resource for WA Teachers
- Staff Appointment Process
- Drug Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Staff Dispute and Grievance Resolution Policy and a concerns process
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Social Media Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure
- Internet and Email Use Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Crisis Management Plan and Procedures

### **2.4 Definition of Child Maltreatment:**

#### **Child Abuse and Neglect:**

This is maltreatment of a person under the age of 18 years. It is the result of action or inaction on the part of a person who has responsibility to care for a child resulting in harm or injury to the child. The harm may include delayed physical and/or intellectual development. The maltreatment experienced is normally described in five categories. Each category of maltreatment is described by a range of indicators.

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Psychological
- Neglect

Descriptions of these indicators have been taken from the Department for Child Protection and Family Services document *"Identifying and responding to child abuse and neglect – A Guide for Professionals"*.

#### **Physical abuse:**

Physical abuse occurs when a child has experienced severe and/or persistent ill-treatment. It can include, but is not limited by, injuries such as cuts, bruises, burns and fractures caused by a range of acts including beating, shaking, illicit administration of alcohol and other drugs, attempted suffocation, excessive discipline or physical punishment.

#### **Sexual abuse:**

Sexual abuse covers a wide range of behaviour or activities that expose or subject a child to sexual activity that is exploitative and/or inappropriate to his/her age and developmental level. These behaviours include observation or involvement with inappropriate fondling of a child's body, making a child touch an adult's genitalia, showing pornographic material or sexual acts to a child, and sexual penetration of the child. Harm from sexual abuse may

include significant emotional trauma, physical injury, infections and impaired emotional and psychological development.

**Emotional abuse:**

Emotional abuse is a sustained, repetitive, inappropriate, ill treatment of a child or young person through behaviours including threatening, belittling, teasing, humiliating, bullying, confusing, ignoring and inappropriate encouragement. Children who have been emotionally abused are likely to have a reduced capacity to experience a range of emotions, to express emotion appropriately and to modulate their emotional experience. Children who have been emotionally abused are likely to be fearful, withdrawn and/or resentful, distressed and despairing.

**Psychological abuse:**

Psychological abuse is the sustained, repetitive, inappropriate, ill treatment of a child or young person through behaviours including threatening, isolating, neglecting, discrediting, misleading, disregarding, ignoring and inappropriate encouragement. This abuse damages a child's intellectual faculties and processes, including intelligence, memory, recognition, perception, attention, imagination and moral development. Children are likely to feel worthless, flawed, unloved, unwanted, endangered or only of value in meeting another's needs.

**Neglect:**

Neglect is the failure of a parent/caregiver to provide a child with the basic necessities of life. These include adequate supervision, adequate food or shelter, suitable clothing, effective medical, therapeutic or remedial care and emotional security. Neglect can be acute, chronic or episodic, and can result in detrimental effects on the child or young person's social, psychological, educational or physical development and/or physical injury. Neglect should be considered in the context of physical, emotional or psychological abuse.

**Note:** Child abuse and neglect, through the Department for Child Protection and Family Services, is defined as maltreatment done by a person who has responsibility to care for a child and this document concentrates specifically on that relationship.

The definitions of child maltreatment can be used to explain some of the behaviour that may occur in the School by one child to another. The treatment of such behaviour may be dealt with through the SJGS's Bullying and Behaviour Management Policies. These events are treated seriously by SJGS with the aim to help all parties.

A child who is 'bullying' may be doing so because they have been subjected to the same inappropriate behaviour and may require assistance through the SJGS's Student Protection policy.

**Note:** Students aged 18 and over may attend SJGS but are legally considered adults and as such DCPFS does not have a child protection mandate for them. However, they can be considered potentially vulnerable and in need of specialist services and SJGS owes a duty of care towards these students. There are many youth-specific agencies available to assist these students. Details of these are listed in section 6 of this document.

SJGS will contact the Police if they are aware of any assault or crime against a young adult.

**2.5 Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect:**

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive but contains those that will be of most use to staff. This list has been taken from the Department for Child Protection and Family Services document *"Identifying and responding to child abuse and neglect – A Guide for Professionals"*.

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, mental illness, substance abuse and domestic violence within families must also be considered.

***Physical abuse:***

- broken bones or unexplained bruises, burns, or welts in various stages of healing
- the child or young person is unable to explain an injury, or explanations given are inconsistent, vague or bizarre
- direct admissions from the parents that they are concerned that they might harm their child
- family history of violence
- marked delay between injury and obtaining medical assistance
- parent who shows little concern about the welfare of their child or the treatment and care of the injury
- repeated presentations of the child to health services with injuries, ingestions or minor complaints (this could also be an indicator of Factitious Disorder by proxy, a rare expression of physical and emotional abuse)
- the child or young person is unusually frightened of a parent or carer, or is afraid to go home
- the child or young person reports intentional injury by their parent or carer
- arms and legs are kept covered by inappropriate clothing in warm conditions
- ingestion of poisonous substances including alcohol or drugs
- avoidance of physical contact by the child (particularly with a parent or carer)

***Sexual abuse:***

- sexualised behaviours inappropriate to their age (including sexually touching other children and themselves)
- knowledge of sexual behaviour inappropriate to their years
- disclosure of abuse either directly or indirectly through drawings, play or writing that describes abuse
- pain or bleeding in the anal or genital area with redness or swelling
- fear of being alone with a particular person
- child or young person implies that he/she is required to keep secrets
- presence of sexually transmitted disease
- sudden unexplained fears
- enuresis and/or encopresis (bed-wetting and bed soiling)

***Emotional or Psychological abuse:***

- the parent or carer constantly criticises, threatens, belittles, insults, or rejects the child or young person with no evidence of love, support, or guidance
- the child or young person exhibits extremes in behaviour from overly aggressive to overly passive
- delayed physical, emotional, or intellectual development
- compulsive lying and stealing
- high levels of anxiety
- lack of trust in people
- feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves
- eating hungrily or hardly at all
- uncharacteristic seeking of attention or affection
- reluctance to go home
- rocking, sucking thumbs or self-harming behaviour
- fearfulness when approached by a person known to them

***Neglect:***

- signs of malnutrition, begging, stealing or hoarding food
- poor hygiene: matted hair, dirty skin or severe body odor
- unattended physical or medical problems
- the child or young person states that no one is home to provide care (inadequate supervision, failure to ensure safety)

- child or young person appears constantly tired
- frequent lateness or absence from school.
- inappropriate clothing, especially inadequate clothing in winter
- alcohol and/or drug abuse present in the household
- frequent illness, low grade infections or sores
- hunger

### **Myths about Child Abuse and its Prevalence:**

An accurate understanding of the dynamics underlying child abuse is important because the impact of any form of abuse on the victim can be life changing. Common outcomes associated with abuse include drug abuse, suicide, eating disorders, low self-esteem, psychosomatic illness and self-mutilation.

There are many myths about sexual abuse. Some of the common ones are:

- sex between children and adults is not damaging if it is in the context of a loving relationship;
- it is not the abuse which causes the problem but the effects of the intervention by others;
- those abused turn into abusers;
- children frequently lie about sexual abuse;
- sexual abuse is more common in lower socio-economic areas and families;
- only men sexually abuse children;
- sexual abusers are readily identified by 'normal' people.

