

# Child Protection Policy

Authorisation Date: 02/2021

OSG Document Code: POL\_WA\_OP\_Child Protection Policy v1.3

Region: WA

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<b>OSG Document Code</b> POL_WA_OP_Child Protection Policy v1.3	<b>Authorisation Date</b> 02/2021	<b>Next Review Date</b> 12/2024
<b>Local Document Code</b> (if applicable) XXXXXXX	<b>Approval Authority</b> Region Board	<b>Document Author</b> Regional Principal
<b>Enquiries Contact:</b> admin.wa@au.oneschoolglobal.com	<b>Associated Documents</b> Professional Learning Policy Child Abduction Response Plan Guidelines Critical & Emergency Incidents Policy Mandatory Reporting Policy Staff Code of Conduct CPOMS OSGAware Complaints and Disputes Policy Complaints Procedure Flowchart for Parents & Students Parent Code of Conduct Policy Student Code of Conduct National Principles for Child Safe Organisations WA Children & Community Services Act 2004 OSG Global Consistent Governance of Child Protection OSG Global Child Protection Guidelines	

## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide written processes, to comply with accreditation requirements, for:

- a) how the school will respond to harm, or allegations of harm, to students under 18 years; and
- b) the appropriate conduct of the school's staff and students

## 2. SCOPE

Students and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements at OneSchool Global WA.

## 3. RATIONALE

The Trustees, staff and regular volunteers of OneSchool Global WA are committed to the protection of children and young people who are involved with any OneSchool Global WA program or related activities.

All staff employed by OneSchool Global WA are responsible for the care, safety and protection of children.

This responsibility extends to the identification and timely response to concerns regarding the possible sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect of a child.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

In Western Australia, the legislation covering mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse is the *Children and Community Services Act 2004*.

Department of Communities - Child Protection and Family Support ('The Department').

### 4.1 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.

#### 4.1.1 Physical

#### 4.1.2 Sexual

#### 4.1.3 Emotional including psychological

#### 4.1.4 Family and domestic abuse

#### 4.1.5 Neglect

### 4.2 Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect

#### 4.2.1 Physical abuse

4.2.1.1 broken bones or unexplained bruises, burns, or welts in various stages of healing

4.2.1.2 the child or young person is unable to explain an injury, or explanations given are inconsistent, vague or bizarre

4.2.1.3 direct admissions from the parents that they are concerned that they might harm their child

4.2.1.4 a history of family violence

4.2.1.5 marked delay between injury and obtaining medical assistance

4.2.1.6 parent who shows little concern about the welfare of their child or the treatment and care of the injury

4.2.1.7 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)

4.2.1.8 the child or young person is unusually frightened of a parent or carer, or is afraid to go home

4.2.1.9 the child or young person reports intentional injury by their parent or carer

4.2.1.10 arms and legs are kept covered by inappropriate clothing in warm conditions

4.2.1.11 ingestion of poisonous substances including alcohol or drugs

4.2.1.12 avoidance of physical contact by the child (particularly with a parent or carer)

#### 4.2.2 Sexual abuse

4.2.2.1 sexualised behaviours inappropriate to their age (including sexually touching other children and themselves)

4.2.2.2 knowledge of sexual behaviour inappropriate to their years

- 4.2.2.3 disclosure of abuse either directly or indirectly through drawings, play or writing that describes abuse
- 4.2.2.4 pain or bleeding in the anal or genital area with redness or swelling
- 4.2.2.5 fear of being alone with a particular person
- 4.2.2.6 child or young person implies that he/she is required to keep secrets
- 4.2.2.7 presence of sexually transmitted disease
- 4.2.2.8 sudden unexplained fears
- 4.2.2.9 enuresis and/or encopresis (bed-wetting and bed soiling)

#### 4.2.3 Emotional or Psychological abuse

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

#### 4.2.4 Neglect

- 4.2.4.1 signs of malnutrition, begging, stealing or hoarding food
- 4.2.4.2 poor hygiene: matted hair, dirty skin or severe body odour
- 4.2.4.3 unattended physical or medical problems
- 4.2.4.4 the child or young person states that no one is home to provide care (inadequate supervision, failure to ensure safety)
- 4.2.4.5 child or young person appears constantly tired
- 4.2.4.6 frequent lateness to school or absence from school
- 4.2.4.7 inappropriate clothing, especially inadequate clothing in winter
- 4.2.4.8 alcohol and/or drug abuse present in the household
- 4.2.4.9 frequent illness, low grade infections or sores
- 4.2.4.10 hunger

#### 4.2.5 Grooming Behaviour

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.

