

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 Belgravia Health & Leisure Group (“Belgravia”) has made an ongoing commitment towards the wellbeing and protection of children by providing an environment that is safe for children attending its facilities and premises.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy was developed in collaboration with employees, volunteers, children who use our services, and their parents. It applies to all employees, volunteers, children and individuals who work at and/or enter the Organisation’s premises, while they are at the premises.

3 GLOSSARY

- 3.1 Terms not defined in this document may be in the Organisation’s glossary.

Terms and definitions

Organisation: Belgravia Group and associated entities.

DCPP: designated child protection person within the Organisation.

Regulations: Each country, state and territory has its own child protection reporting and regulatory framework. Individual services and educators will be aware of and understand the jurisdiction that applies to them.

The scope of this policy’s definitions, regulations and considerations are available from CS0.1 Child Safe Policy – References & Definitions.

4 POLICY STATEMENT

- 4.1 The Organisation acknowledges its duty of care to report suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect. The Organisation ensures that its employees and volunteers understand their legal and moral responsibilities and obligations as it relates to mandatory reporting conduct.
- 4.2 The Organisation’s employees are made aware of the Child Protection Policy, and other associated policies, through induction and training procedures.
- 4.3 The Organisation ensures that children are protected by establishing an environment that minimises risks and sets out clear safeguards for employees and children’s’ guardians to follow. The Organisation will also protect employees from the possibility of unfounded allegations of child maltreatment that could be made against them as a result of their work.
- 4.4 The health and welfare of all children attending the Organisation’s facilities is of paramount importance. The Organisation will act to protect children’s rights to safety and security in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements.

5 PROCEDURE

Responsibilities of the Organisation

- 5.1 DCPPs will take action following any expression of concern where the lines of responsibility in respect of child protection are clear.
- 5.2 DCPPs know how to make appropriate referrals to child protection agencies.

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- 5.3 The Organisation's policies regarding children will be openly and widely available to employees, contractors and volunteers and actively promoted within the organisation.
 - 5.4 It is part of the Organisation's acceptance of its responsibility of duty of care towards our employees that anybody who encounters child protection concerns in the context of their work on behalf of the Organisation will be supported when they report their concerns in good faith.
 - 5.5 The Organisation will perform annual risk assessments on activities requiring interaction with children. While these risk assessments will be carried out in conjunction with the risk assessments performed on the physical environment, specific risk assessments will also be conducted on child related activities (e.g. how our instructors actually manage risk when coaching).

Responsibilities of employees and volunteers

- 5.6 All employees and volunteers working on behalf of the Organisation are made aware of, read and comply with the Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy.
- 5.7 All employees and volunteers working on behalf of the Organisation accept responsibility for the welfare of children who come into contact with the Organisation in connection with its tasks and functions, and that they will report any concerns about a child or somebody else's behaviour, using the procedures laid down.
- 5.8 All those who are involved with children on behalf of the Organisation must adhere to the Code of Professional Conduct Policy specified in this document in relation to children.
- 5.9 Information relating to any allegation or disclosure will be clearly recorded as soon as possible, and there is a procedure setting out who should record information and the timelines for passing this information on.
- 5.10 Considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations should not be allowed to override the right of children to be protected from harm. However, every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned when an allegation has been made and is being investigated.
- 5.11 All employees, volunteers and anyone in paid or unpaid work on behalf of the Organisation will be checked appropriately and will be required to comply with the Working with Children and Police Checks Policy.

Valuing diversity

- 5.12 The Organisation values diversity. We do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this, we:
 - 5.12.1 Support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and their families.
 - 5.12.2 Support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/ or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families.
 - 5.12.3 Welcome children with disability and their families and act to promote their participation.
 - 5.12.4 Seek to recruit appropriate candidates from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
 - 5.12.5 Welcome same-sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse children and families.
 - 5.12.6 Have a physical environment that actively celebrates diverse cultures and recognises cultural difference.
 - 5.12.7 Commit to ensuring our facilities promote inclusion of children of all abilities.
 - 5.12.8 Ensure employees and volunteers receive training on diversity and inclusion.