The following myths pertaining to sexual and other forms of abuse relate particularly to schools:

- there will not be a problem here because all the volunteers/employees are female;
- there will not be a problem here because the young people come from privileged backgrounds and will complain if there is an issue of abuse;
- if we get the selection procedures right we will eliminate the possibility of abuse;
- we use Police Clearances and Working with Children Checks here so we are covered;
- it is one of the other children's parents/brothers/sisters to whom I am entrusting the child/ren, so it will be OK;
- we did not need to screen Mr Smith because he is a friend of the teacher, Board Chair, etc.;
- my workers, volunteers and casuals are youth themselves so there is no risk;
- we are pretty good at identifying people here who are a bit 'odd'.

### **The Facts about Child Abuse**

Children or young people are more often abused by a parent or carer. Adults who were abused as children are at greater risk of developing psychological and emotional problems later in life, and repeating the pattern of abuse with their own children.

A child abuser can be a member of the family (father, step-father, mother, etc.) or someone close to the family or the child (church member, teacher, community group leader). A child abuser usually spends a lot of time grooming the child, with the child being made to feel that they are in some way complicit in the acts, thus making disclosure a difficult process.

On the whole, abusers are the least obvious people in our community. Many child sex abusers, for example, hold positions of trust within the community with easy access to children and their families. Occupations that some convicted child sex offenders have held include bus driver, entertainer, teacher, scout leader, librarian, principal, church leader, judge.

In Australia, a case of child abuse is reported every 2.5 minutes.

Sexual abuse is more common among girls; other types of abuse are slightly more common among boys (Child Protection, Australia (2010 – 11), Australian Institute of Health and Welfare).

Two-thirds of substantiations for abuse or neglect are for children aged 9 years old and under [Child Protection, Australia (2010 – 11), Australian Institute of Health and Welfare].

### 3. MANDATORY REPORTING OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE:

#### 3.1 The Legislation:

Since 1 January 2009, the *Children and Community Services Amendment (Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children) Act 2008* has been in effect and covers mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse in Western Australia. This amendment forms part of the *Children and Community Services Act 2004*.

In Western Australia, the mandatory reporters of child sexual abuse are the following professions in both the government and non-government sectors:

- doctors
- nurses
- midwives
- teachers
- police officers
- boarding supervisors

#### 3.2 Definitions:

##### Definition of a teacher:

The definition of teacher in section 124A of the Children and Community Services Amendment (Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children) Act 2008 has been changed to read:

‘A person who is registered under the Teacher Registration Act 2012’

***Please note that at SJGS, once a teacher has formed a belief based on reasonable grounds, they are required to make the report to DCPFS through the Mandatory Reporting Service, not to the School Principal. Prior to forming a belief, a teacher may, if they wish, consult with colleagues with specialist knowledge, for example, the Principal or School Social Worker.***

##### Definition of sexual abuse:

Sexual abuse is defined by the Act in section 124A as:

‘Sexual abuse’ in relation to a child, includes sexual behaviour in circumstances where:

- a) The child is the subject of bribery, coercion, a threat, exploitation or violence; or
- b) The child has less power than another person involved in the behaviour; or
- c) There is a significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.

This legislation is not intended to capture all sexual activity involving children and young people. Reference should be made to consent laws in Western Australia.

##### Definition of child:

The definition of ‘child’ is defined in Section 3 of the Act as a person who is under the age of 18 years. In the absence of positive evidence as to age, a child is a person who is apparently under 18 years of age. Young people aged 18 and over are considered to be adults and are not covered by this legislation. However, schools still owe a duty of care to all students at the school. In these instances, police should be informed of any assault or crime against the young person.



### **3.3 When does a mandatory reporter make a report?**

Mandatory reporters must report a belief, based on reasonable grounds in the course of their work, paid or unpaid, that child sexual abuse has occurred or is occurring. This means that teachers working outside of the SJGS grounds are also required to report when working in either a paid or unpaid capacity. For example, tutoring, volunteer teacher at youth centre, working as a Sunday school teacher.

Failure to make a report can incur a penalty of up to \$6 000.

A mandatory reporter can form the necessary belief, based on reasonable grounds, by noting the presence of indicators, disclosures, injuries, signs, symptoms and behaviours that heighten concerns about child sexual abuse. Information on the indicators of sexual abuse is covered in Section 3 of this document.

Teachers may wish to consider the following questions to assist them in deciding if their belief is based on reasonable grounds:

- Can you describe the reasons why you believe a child has been, or is being sexually abused?
- What has the child said or done to suggest they are being sexual abused?
- Have you observed, or been told about, the presence of any of the 'possible indicators' of sexual abuse?
- Did the child disclose sexual abuse? What did they say happened? Who did they disclose to and when?
- What other behaviours have you observed and/or interactions with the child are of concern to you? What is the frequency and severity of the behaviour? How long has it been occurring?

### **3.4 How does a mandatory reporter make a report?**

A centralised Mandatory Reporting Service has been established to receive all reports of child sexual abuse in Western Australia. This service is operational 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

There are two ways to make a report - verbal or written.

A verbal report is preferred in the first instance, particularly if the teacher has formed a belief that the child is still at risk of being abused, as it allows the Mandatory Reporting Service to respond quickly, ask clarifying questions and gather as much information as possible. However, it must be followed by a written report as soon as is practicable, usually within 24 hours. To make a verbal report, the Mandatory Reporting Service can be reached on 1800 708 704.

Failure to follow up a verbal report with a written report as soon as is practicable may result in a fine of \$3,000.00. A written report form can be downloaded from the mandatory reporting website [www.mandatoryreporting.dcp.wa.gov.au](http://www.mandatoryreporting.dcp.wa.gov.au).

If you do not have access to a computer, the form can also be mailed out to you. Once you have completed your written report, it can be returned using any of the following methods:

Email to: [mrs@dcp.wa.gov.au](mailto:mrs@dcp.wa.gov.au)  
Fax to: 1800 610 614  
Post to: PO Box 8146  
Perth BC WA 6849

Once you have lodged a report, you will receive a standardised letter. This letter is proof that you have made a report so it is important that you keep it.

Once the report has been lodged, the Mandatory Reporting Service will assess the immediate risk to the child, and determine the need for further child protection assessment

and investigation. A copy of the report is sent to the WA Police. The police determine if they need to be involved on a case by case basis.

The mandatory reporter will receive a feedback letter advising them of the DCPFS District Office it has been referred to, or whether no further action was recommended by the Mandatory Reporting Service.

