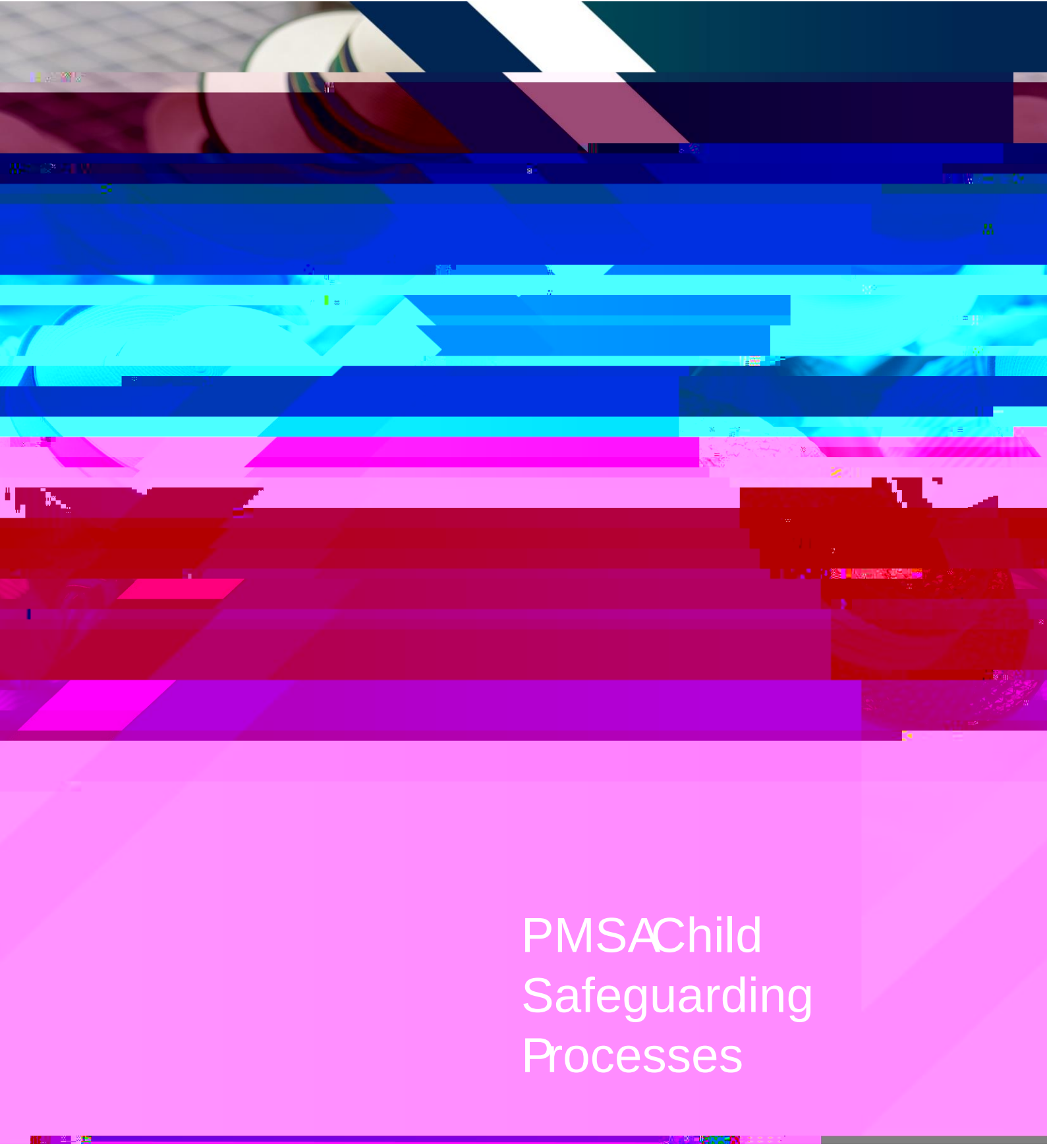

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schools.edu.au.

The PMSA will review and update this document on a three yearly cycle or in response to legislative changes and communicate any changes to schools for their local implementation.