5.12.9 Ensure all employees and volunteers adhere to the Organisation's Equal Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination, Diversity, Harassment and Bullying Policy.

Recruitment and selection procedures of employees and volunteers

5.13 The Organisation is committed to having appropriate recruitment and selection processes and practices to ensure the consistent application of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and related procedures.

5.14 The recruitment practices include the following:

5.14.1 Clear definitions for all roles, including casual roles.

5.14.2 Selection of employees based on core competencies and personal attributes.

5.14.3 Reference checks to be undertaken for all employees and volunteers. Reference checks should be both written and verbal.

5.14.4 All employees and volunteers are required to declare any previous convictions and must agree to a formal check in accordance with the Working With Children and Police Checks Policy.

5.14.5 All employees and volunteers understand the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and procedures of the Organisation and meet their record keeping, information sharing and reporting responsibilities.

5.14.6 Employees and volunteers sign and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct.

5.15 The Organisation's full recruitment procedures are outlined in the Organisation's Recruitment, Selection and Retention Policy.

Procedure for reporting concerns

5.16 A parent, child, employee, contractor or volunteer could have their suspicion or concern raised in a number of ways, the most likely of which are:

- A child discloses abuse
- Seeing the abuse occur, this may be by a family member, staff member or child
- Noticing signs and symptoms of mistreatment, including neglect
- Physical signs: bruising or evidence of physical hurt which may or may not be accompanied by unusual behaviour by the child.

Reporting

5.17 Concerns about a specific child should be:

- Reported immediately by telephone to the DCPP; and
- Confirmed in writing within 24 hours using the Child Protection Incident Report Form.

5.17 Delay in reporting could prejudice the welfare of a child. If the concerns relate to the conduct of an employee, these should be reported by telephone to the DCPP at the earliest opportunity.

Investigation

5.18 The DCPP will consider the report and either:

- Refer this immediately to the authorities or, after taking appropriate advice (which may include discussing the circumstances on a confidential basis with the appropriate government department); or

- Decide not to refer the concerns to the authorities but keep a full record of the concerns.

Allegations against employees, contractors or volunteers

- 5.19 Any allegations of harm to a child, against an employee will be fully investigated. The employee will be asked to step aside while the matter is investigated and all information in relation to the matter will be kept strictly confidential to protect all parties involved while the investigation is being conducted.
- 5.20 Any matters that require disciplinary measures following an investigation of an allegation of harm to a child by an employee will be dealt with by the Organisation in conjunction with the relevant authorities.
- 5.21 Any proven misconduct towards a child by any employee will be dealt with swiftly and harshly by the Organisation.
- 5.22 The process flowchart for reporting concerns is attached as Appendix 1.

Responding appropriately to a child making a disclosure

- 5.23 The following steps are appropriate for responding to a child making a disclosure:
- Stay calm.
 - Listen carefully to what is said.
 - Give the child your full attention.
 - Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you.
 - When appropriate and possible tell the child that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it and reassure them that you will not be speaking with the perpetrator about it.
 - Allow the child to continue at their own pace.
 - Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
 - Do not share personal stories about yourself or others with the child.
 - Tell them what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared.
 - Record in writing what was said, using the child's own words as soon as possible; note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
- 5.24 It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. This is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral from the DCPD in the Organisation.