### 3.5 Confidentiality and Legal Protection:

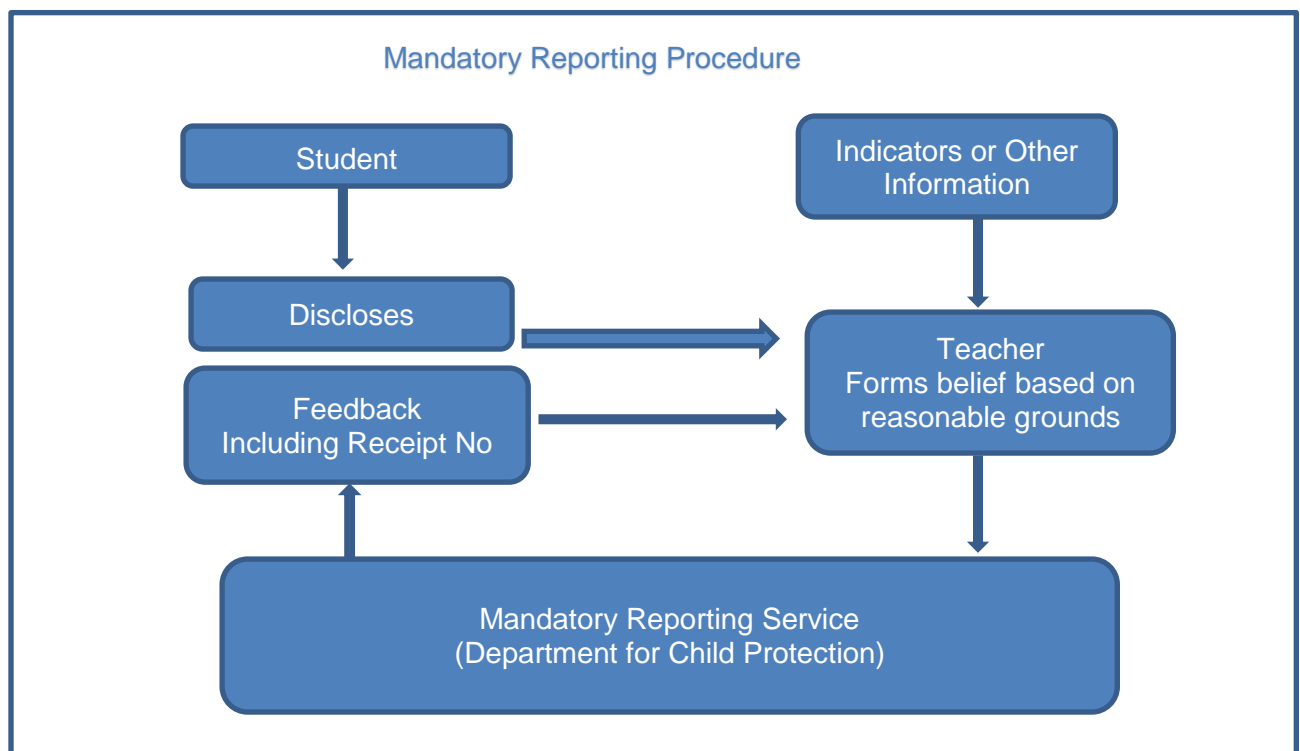
The identity of the reporter is required to be kept confidential, except in limited circumstances. Section 124F (2) protects a reporter's identity from being disclosed. Disclosure of a reporter's identity carries a maximum fine of \$24,000.00 and 2 years imprisonment.

There are exceptions where a reporter's identity is permitted. Even where disclosure is allowed, consideration will be given to ensuring the reporter's safety has been taken into account. Examples of when a reporter's identity may be revealed include:

- The Mandatory Reporting Service must send a copy of every written report to the WA Police;
- The WA Police may need to reveal a reporter's identity in order to investigate or prosecute a suspected offence;
- A Department for Child Protection and Family Services officer may need to reveal the reporter's identity when certain child protection, family law or adoption proceedings are taking place;
- The reporter may have provided written permission for their identity to be disclosed.

A mandated reporter who is normally governed by a code of confidentiality or secrecy, professional ethics, standards or principles of conduct (e.g. Doctor/patient) is protected from a breach to this code if they are making a report in good faith. The legislative requirements of the Act override internal school policies, professional codes or confidentiality requirements.

A mandated reporter is also protected from liability. If a report is made in good faith, they will not incur any civil or criminal liability by making a report.



Once a teacher has formed a belief based on reasonable grounds, they are required to make the report to DCPFS.

The flowchart on the previous page shows what the teacher must do once they have formed a belief. It does not include any consultation process with other SJGS staff. However; a consultation process with key SJGS staff may occur prior to the teacher forming a belief (eg Principal, Deputy Principal, Head of School and or Social Worker). If the teacher concerned wishes, the Principal and other relevant staff may be involved in discussions with the teacher in relation to a specific child, prior to the teacher forming a belief based on reasonable grounds.

**It is the teacher's responsibility to make the report directly to the Mandatory Reporting Service when the teacher forms a reasonable belief that sexual abuse has occurred, or is occurring.**

The Principal and other relevant staff are there to provide support, if required. SJGS's policy is that a teacher may advise the Principal of the report, but there is no obligation on the teacher to do so.

Teacher assistants, school chaplains and school social workers are examples of people who work with children in schools who are not mandated reporters. However, all people working with children, whether mandatory reporters or not, should continue to report reasonable beliefs and suspicions or concerns about all forms of abuse. These people who work with children also have a greater knowledge of the children in their care and can be included in the consultative process with the teacher in the case of sexual abuse.

Reports by those employees who are not mandated are made to the Principal (see flowchart on Page 19). In the case where it is believed the Principal may somehow be complicit or obstructionist, the report should be made to the Chair of the Governing Body.

### **3.6 Where to go for information and assistance:**

The Department for Child Protection and Family Services is the agency responsible for the legislation regarding the mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse. The Mandatory Reporting Service has been established by the Department to receive and investigate reports of sexual abuse.

The Department for Child Protection and Family Services has established a website [www.mandatoryreporting.dcp.wa.gov.au](http://www.mandatoryreporting.dcp.wa.gov.au). Information on this website includes frequently asked questions and a copy of the report to download.

The Mandatory Reporting Service can also be contacted through the following ways:

Telephone:	1800 708 704
Email:	<a href="mailto:mrs@dcp.wa.gov.au">mrs@dcp.wa.gov.au</a>
Fax:	1800 610 614
Post:	PO Box 8146, Perth BC, WA 6849

### **3.7 Cyber Predators:**

Although the main perpetrators of child abuse and neglect are people that the child knows the continuing popularity of the internet has given credence once more to the term 'Stranger Danger'.

The internet is one of the main sources of communication for young people today. The popularity of chat rooms, discussion groups and interactive games makes them a very attractive place for predators to go as they can remain virtually anonymous whilst participating in a range of paedophilic activity.

These quotes come from the Net Alert website:

*"...paedophiles can socialise together, trawl for inappropriate content (such as child pornography) and easily make collections of this and distribute to others.*

*They can pretend to be people other than themselves and they find a sense of security by operating from the confines of their own homes.*

*Grooming children online with the intention to meet them in real life is an activity many undertake.*

*They often set up bogus email accounts and handles (a nickname for a person who uses the Internet) which protect their identity online.*

*Children need to think carefully about a handle they choose. Handles such as \*Angel-Babe\*, \*Sweet-Sixteen\* and \*Sexy Kid\* appear harmless on the outset, however can attract the wrong attention. Paedophiles are often attracted to people with these types of names.*

*Paedophiles can also erase the history of what they have done online from their personal computers, making it a lengthy and difficult task for authorities to charge them with an offence.*

*Paedophiles conduct numerous activities online, including:*

- Swapping child pornographic pictures in chat rooms or through email or P2P networks;*
- Swapping children's personal information;*
- Participating in online communities with the intention to groom children for personal sexual gratification or to meet them in person;*
- Forming networks with other paedophiles;*
- Trading techniques on how to avoid the authorities."*

The WA Police, in conjunction with AISWA, the Department of Education and the Catholic Education Office have formed the Internet Safety Working Party. The aim of the working party is to implement strategies through schools and community networks to educate children and parents on safe internet behaviours.

The *Criminal Code Amendment (Cyber Predators) Act 2006* is the legislation in Western Australia that protects children under the age of 16, or that the offender believes is under the age of 16, from an adult who uses electronic communications with the intent to procure the child to engage in sexual activity; or to expose the child to any indecent matter.

### **3.8 Grounds for belief that the child has been sexually abused:**

Mandatory reporters must specify the grounds on which they formed the belief that a child has been, or is being, sexually abused. It is important to provide as much detailed information as possible, including:

- what the child has said or done to suggest they are being sexually abused
- if the child has disclosed abuse, what they said happened and who they disclosed to and when
- a description of any behaviours/interactions with the child that are of concern, including frequency and severity of behaviours
- whether the child has any injury, or medical needs.