Introduction

The PMSA is committed to creating and maintaining safe environments for all children and young people. The PMSA has zero tolerance to harm. This document operationalises the PMSA Child Protection Policy (The Policy) and outlines the following:

- processes for how the PMSA will respond to harm, or allegations of harm, to students
- a process for reporting by a student to a stated staff member the behaviour of another staff member that the student considers is inappropriate
- a process for how information reported to the stated staff member must be dealt with by the stated staff member.
- a process for reporting sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse in compliance with the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld), sections 366 and 366A
- a process for reporting a reportable suspicion under the Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld), section 13E.

Compliance with these processes is mandatory for all PMSA staff, volunteers, and contractors.

Child Safeguarding Process

Every child and young person has the right to feel safe. The safeguarding of children and young people is of paramount importance to the PMSA and its schools, and the PMSA has developed these processes 3f 1 0 0 1b94wus(i

1. Identify

It is critical that all PMSA staff, volunteers, and contractors are able to identify and recognise child safeguarding concern A concern is information of whatever nature and from whatever source, that leads to a reasonable suspicion of circumstances that may have posed or continues to pose a risk to the physical or psychological safeguarding

and may be afraid to tell anybody about the abuse. They may struggle with feelings of guilt, shame, or confusion. Many of the signs of abuse are the same regardless of the type of abuse. Anyone working with children or young people need to be able to recognise the signs. These include but are not limited to the following:

- being afraid of particular places or making excuses to avoid particular people
- l v } Á] v P } µ š } Œ] v P] v À } o À] v Z µ o š] • • µ • [Á Z] Z Œ] v ‰ ‰ C development, for example alcohol, drugs and/or sexual behaviour
- having angry outbursts or behaving aggressively towards others
- becoming withdrawn or appearing anxious, clingy, or depressed
- self-harming or having thoughts about suicide
- showing changes in eating habits or developing eating disorders
- regularly experiencing nightmares or sleep problems
- regularly wetting the bed or soiling their clothes
- running away or regularly going missing from home or care
- not receiving adequate medical attention after injuries

These signs do not necessarily mean that a child is being abused. There may well be other reasons for changes in Z] o [• Z À] } µ Œ • µ Z • Œ À u v š } Œ Œ o š] } however, they should be enough to š Á raise concerns with an Appropriate Person. For further information on the signs of abuse, the Queensland G } À Œ v u v š o Recognising Signs of Abuse will provide further information for staff, volunteers, and contractors

Waiting for a child to be ready to speak about their experiences could mean that abuse carries on and they, or another child, are put at further risk of significant harm. Not taking appropriate action quickly can also affect the Z] o [• u v š and Z well-being. This may discourage them from seeking help in the future and make them distrust adults. Raising a concern does not require a direct disclosure.

1.2 Disclosures

Disclosure is the process by which children and young people start to share their experiences of abuse with others, often taking place over a long period of time. Children may disclose directly or indirectly and sometimes they may start sharing details of abuse before they are ready to put their thoughts and feelings in order.

Where a disclosure is made, or a person has a reasonable suspicion that a child is being subjected to abuse or harm, the steps and processes outlined in section 2 and 3 must be followed. All disclosures should be taken seriously. It takes extraordinary courage for a child to go through the journey of disclosing abuse and it's vital that anyone who works with children and young people undertaking this journey can provide them with the support they need.

Children and young people may disclose abuse in a variety of ways, including:

- Directly W u l] v P • ‰] ( ] À Œ o • š š u v š • ht(g)4(perio)-3(d)3( )9(o)-5(f t)-3(i)18C01

2. Respond

Key Documentation
Child Protection Guide CSYW

Engaging in appropriate conferral processes is an important element of responding to concerns around the safeguarding and well-being of students to ensure any decision-making process is fully informed.

PMSA staff, volunteers, and contractors may confer with colleagues (for example the Appropriate Person as outlined in 2.1 below) to establish whether the information at hand may constitute a reasonable suspicion of abuse, harm, or inappropriate behaviour. This process is encouraged as a means of ensuring the best possible response to a concern and also assists the staff member, volunteer, or contractor to gain insight through the provision of additional information about a student or their family that is not known which may include:

- greater context to the concerns identified.
- changes to the seriousness of the concerns, particularly as to whether harm š } • š µ v š] • ^.•] P v] ( ]
- greater clarity around whether there is a parent able and willing to protect the student.

In addition to conferring with colleagues, a number of practical tools and resources exist to support staff members, volunteers, and contractors in their decision making, including the Child Protection Guide CSYW, an online decision support guide that has been developed to assist professionals to appropriately report or refer families to the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women (Child Safety) or other service providers in a timely manner.