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

- a. selecting, befriending a child and gaining his or her trust, exploiting the child's vulnerabilities;
- b. testing a child's boundaries through telling inappropriate jokes, roughhousing, backrubs, tickling, or sexual games;
- c. 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 desensitized to the touch;
- d. 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;
- e. 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.

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

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

Although it is mandatory for teachers, any staff member or community member concerned about the welfare, safety, possible grooming or sexual abuse of a student should advise the Regional Principal. Employees at OneSchool Global WA, other professionals and volunteers must have very clear understandings of the expectations around interactions with students and processes for reporting concerning behaviours.

## 5. PROCEDURES

### 5.1 Making a Report

#### Step 1

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.

Once a teacher has formed a belief based on reasonable grounds, in the course of their work, that individual teacher is required to make a written report to The Department, not the Regional Principal. Prior to forming a belief, the teacher may, if they wish, consult with appropriate colleagues with specialist knowledge, for example, the principal, psychologist, school counsellor.

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 'Definitions' of this document.

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

- 5.1.1 Can you describe the reasons why you believe a child has been, or is being sexually abused?
- 5.1.2 What has the child said or done to suggest they are being sexually abused?
- 5.1.3 Have you observed, or been told about, the presence of any of the 'possible indicators' of sexual abuse?
- 5.1.4 Did the child disclose sexual abuse? What did they say happened? Who did they disclose to and when?
- 5.1.5 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?

This belief and the reasonable grounds for forming it should be reported to Child Protection Services as soon as practicable after forming the belief.

AND

after each occasion on which they become aware of any further grounds for the belief.

It is not permissible for a teacher to undertake any form of investigation such as taking photographs or conducting interviews. This is the role of The Department child protection specialists.

Staff cannot agree 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. Restrictions and reasons for breaches of confidentiality need to be overtly stated within the school.

Where a teacher has formed a belief that the child is at imminent risk of being abused, they should consider calling the Western Australian Police first, whether through the 000 or the 131444 numbers. This does not fulfil the legal obligation to report a child sexual abuse belief and the individual who has formed the belief should then make a Mandatory Report (MR).

## Step 2

It is essential that reports are managed in a caring, supporting and confidential manner and that the reporting teacher be supported. Written records should be kept.

The identity or information with potential to indicate the identity of, the notifying individual must remain confidential.

This information will be kept in the Principal's confidential Incident Register.

### Step 3

If there is uncertainty about the need for a mandatory report to Department for Communities - Child Protection and Family Support, the teacher or his/her delegate should contact the following for advice:

Department for Child Protection and Family Support) 1800 273 889 or email [cpduty@cpfs.wa.gov.au](mailto:cpduty@cpfs.wa.gov.au)

### Step 4

If after these confidential discussions, it is deemed necessary to make a mandatory report, the teacher can make a verbal report through The Department, or a written report. However, a verbal report must be followed by a written report in all cases.

### Step 5

After all the relevant authorities have been consulted with, referred to above in steps 1-4, it should then be decided who else, if anyone, should be informed. The need for confidentiality should be remembered at all times in the interest of the child and family. Only where the welfare of the child or the reporter will be affected should the matter be discussed with anyone else.

If, following a report, a family approaches the school, it is recommended that any interview or discussion be conducted with a minimum of two school staff members present. The focus of such a meeting should be on the welfare of the child, not on justifying the actions of the teacher/s involved.

This meeting must be documented.

### Step 6

Support for the reporting teacher/s and the student who is the cause for concern and anyone else affected should be arranged. Support should continue to be provided if necessary, as the role of the teacher with the student and The Department may be ongoing.

## 5.2 Professional Learning

All staff at OneSchool Global WA are to undertake annual professional learning on the recognition of grooming and child abuse and appropriate prevention practices and strategies through CPOMS and AISWA Mandatory Reporting training.

## 5.3 Breach of the Staff Code of Conduct

The governing body ensures that actual breaches of the Staff Code of Conduct, where there are reasonable grounds to suspect grooming, are reported to the Director General using the Critical and Emergency Incident Report form available at <https://www.education.wa.edu.au/ongoing-obligations>.