Information that must be provided, if known:

- The child's date of birth.
- The child's current address.
- The names of the child's parents or other responsible persons.

### **3.9 Responding to a disclosure:**

It is critical that a mandatory reporter is sensitive to a child or young person who makes a disclosure of child sexual abuse.

Mandatory reporters will:

- Listen to the child and let them tell their story.
- Believe him/her and reassure the child that telling an adult was the right thing to do.
- Comfort the child if he/she is distressed, without making any promises.

- Avoid making the child repeat their story/disclosure to another person in their organisation.
- Write down what the child says and any relevant observations.
- Not confront the person alleged by the child to be responsible for the abuse.
- Not ask leading questions.
- Not interview or investigate the allegation, as this is the role of trained professionals.
- Make a report to the Mandatory Reporting Service as soon as practicable.

### **3.10 Reciprocal Child Protection Procedures and the Interagency Collaborative Framework for Protecting Children:**

The [Interagency Collaborative Framework for Protecting Children](#) and the [Reciprocal Child Protection Procedures](#) have been developed to strengthen collaboration and partnerships between communities, agencies and government departments to protect children from harm. These arrangements are supported by legislative provisions that protect people who make reports to help strengthen information sharing.

The roles and responsibilities of the following agencies are documented in the Framework.

- Department for Community Development (now the Department for Child Protection and Family Services and Department for Communities)
- Department of Education
- Department of Education Services
- Department of Health, including Office of Aboriginal Health
- Department of Justice
- Disability Services Commission
- WA Police Service
- Community Services
- Ethnic Communities Council of WA

The Reciprocal Child Reporting Procedures agreement between government agencies (covering Health and hospitals, Education - including Education Services, Police, Department for Child Protection and Family Services, etc.) requires DES, if made aware of any incidents of child abuse, (eg by parents or teachers at non-government schools) to report it to DCPFS or police, as appropriate. This does not mean that schools should not exercise their own responsibility to report to DCPFS or Police; but if the Minister for Education or DES is included in any part of the information flow, they would report it as well. See for more information.

[www.community.wa.gov.au/DCP/Resources/Child+Protection/The\\_WA\\_approach.htm](http://www.community.wa.gov.au/DCP/Resources/Child+Protection/The_WA_approach.htm).

#### **The role of the Department for Child Protection and Family Services and WA Police:**

**Teachers are required by law to make reports when they have a reasonable belief that sexual abuse is occurring or has occurred. For other forms of child abuse, mandatory reporting is not a requirement, however, schools have a duty of care and a moral obligation to follow the recommended procedures in cases of suspected child abuse.**

The *Department for Child Protection and Family Support (DCPFS)* is the government department with the statutory authority to investigate concerns in Western Australia. It is not the school's role to investigate child maltreatment issues, including concerns of sexual abuse. That is the DCPFS's responsibility. All disclosures or strong concerns of abuse or neglect should be reported to DCPFS by the Principal or teacher. DCPFS will then decide on how to proceed. See sections 6 and 11 of this document for detailed information on reporting procedures.

The *Western Australian Police* also have a role in responding to allegations of child abuse and neglect. The WA Police Service Child Abuse Investigation Unit (CAIT) intervene in instances where it is believed that a criminal offence has occurred which may lead to criminal charges being laid. In the case of a report of child sexual abuse, DCPFS will forward all reports to the WA Police.

Where abuse and neglect has occurred within a family and there is the possibility of criminal charges being laid, the police and the DCPFS may undertake a joint investigation to reduce the trauma of the interviewing process to the child or young person.

Under section 129 of the *Children's and Community Services Act 2004*, people who give information, in good faith, to the Department for Child Protection and Family Services are protected from incurring any civil or criminal liability, from having breached any confidentiality imposed by law, or from having breached any professional ethics or standards.

### **Department of Child Protection and Family Support (DCPFS)**

In cases of child sexual abuse the teacher will provide a written report to the Mandatory Reporting Service of DCPFS. The Mandatory Reporting Service will provide a standardised letter to the reporter outlining which DCPFS local office is involved, and what action has been taken. The Mandatory Reporting Service is required to forward all reports on to the WA Police.

For other forms of abuse, the Principal should report all disclosures or strong concerns to the DCPFS of abuse or neglect arising from the actions or inactions of parents/caregivers and maintain a written record of this communication and subsequent actions. The DCPFS will then decide how to proceed. The decision to progress the matter further is the responsibility of the DCPFS.

The DCPFS is required to provide feedback to people making reports on child abuse. The Principal should seek undertakings from the DCPFS that they will be kept informed within the bounds of confidentiality. The Principal's initial contact with the DCPFS will be through the Central Duty Team at the DCPFS on 1800 273 889 or by email to [cpduty@cpfs.wa.gov.au](mailto:cpduty@cpfs.wa.gov.au). All calls from school concerning students are taken very seriously and it may be appropriate if the emergency occurs after hours to explain to the switchboard operator that it is an emergency so they can speak to the Duty Officer promptly. When reporting to the Duty Officer, note his/her name and position.

*Note: The Mandatory Reporting Service and the Central Duty Team can also be used initially in a consultative role if either the Principal or the teacher is unsure of what action to take.*

The school should be aware that the powers of the DCPFS under the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* include:

- **Apprehension of children in need of care and protection** (without warrant)
- **Interviewing the child:** DCPFS has the authority to interview the child at school before contact is made with the parent/caregiver. Before doing so, the Principal or 'person in charge' at the school must be notified. The child should have the option of having support at the interview from a staff member of their choosing.
- **Removal of children from the school:** DCPFS officers may remove a child from the school if they have the permission of the parent/caregiver or if they have apprehended the child. The Principal should satisfy themselves that all conditions have been met before this occurs and document all conversations.
- **Medical examination:** DCPFS may require that a medical examination occur as soon as possible so that bruising, marking and other symptoms can be recorded for future reference. This would normally take place at either PMH or the Community Child Health Services Centres. This examination can only take place if permission has been obtained from the parent/caregiver or the child has been apprehended (when parent/carer permission is not obtained).
- **Parents/Caregivers** To avoid interfering with any investigative process initiated by DCPFS or the Police, the Principal and teacher must seek advice from DCPFS or Police prior to informing the parent/carer of a concern of abuse or neglect.

## **4. GROOMING BEHAVIOUR**

The Department of Education Services (DES) defines critical incidents as incidents in schools which include:



- circumstances that pose a critical risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of one or more students or staff;
- incidents requiring school closure, lockdown, or reduction of number of students or staff attending;
- death or life-threatening injury of a student or staff member at school, following an incident that occurred while being educated, or through a related school-based activity or circumstance;
- receipt of an allegation of child abuse, including but not limited to sexual abuse, against a student by a staff member or student or other person, whether the abuse is alleged to have occurred recently or in the past;
- issuing a formal warning to a staff member or ceasing the employment of a staff member for breach of the staff Code of Conduct suspected to be grooming behaviour.

**Note:** Notification requirement - Non-government school Principals are required to notify the Director General of DES of any critical and/or emergency school incidents as soon as practicable and, in any event, within 48 hours of the incident. The Critical incident report form is to be completed and emailed to: [criticalincidents@des.wa.gov.au](mailto:criticalincidents@des.wa.gov.au) . The Principal notifies the governing body of all critical or emergency incidents.

Grooming in a child protection context refers to deliberate actions undertaken to engage in sexual activity with a child. It differs from sexual abuse in that it is primarily a preparatory activity occurring before abuse occurs, but is continued during and after the abuse to ensure the safety of the groomer.