2.1 Raising Concerns

A concern is information that leads to a reasonable suspicion of circumstances that may have posed, or continues to pose, a risk to the physical or psychological safety and wellbeing

Visitors, including parents and carers	A CSO or the Principal
Staff, Volunteers, and contractors (Staff are also to refer to relevant sections regarding statutory reporting obligations)	A CSO or the Principal Where required to guide the application

above.

Responding to student sexual behaviour

Sexual behaviours of various kinds may be evident in children and young people, particularly in the early years. Some (} Œ u • } (• Æ µ o Z À] } µ Œ u Ç } v •] Œ À o } ‰ u v š o o Ç ‰ ‰ Œ } ‰ Œ development. Other behaviours may indicate that the child could have been exposed to inappropriate material or experiences (for example, reports of very young children knowing about and experimenting with oral sex). Resour

b. discuss concerns with a CSO or the s Z } } o P [incipal

c. consider any additional information available to inform the decision and

3.2 Reporting Sexual Abuse or Likely Sexual Abuse

Key Documentation
Child ^ (šo[line reporting form
Child Protection Guide CSYW
Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1)

Staff members, visitors, and contractors are required to immediately provide a written report when they become aware, or reasonably suspect, in the course of their employment or engagement at a PMSA school, that

- a student under 18 years attending the school;
- a kindergarten age child in a kindergarten learning program at the school;
- a person with a disability who:
  - (i) under section 420(2) of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld), is being provided with special education at the school; and
  - (ii) is not enrolled in the preparatory year at the school;

has been, or is likely to be, sexually abused by another person.

This includes sexual behaviour involving the student and another person, where:

- The other person bribes, coerces, exploits, threatens or is violent toward the student; or
- The student has less power than the other person; or
-

(ii) gather and share relevant information available

b. consider the use of additional supports to guide decision making and management of the matter.

c. on receiving these concerns, ensure a Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1) is commenced.

d. CSOs will, as soon as practicable, bring the concerns to the attention of the Principal and provide a copy of the commenced Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1)

e. If the concerns relate to the Principal, then concerns are to be reported] Œ š o Ç š } šŒE Ow WoDvll meet any responsibilities otherwise delegated to that Principal regarding the management of the matter.

Responsibilities for Principals

Principals are required to:

a. as soon as practicable, report all concerns to the W D ^ CEO.

b. adhere to all applicable statutory reporting requirements

c. work with the PMSA CEO to plan an appropriate response that demonstrates integrity, using a process that would stand up to external scrutiny. An investigation may be commenced where there is a reasonable suspicion that the staff member, volunteer } Œ } v š Œ behaviour has caused or is likely to cause harm to a child or young person and if it is appropriate in the circumstances. Investigations must be conducted by a third party, e.g. a law firm or external investigator

d. ensure all actions taken and decisions made are appropriately documented

e. ensure a copy of the Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1), and any other records, are retained appropriately by the scho(454.51 re W* n

4. Support

Once a child safeguarding incident has been identified and reported, support must be given to the child or young person to ensure they are supported throughout the process. The following sections outline all PMSA staff are to support children experiencing child safeguarding incidents.

4.1 Support when children make disclosures

Research about how adults can better respond to a child who is disclosing abuse found three key interpersonal skills

4.4 Protective Interrupting

Where children or young people disclose in front of peers, or at another inappropriate time, it may be appropriate t
µ• •šŒ š P] • o oo Z‰Œ}š š]À]vš ŒŒµ‰š]vP[U šZ •]v oµ W

- Gently interrupt the child by acknowledging them and preventing further disclosure. For example, "thank Ç}µU]š •}µv • • šZ}µPZ Ç}µ Z À •}u šZ]vP Œ ooÇ]u‰}Œš vš š}
- Be supportive and gently indicate that the child or young person can talk in a more private situation. For example, "why don't we have a chat at recess?" or ask the student if they would like to leave the classroom to continue the conversassred8e(o)-5(r a)11(sk)9(t)-3(h0co)-] TJ .3(u)3(e)9(63(n)3(tin)3(u)3(e)91h0c93(h)

- Allocates a person responsible for implementing each action, this may be a child or young person, or any other relevant stakeholder.
- Allocates an appropriate staff