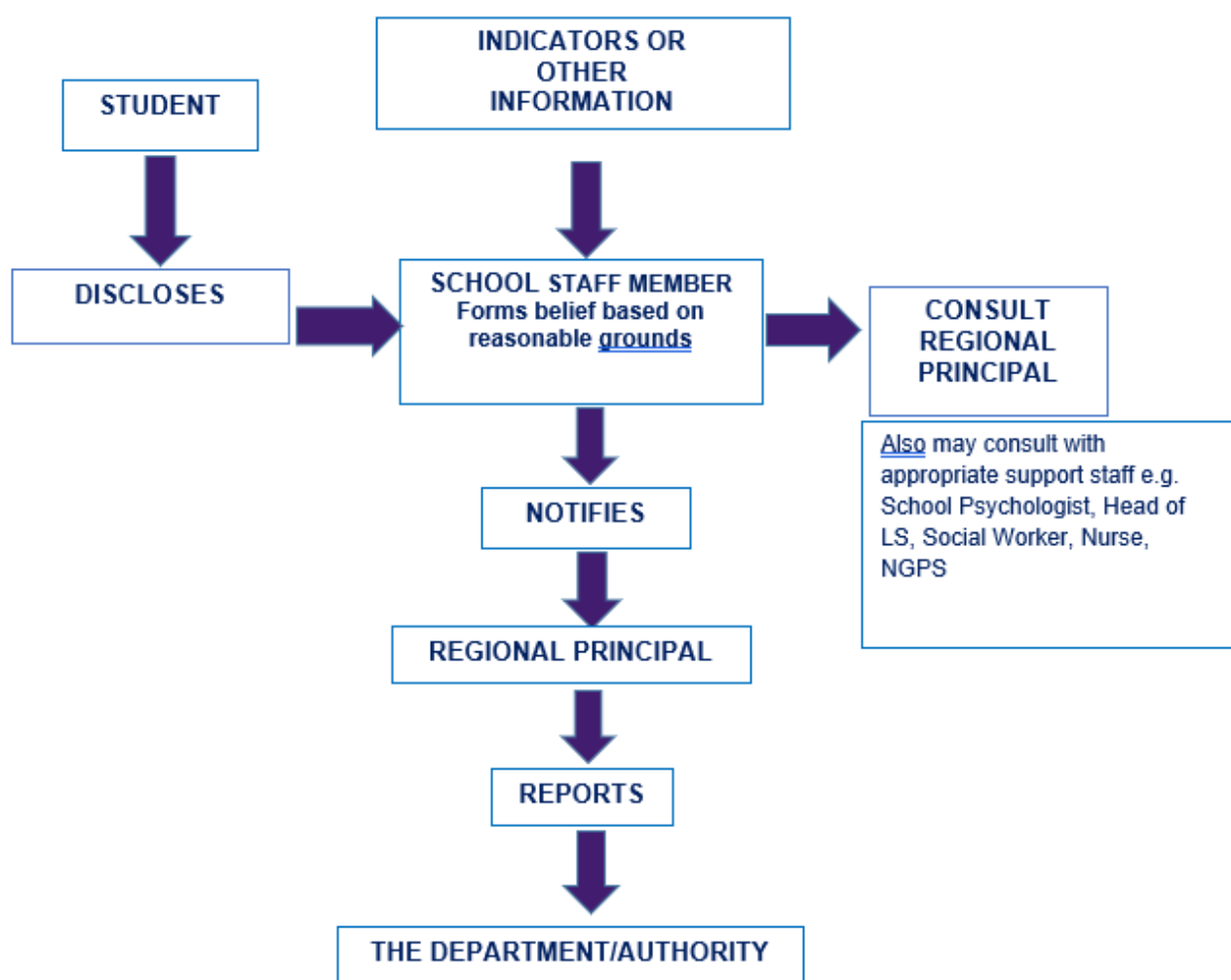
## 5.4 Allegations – Current or Former Staff

In the case of an allegation of grooming or child abuse by current or former staff, the complainant is informed about the services, including advocacy and support services, which may be available.

Responsibility	Role
Project Sponsor	COO
Project Owner	Regional Principals + Nominated NLT
Project Admin	Nominated EA
Contextualization	Regional Principal* + Nominated NLT
Training the trainers	Regional Principals* + GDE
Program Delivery	Nominated Campus trainer(s)
Program consistency	Campus Principals