Grooming is a subtle, gradual, and escalating process of building trust with a child and those around the child, both children and adults, with the express purpose of the sexual gratification of the perpetrator and generally involves engaging in sexual activity with the child. It is deliberate and purposeful and occurs both before and after the abuse. Abusers may groom children and supporting adults for weeks, months, or even years before any sexual abuse actually takes place. The grooming may occur in person or via cyber media.

In the early stage, a committed offender will employ grooming behaviour and because it is so subtle and gradual the child may not be aware of the actual abuse when it occurs and that it is wrong or harmful. The grooming occurs not only with the child but also with those supporting networks around the child which might act as a deterrent or protective element. The perpetrator will invest significant energy and patience to minimise the risk of detection and exposure.

The groomer will employ manipulation, guilt, shame, bribery, coercion or exploit low self-esteem to psychologically manipulate the child and as a result the child becomes increasingly dependent on the groomer and increasingly alienated from protective elements including possible sources to disclose to. Plausible deniability is part of the strategy that the groomer employs to ensure that staff don't take seriously the possible disclosures of a child. This is a deliberate strategy employed to maintain the secrecy of the abuse, so that the abuse is concealed and to ensure the silence of the child.

The groomer will exploit vulnerabilities of the protective elements around the child, including parents and family circumstances, organisational and systemic weaknesses. Groomers are very adept at identifying anomalies, boundary ambiguities, and the lack of systemic awareness; at deflecting attention from their own actions and intentions.

Grooming behaviour with children may include, but is not limited to:

- selecting, befriending a child and gaining his or her trust, exploiting the child's vulnerabilities;
- testing a child's boundaries through telling inappropriate jokes, roughhousing, backrubs, tickling, or sexual games;
- moving from non-sexual touching to "accidental" sexual touching. This typically happens during play so the child may not even identify it as purposeful, inappropriate touching. It is often done slowly so the child is gradually desensitised to the touch;

- manipulating the child to not tell anyone about what is happening. The abuser may use a child's fear, embarrassment, or guilt about what has happened. Sometimes, the abuser uses bribery, threats, or coercion;
- causing the child to feel responsible for the abuse. Children may not notice or may become confused as the contact becomes increasingly intimate and sexual.

Grooming behaviour with adolescents may include additional strategies, such as:

- identifying with the adolescent. The abuser may appear to be the only one who understands him/her;
- displaying common interests in sports, music, movies, video games, television shows, etc;
- recognising and filling the adolescent's need for affection and attention;
- giving gifts or special privileges to the adolescent;
- allowing or encouraging the adolescent to break rules (e.g. smoking, drinking, using drugs, viewing pornography);
- communicating with the adolescent outside of the person's role (e.g. teacher, or coach). This could include, for example, texting or emailing the child without the parents' knowledge.

In addition to grooming the child, the groomer will use deflection strategies to remain unchallenged. Some of these strategies may include where the perpetrator:

- promotes self and creates a reputation as caring, child-loving, competent, available, trustworthy, truthful;
- raises doubts about the motives, mental health, reliability of the child or anyone else who might approach support services with allegations;
- fosters dependency as someone the family can rely on; and
- positively represents child to others so, as to be perceived as someone who would never harm the child.

### **Preventing or Interrupting the Grooming process**

Schools, unfortunately, provide a vast array of opportunities for groomers to enact the grooming process. Some abusers have a particular preference for children within particular age bands and some studies have shown that groomers will take child-focused employment primarily to gain access to a particular cohort of children.

Within an organisational context, holding all staff members accountable to the SJGS's Staff Code of Conduct and challenging boundary crossings and violations is one of the most accessible strategies to combat grooming behaviour.

Employees, other professionals and volunteers, and others, must have very clear understandings of the expectations around interactions with students and processes for reporting concerning behaviours. Where an employee is investigated for behaviours considered to be grooming, school authorities are obligated to report this to both the Director General of DES and the TRBWA (Standard 9), as is required for any occurrence of what is deemed as a 'critical incident'.

### **Reporting Grooming Behaviour**

Non-government school Principals are required to notify the Director General of DES of the issuing of a formal warning to a staff member or ceasing the employment of a staff member for breach of the staff Code of Conduct suspected to be grooming behaviour as soon as practicable and, in any event, within 48 hours of the incident. The Critical Incident report form is to be completed and emailed to: [criticalincidents@des.wa.gov.au](mailto:criticalincidents@des.wa.gov.au) The Principal notifies the governing body of all critical or emergency incidents.

See the flowchart on the page 18 for a description of the process to follow for a staff member who has formed a belief based on reasonable grounds that a child is the subject of grooming behaviour by a staff member.



## Recruitment Practices

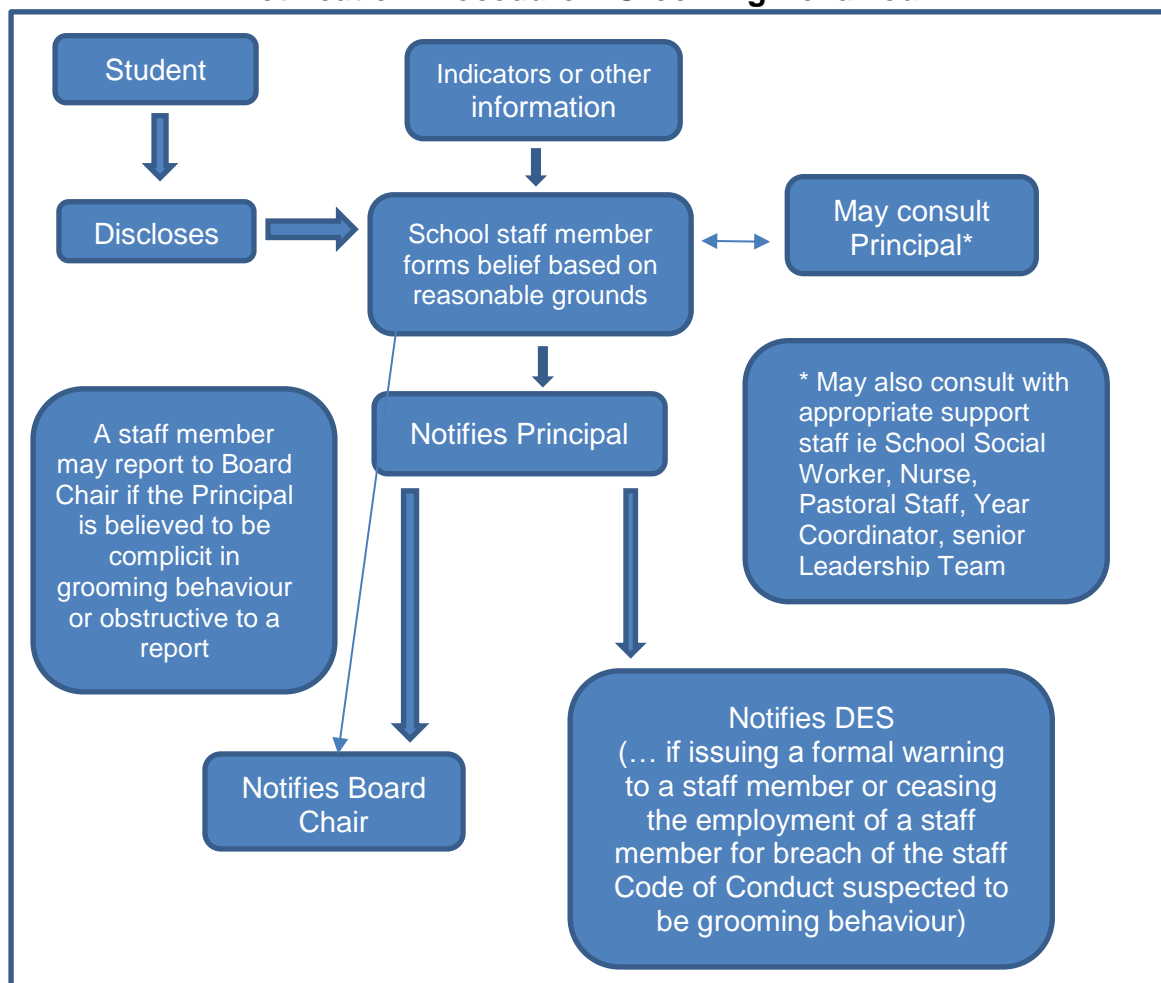
SJGS seeks to deflect and deter from employment at SJGS anyone who would undertake deliberate actions to engage in sexual activity with a child.