6. Information Management

It is appropriate for CSOs and Principals, when they have developed or received a concern, to identify and gather information that will assist in determining the most appropriate response to the concerns. In doing so, the following will be considered:

- In these circumstances, what information is reasonable to be sought and from what source?
- What information gathering is not appropriate given its potential impact on an investigation by a statutory authority (e.g. Child Safety or Police)?
- The reporting threshold for most statutory authorities (including in particular the Police and Child Safety) is [reasonable suspicion]. [illegible]
- Any school investigation regarding concerns will occur in a carefully planned manner, as coordinated by the Principal and the PMSA CEO, in consultation with any relevant statutory authority and any other appropriate support.
- In most cases schools do not need to photograph injuries. If required, Police or Child Safety will arrange for photographs.
- schools are to seek medical attention for known injuries as appropriate to the circumstance and will document such, using written notes and diagrams. Staff, volunteers and contractors will not seek to sight any injuries in an area normally covered by underwear.

6.1 Records Retention

All concerns that are reported to a CSO or Principal are to be recorded on a Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1). This form, and all supporting information/records, are to be stored securely and appropriately. A key goal of the Form is to provide a record that reflects and supports the decision-making process.

Where the concerns relate to:

- physical or sexual abuse, or likely sexual abuse, that may require reporting to Police or Child Safety, or
- inappropriate behaviour by a staff member, volunteer, or contractor.

and it is practicable, the Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1) is to be commenced by the person who first identifies, or otherwise receives, the concerns.

In retaining Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1), schools, noting the sensitive and personal nature of the information recorded, will:

- have a record keeping system that provides access to necessary if further concerns arise, or the school is required to account for actions taken.
- manage the form in keeping with the school [illegible] record keeping and retention requirements, as well as in accordance with its privacy obligations.

Consistent with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recommendation (8.4), [illegible]

- Principle 1: Creating and keeping full and accurate records relevant to child safeguarding and wellbeing is in the best interests of children and should be an integral part of institutional leadership, governance, and culture.
- Principle 2: Full and accurate records should be created about all incidents, responses and decisions affecting child safeguarding and wellbeing.
- Principle 3: Records relevant to child safeguarding

Headspace: headspace.org.au - Headspace is the National Youth Mental Health Foundation providing early intervention mental health services to 12-25 year olds. Headspace can help young people with mental health, physical health (including sexual health) alcohol and other drug services, work and study support.

Kids Helpline: https://kidshelpline.com.au/ } Œ o o í ô ì ì ñ ñ í ô ì ì X <] • , o ‰ free, confidential Œ o] 24/7 online and phone counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25. Qualified counsellors at Kids Helpline a available via WebChat, phone or email anytime and for any reason.

Child and Youth Mental Health Service (CYMHS): https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/our-services/mental-health-services/. CYMHS specialises in helping infants, children and young people up to the age of 18 who have complex mental health needs. They provide community and hospital-based services, outreach and telepsychiatry programs, early intervention, forensic and other specialty services.

In emergencies, it may be appropriate to call an ambulance, or access a hospital emergency department. In non emergencies, it may be appropriate to ask families to engage with their GP for appropriate intervention and referra

7.4 Online Safe guarding

Where concerns relate to online abuse, guidance can be sought from the eSafety Commissioner https://www.esafety.gov.au/. The eSafety Commissioner has powers relating to cyberbullying, image-based abuse, and illegal and harmful online content.

To guide appropriate actions, the eSafety Commissioner also publishes the following Toolkit for schools: https://www.esafety.gov.au/educators/toolkit-schools

https://www.thinkuknow.org.au/ is an education program led by the Australian Federal Police focused on preventin online child sexual exploitation.

7.5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families

The Queensland Government funds Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Support Services with an explicit goal of making it easier for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in communities across Queensland, to access culturally responsive support to improve their social, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing, and build their capacity to safely care for and protect their children. For information on local service options visit: https://familysupportreferral.org.au/

https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/protecting-children/child-family-reform/meeting-needs-requirements-aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-children-families-communities/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-family-wellbeing-services