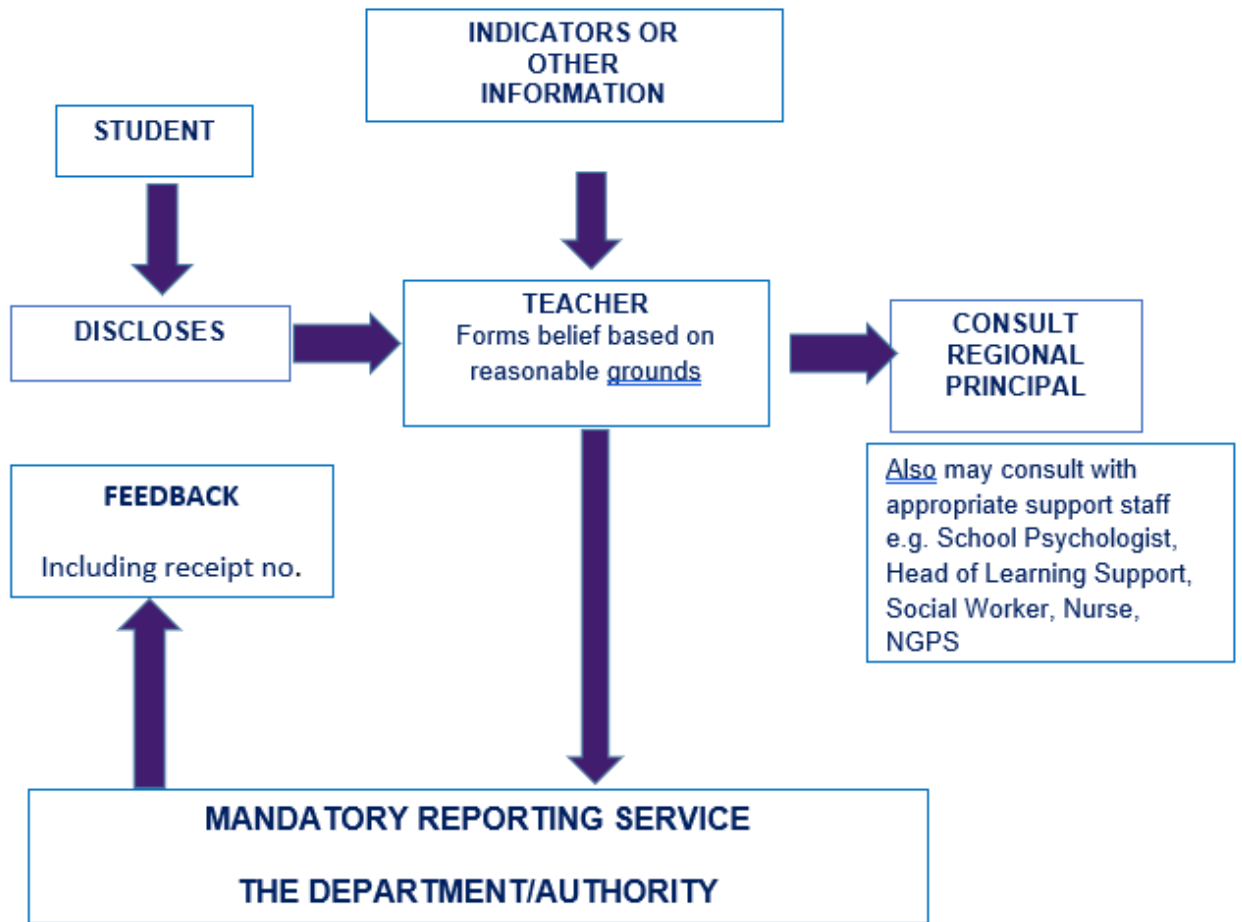
\* or nominated member of Senior Regional Professional Team