All workers, including paid staff and volunteers, are carefully selected using a recruitment strategy that includes multiple checks. Measures taken include:

- advertised duty statements include the following statement: *"Serpentine Jarrahdale Grammar School-prioritises the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment."*
- multi-person interview panel
- transparent short-listing process
- inclusion of 'safeguarding questions' in standardised list of questions at interview
- standardised reference checks
- qualification verification
- Working With Children Check
- National Police Check

Staff and volunteers participate in a structured induction process which includes training, advice and ongoing support in relation to child safe policies and day-to-day child safe practices in the workplace.

### Notification Procedure – Grooming Behaviour



## 5. PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING ALLEGED PHYSICAL AND/OR EMOTIONAL ABUSE OR NEGLECT:

### 5.1 Summary of Procedure:

#### Underlying Principles:

- a) The Principal has ultimate authority and responsibility for both enacting and ensuring that there is strict adherence to this Policy.
- b) It is not the role of the teacher to investigate child abuse or neglect matters. Teachers must report concerns to the Principal, or the Board Chair if it is not appropriate to discuss with the Principal.
- c) The Teacher and the Principal, may wish to consult with the Deputy Principal, Head of School and/or School Social Worker. Confidentiality is paramount and disclosure of information should only be disclosed in SJGS with those that need to know.

#### Procedures for alleged physical and/or emotional abuse or neglect:

**Note:** *If a student's welfare would likely be compromised as a result of the following procedures, the procedures may be varied, as is appropriate.*

Staff will report, verbally or in writing, to the Principal:

- a) student disclosure of alleged physical and/or emotional abuse or neglect from someone with a responsibility to care for the student;
- b) a student showing signs of potential physical and/or emotional abuse or neglect from someone with a responsibility to care for the student;

Upon receipt of such a report, the Principal will choose to consult with the Deputy Principal, Head of School and or School Social Worker (and then initiate appropriate action, possibly including:

- contacting the parents;
- implementing behaviour management strategies;
- establishing a case management process;
- reporting to the Department of Child Protection and Family Support;
- reporting to the police; and
- reporting to the Chair of the Governing Body.

In certain circumstances, it may be more appropriate for the Principal to initiate actions prior to consultation with other staff at SJGS. In those circumstances, the necessary staff will be notified after action has been initiated.

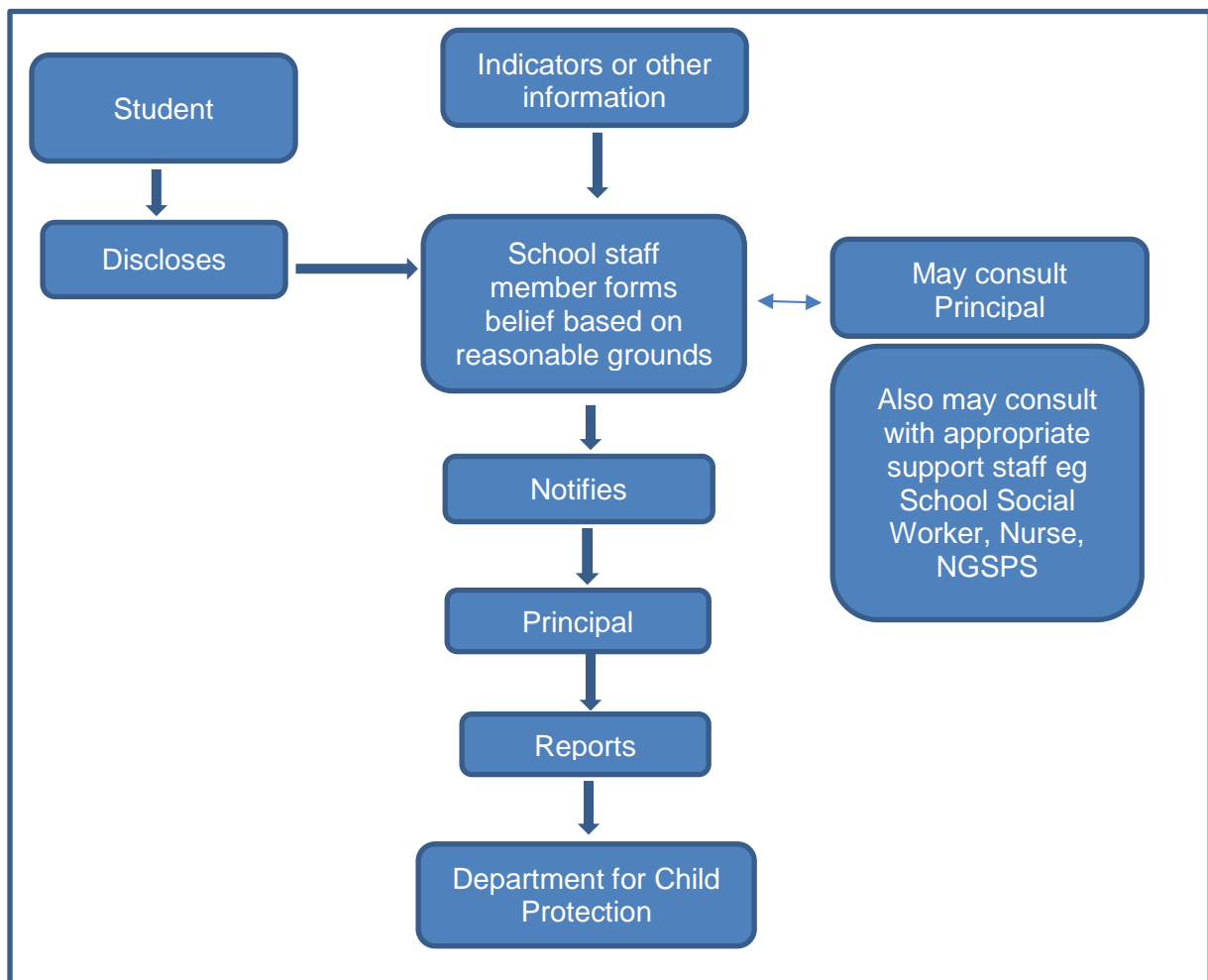
The Principal will undertake further action in consultation with parents/caregivers, appropriate personnel and/or agencies.

Privacy and confidentiality are paramount to maintain the integrity of the process and to allow all stakeholders to maintain their dignity while working through the issues. **However, a student's request for no action to be taken, even when the student has disclosed allegations of physical and/or emotional abuse or neglect, cannot be acceded to. A staff member advised of such allegations is duty bound to take action.**

Instances involving allegations against the Principal will be reported, verbally or in writing, directly to the Chair of the Governing Body.

The flowchart on the following page describes the notification procedure for other forms of child abuse/neglect, including those who are NOT mandatory reporters.