	x reasonable steps taken to protect a child from immediate harm, such a š l] v P aZ] to stop them from going into oncoming traffic x medical treatment given in good faith by an appropriately qualified person, such as a senior first aid officer administering first aid.
Behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child	Examples of behaviours that may cause emotional or psychological harm in x exposure to violence or threats of violence, including family violence x persistent hostility/rejection x humiliation/belittling x scapegoating. Please note the following does not constitute behaviour that causes signific emotional or psychological harm to a child: x a person takes reasonable steps to protect a child from immediate har x a person with responsibility for discipline takes lawful and reason] •] ‰ o] v Œ Ç š] } v U • µ Z • • v] v P Z] o time, in line with organisational policy x the conduct is related to providing medical treatment or care given in g faith, such as a first aid officer administering first aid.
Significant neglect of a child	The neglect: x must be more than minor and insignificant x does not need to have a lasting or permanent effect x may be an ongoing situation or a one-off incident, as long as it is not minor in nature. Examples of different types of neglect include: x supervisory neglect, which is the absence or inattention of a person w places the child at risk of physical harm or injury, sexual abuse or allows other criminal behaviour towards the child x physical neglect, which is the failure to provide basic physical necessi for a child, such as adequate food, clothing and housing x medical neglect, which is the failure to provide for appropriate medical care for a child, including a failure to acknowledge the seriousness of illness or condition, or deliberately withholding appropriate care.

Appropriate Authority

An Appropriate Authority refers to the PMSA CEO.

- incidents or allegations of sexual, physical, or other abuse or inappropriate behaviour
- matters that are recent or historical in nature.

Grooming

The cultivation of a relationship in order to:

- initiate or hide sexual assault or abuse
- facilitate the procurement of a child to engage in a sexual act or
- expose, without legitimate reason, a child to any indecent matter.
- In the case of child sexual abuse, an offender may groom not only the child, but also the [illegible] parents or guardians, colleagues, or other persons.

Harm

As defined in section 9 of the Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld), harm, to a child, is any detrimental effect of a [illegible] psychological or emotional well-being. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by physical, psychological, or emotional abuse or neglect, or sexual abuse or exploitation. Harm can be caused by a single act, omission or circumstance, or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.

Inappropriate behaviour

Any behaviour that is:

- sexual in nature, including grooming or
- regardless of the nature of the behaviour, where it is reasonable to suspect this behaviour has placed a child or young person at risk of harm, caused harm, or there is a likelihood of future harm. For example, this includes behaviour defined as abuse.

Information

Information of whatever nature and from whatever source relating to:

- alleged conduct of an adult wherever or whenever occurring involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, or sexually inappropriate behaviour, grooming or the possession, making or distribution of child exploitation material
- alleged inappropriate or unreasonable conduct or omission of a PMSA employee who had knowledge of (a); or
- an alleged process

manner that contravenes regulations; or

- any circumstance where a child is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the premises

Flowchart 2: Reporting Sexual Abuse & Likely Sexual Abuse where the first person is the Principal

The Principal identifies a concern regarding a student

The Principal may confer with a colleague or use resources such as the Child Protection Guide, in order to determine whether the concern forms a reasonable suspicion that the student has been sexually

Flowchart 3: Reporting Significant Harm to Child Safety Services

The first person identifies a concern regarding a student

The first person may confer with a colleague, or use resources such as the Child Protection Guide, in order t determine whether the concern forms a reasonable suspicion that the student has suffered, is suffering or is unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm and may not have a parent able and willing to protect the student fro harm

A reasonable suspicion is formed by the first person

The first person completes the Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1) and submits the form to the Principal immediately (or the PMSA CEO if the allegation is against the Principal)

The Principal or the PMSA CEO immediately forwards the report to the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

Which does not include sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse

TYPE OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

Physical Boundary Violation

Emotional Boundary Violation

Behaviour Boundary Violation

Other

AWARENESS OF CONCERN

Disclosure by student Information from another student

Information from a relative of the student

SOURCE(S) OF CONCERN

Details of person believed to have caused the harm

Legal Name

Preferred Name

Gender

Date of Birth/Approximate Age

Contact Telephone Number(s)

SOURCE OF CONCERN BY CATEGORY

Staff member, other employee or volunteer

Parent, carer, family member or other person in the community

Other student enrolled at the school Self-harm

Is the source of concern a parent?

Yes

No

Unknown

Relationship

Does this parent have current access to the affected child?

Yes

No

Unknown

PERSON(S) WITH MORE INFORMATION

Please include information on each person, name, position, contact number/s

FIRST PERSON REPORT (REPORT OF CONCERN) COMPLETED BY

Name

Position

Contact Telephone Number(s)

Other contact Information

List other actions (if applicable)