### Reporting Flow Chart for Reporting of Abuse and Neglect (Non-Mandatory Report)

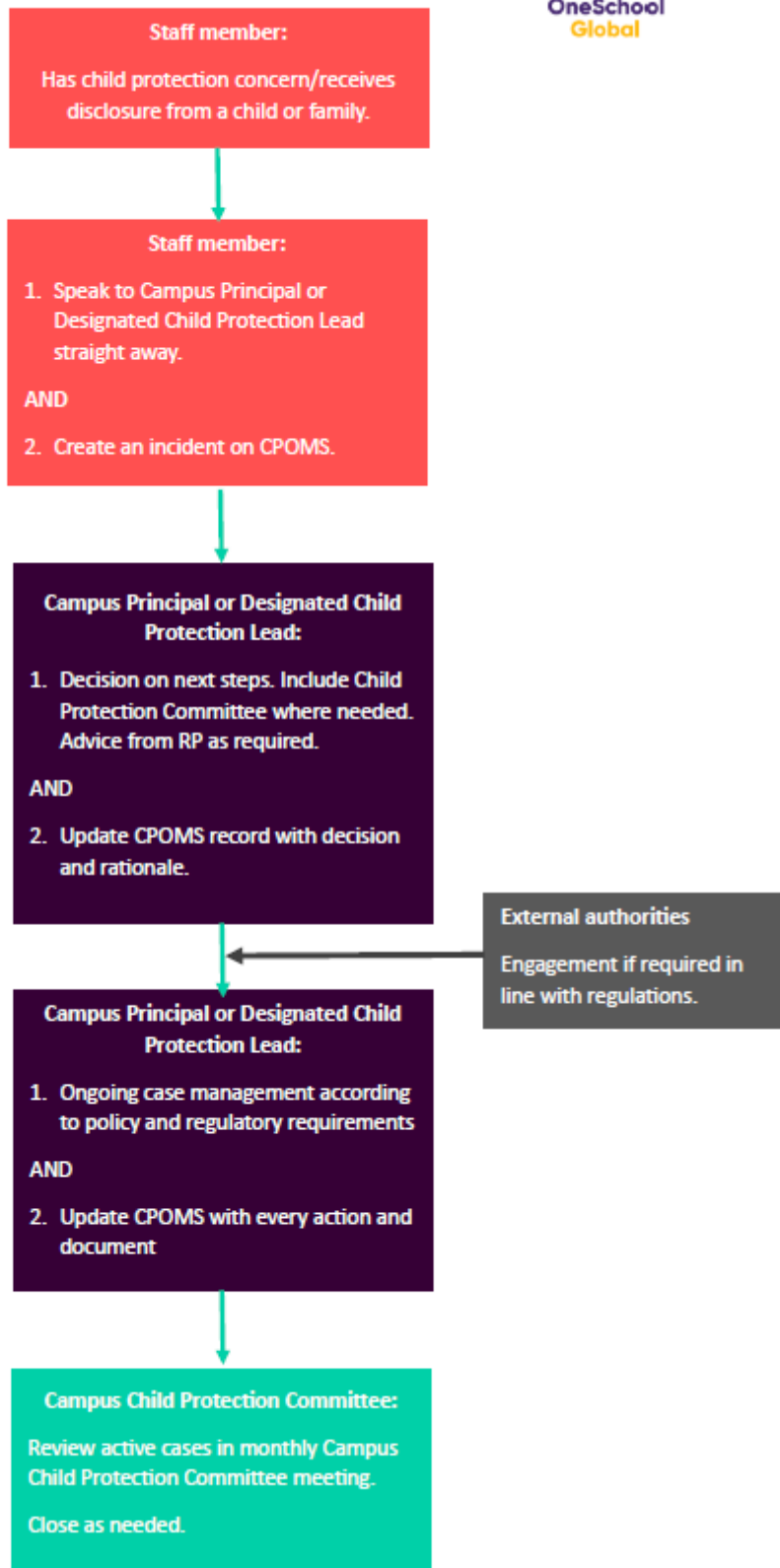




**Reporting Flow Chart for Reporting of Sexual Abuse  
(For Mandatory Reporters)**



## Reporting and Management of Child Protection Cases



## 6. EDUCATION (OSGAware)

The OSGAware program aims to prevent our young people from becoming perpetrators and targets of abusive relationships by:

- encouraging them to understand what a healthy relationship is;
- teaching them about the warning signs ('Red Flags') of controlling behaviour, bullying, violence, abuse, sexual abuse and what consent means within their relationships;
- giving guidance on how to say No, remove themselves from risky situations and
- directing them to places for help and advice.

The program is designed to enable learning that can be applied to any situation online and in person and develops themes that are embedded into the OneSchool Global (Australia) curriculum for Year 3 – 6 and Year 7 to 12.

The sessions are designed to help young people discuss issues around abusive and healthy relationships, set in the context of online and offline behaviours.

The objectives of the sessions are to:

- help young people recognise what a healthy relationship looks like, and which behaviours are abusive.
- improve understanding of what constitutes bullying, violence, abuse or controlling behaviour in relationships.
- build understanding of consent.
- empower young people to challenge, avoid and report violent or abusive behaviour, including sexually abusive or violent behaviour.
- direct young people to appropriate sources of further help and advice.

## 7. VERSION CONTROL

Document Code	Date	Version No.	Nature of Change
Child Protection Policy	December 2014	1214	Various
Child Protection Policy	August 2017	0817	Various
Child Protection Policy	January 2019	0119	Various
Child Protection Policy	June 2019	0619	Various
Child Protection Policy	August 2019	0819	Various
Child Protection Policy	October 2019	1019	Mandatory Reporting

POL-WA_ADM-Child Protection Policy DEP	30/10/2019	v1.1	OSG Format
POL_WA_OP_Child Protection Policy	24/02/2021	v1.2	Review, update, reformat
POL_WA_OP_Child Protection Policy	24/11/2023	v1.3	Review & update