## Notification Procedure – Child Abuse and Neglect (Non-Mandatory Report)



**NOTE:** Those who are NOT mandatory reporters (eg Education Assistants, Teacher Assistants, School Social Workers, Administration & Support Staff etc.) would also follow this procedure in the flowchart above for child sexual abuse (ie they report to the Principal and the Principal reports to DCPFS).

### 5.2 Responsibilities of the Principal:

#### General:

Non-government school Principals are required to notify the Director General of DES of receipt of an allegation of child abuse, including but not limited to sexual abuse, against a student by a staff member or student or other person, whether the abuse is alleged to have occurred recently or in the past, as soon as practicable and, in any event, within 48 hours of the incident. The Critical Incident Form is to be completed and emailed to:

[criticalincidents@des.wa.gov.au](mailto:criticalincidents@des.wa.gov.au)

The Principal will ensure that:

- procedures are in place to ensure that all employees and people working at SJGS gain awareness of their responsibility with respect to SJGS's procedures for reporting and recording incidents or issues of student protection;
- procedures are in place for the recognition, notification and support of students who are at risk or are victims of physical and/or emotional neglect or abuse. These procedures address the range of situations described in this policy document including where SJGS staff are alleged to have maltreated or assaulted students;
- staff are aware that they cannot accede to a student's demands for confidentiality or requests that parents, police or other agencies not be informed when the welfare or safety of the student or other students may be threatened.

- all concerns, based on reasonable grounds, for the welfare of students believed to be maltreated will be discussed with the Department of Child Protection and Family Support or the police;
- all staff at SJGS will have appropriate Working with Children Check (WWC), police clearances and teaching staff are registered with the Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia (TRBWA);
- the SJGS staff provides a curriculum ('Keeping Safe' Curriculum) that teaches all students appropriate protective behaviours; and
- victims of physical and/or emotional abuse and neglect are supported within SJGS through an appropriate management plan.

#### **Reporting:**

##### **Department of Child Protection and Family Support:**

The Principal will report immediately to the Department of Child Protection and Family Support (DCPFS) disclosures or concerns based on reasonable grounds of suspected physical and/or emotional abuse and neglect. The Principal will maintain a written record of this communication and subsequent actions in a separate file kept securely in the Principal's office. The Principal will work with DCPFS to ensure the best outcome for the student from the investigation of the concerns, and plan for the student's continuing needs in the SJGS environment.

DCPFS guidelines require that people making reports of student maltreatment are given feedback on the actions taken or to be taken. The Principal will seek an undertaking from the DCPFS that he/she will be kept informed, within the bounds of confidentiality.

DCPFS has authority and powers, under the *Children and Community Services Act (2004)*

##### **Police:**

The Principal, in addition to or in lieu of contacting the DCPFS, advise Police via 131 444 (not to local police) of concerns based on reasonable grounds and disclosures of alleged abuse.

##### **Parents/Caregivers:**

The Principal will usually report all strong concerns and disclosures of alleged abuse and neglect to parents/caregivers subject to the legal provisions.

#### **5.3 Responsibilities of SJGS Staff:**

SJGS staff have a responsibility to act if concerned, or armed with knowledge, that abuse or neglect may be occurring. These concerns must not be the subject of general staffroom discussion or gossip of any kind. Inappropriate disclosures will subject those involved to disciplinary action as part of their contractual relationship with SJGS and expose them to (among other things) defamation proceedings.

The staff member who has contact with students with disabilities must be sensitive to the particular vulnerability of these students, and be acutely aware of indicators of student abuse and neglect and of a student's attempts to disclose abuse. (See Student Protection Guidelines document).

An assessment of a student's behaviour will be made in the context of a SJGS staff member's overall knowledge of the student, rather than in isolation.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is an illegal procedure in Western Australia irrespective of religious or cultural beliefs. In cases where students have experienced FGM or are identified as at risk of FGM, then action will be taken.

##### **Concerns Based on Reasonable Grounds or Indications or Disclosure:**

If a staff member has strong concerns of abuse or neglect, or if a student discloses abuse or neglect directly to a SJGS staff member or indirectly through a friend, the staff member will immediately inform the Principal. Staff must be aware of the immediate needs of students

making disclosures and will respond accordingly (See Student Protection Guidelines document).

For legal reasons, staff must ensure that anecdotal records and any written or verbal information regarding concerns or disclosures are documented and stored and regarded as strictly confidential and used in a professional manner consistent with this Policy.

*These will be lodged in the Principal's file. Access to this will be limited to the Principal and Deputy Principal.*

The staff member will not personally or in any way investigate or attempt to determine whether physical and/or emotional abuse or neglect has occurred. This is the role of the DCPFS and/or the police.

**Concern but No Disclosure:**

The staff member who is concerned that physical and/or emotional abuse or neglect may be occurring will keep brief, written and dated records of their observations and concerns.

*These will be lodged in the Principal's file. Access to this will be limited to the Principal.*

The staff member will consult with the Deputy Principal, Head of School and/or Social Worker. The Principal will be informed of these concerns by either of the aforementioned members of staff.

The Principal will ensure the processes developed for use by non-teaching staff are used to report concerns.

**Care and Support:**

SJGS will use its best endeavours to support students who have disclosed, or about whom there is a concern. DCPFS staff are available to assist in designing the most appropriate school support program where necessary.

**Response to disclosure of abuse or neglect:**

If a student makes a disclosure of abuse or neglect staff should be aware of the immediate needs of the student and know what to do in these circumstances.

- Use 'protective interrupting' if students begin to disclose in class or in a public area to protect them from sharing the information with too many other people;
- Acknowledge that you have heard them and stop them from disclosing any further;
- Be supportive and gently indicate that they might tell you about it in a more private situation; and
- Quietly arrange to see them as soon as possible, in a situation away from other students.
- Establish clear limits on confidentiality by telling the child that a report will be made to a person who will be able to provide help and protection and that you will help them throughout the process;
- Put your own feelings aside and listen as if the information is not sensational;
- Provide reassurance that you believe them, that it is right to tell and do not think that they are to blame or make judgements about what has happened;
- Listen to students in a private location within SJGS;
- Be supportive and understanding;
- Be empathetic to student feelings;
- Acknowledge that it is difficult to talk about such things;
- Try to identify students' fears;
- Let students tell the event in their own words;
- If you are unable to answer all the questions of the child, it is OK to let them know;
- Once you have established that they have been harmed or are at risk of being harmed, do not pursue the conversation any further. This is important to ensure that questions cannot be raised later about possible manipulation of the disclosure;

- Allow students the option of support during any agency interview and reassure them of the availability of continuing support;
- Document the conversation that you have had remembering as accurately as you can, the words and phrases used by the child to describe what has happened to them;
- Document the disclosure and subsequent discussion and actions;
- Explain what will happen next; and
- Try and stay with the student after the disclosure to provide a sense of security until necessary steps have been taken to ensure the safety and support.

**Staff must be careful that they:**

- Don't push for details or conduct an investigation. Other agencies have this responsibility;
- Don't express judgment of the student, perpetrator or family;
- Don't get angry, upset or show shock;
- Don't ask questions that may make the child feel guilty or inadequate;
- Don't ask leading questions, for instance 'Did Daddy hit you?'
- Don't put words in students' mouths or interrogate as this could jeopardise the interviewing process of DCPFS and Police;
- Don't promise not to tell when there are clear limits on confidentiality;
- Never make false promises;
- Don't give a lecture about right and wrong;
- Don't say 'forget it', 'you'll get over it' or other such minimizing statements;
- Don't give excessive pity;
- Respect the confidentiality of the disclosure and do not share the information with anyone other than the Principal and either the Department for Child Protection and Family Services or the Police. This includes not engaging in general staffroom discussion about the disclosure.

Staff must be aware that a disclosure can arouse in them strong feelings of shock, anger and helplessness. It is important to try and control these feelings and work through them after the disclosure

**6. SELF-HARM:**

A SJGS staff member who is concerned that a student may be at risk of self-harm or suicide must act decisively to reduce this risk. The staff member must immediately inform the Principal. The Principal will consult with the Deputy Principal, Head of School and/or School Social Worker who will provide further support in implementing an action plan.

If SJGS personnel, using a risk assessment process, suspect potential risk they will consult with the SJGS Social Worker who will communicate with the Child and Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Youth Link or Princess Margaret Hospital or other appropriate agency and take the recommended action.

Contact with parents will occur as soon as possible, unless the above agencies expressly advise against it or it is considered not to be in the best interests of the student at that time. The Principal will consider carefully reasons not to inform parents/caregivers and document these reasons.

In situations where the suspected self-harm is triggered by physical and/or emotional abuse/sexual abuse from parents/caregivers, the Principal will follow Reporting Procedures as outlined in Sections 5 and 6.

The Principal will not determine whether students should receive specialist assessment. The role of the Principal is only to advise parents/caregivers and students that it is in their best interests to seek specialist assessment or support. The Principal cannot compel parents/caregivers to take this advice.

## 7. RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND AUTHORITY:

The following Acts can be viewed at [www.slp.wa.gov.au](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au)

- Children and Community Services Act 2004
- Children and Community Services Amendment (Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children) Act 2008
- Criminal Code Act (1913)
- Criminal Code Amendment (Cyber Predators) Act 2006
- (changes to s204B of The Criminal Code)
- Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004

The *Criminal Code Amendment (Cyber Predators) Act 2006* is the legislation in Western Australia that protects children under the age of 16, or that the offender believes is under the age of 16, from an adult who uses electronic communications with the intent to procure the child to engage in sexual activity; or to expose the child to any indecent matter.

### Where to go for further information:

The Department for Child Protection and Family Support is the state government department responsible for issues specifically related to the protection of children, including the handling of abuse and neglect cases. This website contains some excellent material for professionals, and parents and friends. Of particular interest is the information on 'Identifying and responding to child abuse and neglect – a guide for professionals'.

<http://www.community.wa.gov.au/>

The sexual abuse reports, the Mandatory Reporting Service must be contacted through one of the following means:

Telephone:	1800 708 704
Email:	<a href="mailto:mrs@dcp.wa.gov.au">mrs@dcp.wa.gov.au</a>
Fax:	1800 610 614
Post:	PO Box 8146 Perth BC WA 6849

This unit is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for make a report or to raise concerns.

Details regarding mandatory reporting can be obtained through

[www.mandatoryreporting.dcp.wa.gov.au](http://www.mandatoryreporting.dcp.wa.gov.au)

To contact DCPFS for assistance with a specific case that does not involve sexual abuse, the school will need to speak to the Central Duty Team on 1800 273 889 or by email [cpduty@cpfs.wa.gov.au](mailto:cpduty@cpfs.wa.gov.au)

### After hours

#### Child Abuse Services WA

9223 1111/1800 199 008

### Crisis Care

9223 1111/1800 199 008 (a 24 hour telephone service for people in crisis and needing urgent help)

### WA Dept of Education Services – Teacher-Student Professional Boundaries – A Resource for WA Teacher

This resource is available online from the TRBWA at [www.trb.wa.gov.au](http://www.trb.wa.gov.au)

### WA Police Service Child Abuse Investigation Unit:

If the matter is urgent and the safety of a child is at risk, call 000. If you are a victim of child abuse or paedophilia, or if you have information about someone else being abused, you should contact police on **131 444**. You can also report child abuse to the Child Protection

Squad on **9492 5444** or email them on [Child.Abuse.Investigation@police.wa.gov.au](mailto:Child.Abuse.Investigation@police.wa.gov.au) , or you can ring Crime Stoppers on **1800 333 000** or go to your local police station.

**WA Police Cyber Predator Team** can be contacted on 9492 5444 or complaints can be lodged on the WA Police Website [www.police.wa.gov.au](http://www.police.wa.gov.au)

The websites below contain information on cyber predators that for both parents, teachers and students may find informative.

[www.acma.gov.au](http://www.acma.gov.au)

[www.constablecare.org.au](http://www.constablecare.org.au)

[www.cybersmartkids.com.au](http://www.cybersmartkids.com.au)

[www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com](http://www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com)

[www.netaert.net.au](http://www.netaert.net.au)

**The National Association of the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN)**

NAPCAN is an Australian organisation that seeks to resource and network child welfare professionals and practitioners working to prevent child abuse and neglect from happening before it starts, through the provision of parenting brochures, training, support networks and information. [www.napcan.org.au](http://www.napcan.org.au)

**‘Keeping Safe’ Protective Behaviours Curriculum** is a preventative life skills program that assists people of all ages to develop the skills to help them deal with difficult or hostile situations. This curriculum is recommended by AISWA and AISWA staff are able to facilitate staff training within a school.

*The following support service is available for staff at schools who may experience personal issues resulting from making a report:*

Access Wellbeing Services

Offers an employee assistance program including counselling, management and referrals.

1300 66 77 00 (24/7)

[www.accesswellbeingservices.com.au](http://www.accesswellbeingservices.com.au)

*The following services and organisations can provide help, advice and support to the school, parents or children who are affected by the effects of abuse and to prevent abuse from recurring:*

**Department for Child Protection and Family Support:**

**Parenting Line:**

9272 1466/1800 654 432

**Family Helpline** is a free confidential telephone counselling and information service for families with relationship difficulties.

9223 1100/1800 643 000

**Men’s Domestic Violence Helpline** provides a free telephone, referral and counselling service for men to help them change their violent behaviour toward female partners.

9223 1199/1800 000 599

**Women’s Domestic Violence Helpline** provides a free 24 hour telephone support and counselling service for women experiencing family and domestic violence.

9223 1188/1800 007 339

**Child Health and Community Health Services**

Refer to the White Pages for contact details of local Child Health Centres

**Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services**

1800 220 400 – 24 hour mental health advice line



**Princess Margaret Hospital for Children**  
9340 8222

**State Child Development Centre**  
9481 2203

**Disability Services Commission**  
9426 9200/1800 998 214

**Kids Helpline** is a free and confidential telephone counselling service for 5 to 25 year olds in Australia available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.  
1800 551 800

**Sexual Assault Resource Centre Counselling Line** offers a free, 24 hour emergency service for people aged 13 or over who have been sexually assaulted or sexually abused recently (within the last two weeks).  
9340 1828/1800 199 888

**Lifeline Australia** offers a service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can provide information about other support services, if required. 13 11 14

Figure 1 on page 27 summarises SJGS's student notification steps outlined in this document.

#### **8. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:**

In order that SJGS staff are able to manage issues related to student protection, SJGS will provide ongoing professional development for SJGS staff.

The policy will be reviewed biennially by a review group representing the SJGS Social Worker, the senior pastoral staff in SJGS's Primary and Secondary Schools, and the SJGS Senior Leadership Team.

#### **Review History**

Year of Review	Review/Amendments	Approved By
June 2017	Deputy Principal	Senior Leadership Team
July 2017	Deputy Principal – changes to reporting CPFS	Senior Leadership Team

#### **Next Review**

Year	Reviewer
June 2019	Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

Figure 1: Student Protection Notification Steps Flow Chart