Mandatory reporting

- 5.25 The groups of people mandated to notify cases of suspected child abuse and neglect range from persons in a limited number of occupations (e.g., QLD), to a more extensive list (VIC, WA), to a very extensive list (ACT, NSW, SA, TAS), through to every adult (NT and VIC for sexual offences).
- 5.26 The occupations most commonly named as mandated reporters are those who deal frequently with children in the course of their work: teachers, doctors, nurses and police.
- 5.27 Please see Appendix 2 for further details, with additional information available from:

[Mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect | Child Family Community Australia \(aifs.gov.au\)](https://www.aifs.gov.au/child-family-community/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-neglect)

Notifying and reporting allegations of workplace child abuse – Reportable Conduct Schemes in Australia

- 5.28 In 1999, the New South Wales (NSW) Reportable Conduct Scheme was established to provide independent oversight by the Ombudsman of the handling of child abuse and neglect allegations against employees.
- 5.29 On the 1st July 2017, the Victorian Commission for Children and Young People and the ACT Ombudsman, administered new Reportable Conduct Schemes in the related jurisdictions, to oversee how organisations prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse and misconduct by workers and volunteers.
- 5.30 All three Reportable Conduct Scheme’s address employment-related child protection. Although all three schemes have the similar responsibilities, there are differences in the management of the reporting and assessment processes.
- 5.31 The reportable conduct schemes do not interfere with mandatory reporting obligations. If employers suspect criminal conduct has occurred, they should report to child protection or the police in the first instance. Further information is available from:

[Who should report what? A guide to Reportable Conduct Schemes in Australia - ACF Professionals \(childhood.org.au\)](http://childhood.org.au)

Roles and responsibilities of the DCP

- 5.32 The DCP must:
- Know which outside child protection agency to contact in the event of a child protection concern coming to the notice of the Organisation;
 - Provide information and advice on child protection within the Organisation;
 - Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing under confidential cover;
 - Liaise with local social services and other agencies, as appropriate;
 - Keep relevant people within the Organisation informed about any action taken and any further action required, for example, disciplinary action against an employee;
 - Ensure that a proper record is kept of any referral and action taken, and that this is kept safely and in confidence;
 - Advise the Organisation of child protection training needs; and
 - Liaise with the appropriate government department to review the operation of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (and related policies) regularly to ensure the procedures are working and that it complies with current best practice and requirements.

Self-care

- 5.33 Self-care after making a child protection report is important. People may experience personal issues resulting from being involved in making a child report (having a child disclose to you, suspecting and reporting abuse, making the child protection report).
- 5.34 It is important to know that there are resources and support services available for employees and volunteers involved in making a child report. Employees and volunteers should contact their manager, DCP or HR department to find out what help they can offer.

Compliance, monitoring and review

- 5.35 This policy / procedure:

- aligns with relevant legislation, government policy and/or Belgravia Group requirements/strategies/values
- is implemented and monitored (i.e. the policy is followed, reflects the changing policy environment, and emerging issues are identified), and
- is reviewed to evaluate its continuing effectiveness (e.g. achieving its purpose, remains relevant/current.)]

Reporting

5.36 No additional reporting is required.

Records management

5.37 Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy in a recognised recordkeeping system.

6 RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

This policy / procedure:

- aligns with relevant legislation, government policy and/or Belgravia Group requirements/strategies/values
- is implemented and monitored (i.e. the policy is followed, reflects the changing policy environment, and emerging issues are identified), and
- is reviewed to evaluate its continuing effectiveness (e.g. achieving its purpose, remains relevant/current).
- Any references in this document to positions and their authority (or delegated authority) to make decisions on specific matters must align with the Belgravia Group's Delegated Procurement Authority (DPA) Policy.

7 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

[CS 0.01 Child Safety Policy Framework – References and Definitions](#)

[CS 0.02 Child Safety Policy Framework – Index](#)

[CS 0.03 Child Safety Policy Framework – Glossary of Terms](#)

[CS 1.02 Code of Professional Conduct](#)

[CSF 1.01 Child Protection Report](#)

[CSF 1.02 Child Protection Incident Report Form](#)

[HR 2.02 Recruitment, Selection and Retention Policy](#)

[HR 2.03 Equal Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination Diversity, Harassment and Bullying Policy](#)

[HR 3.15 Working with Children and Police Checks Policy](#)

8 FEEDBACK

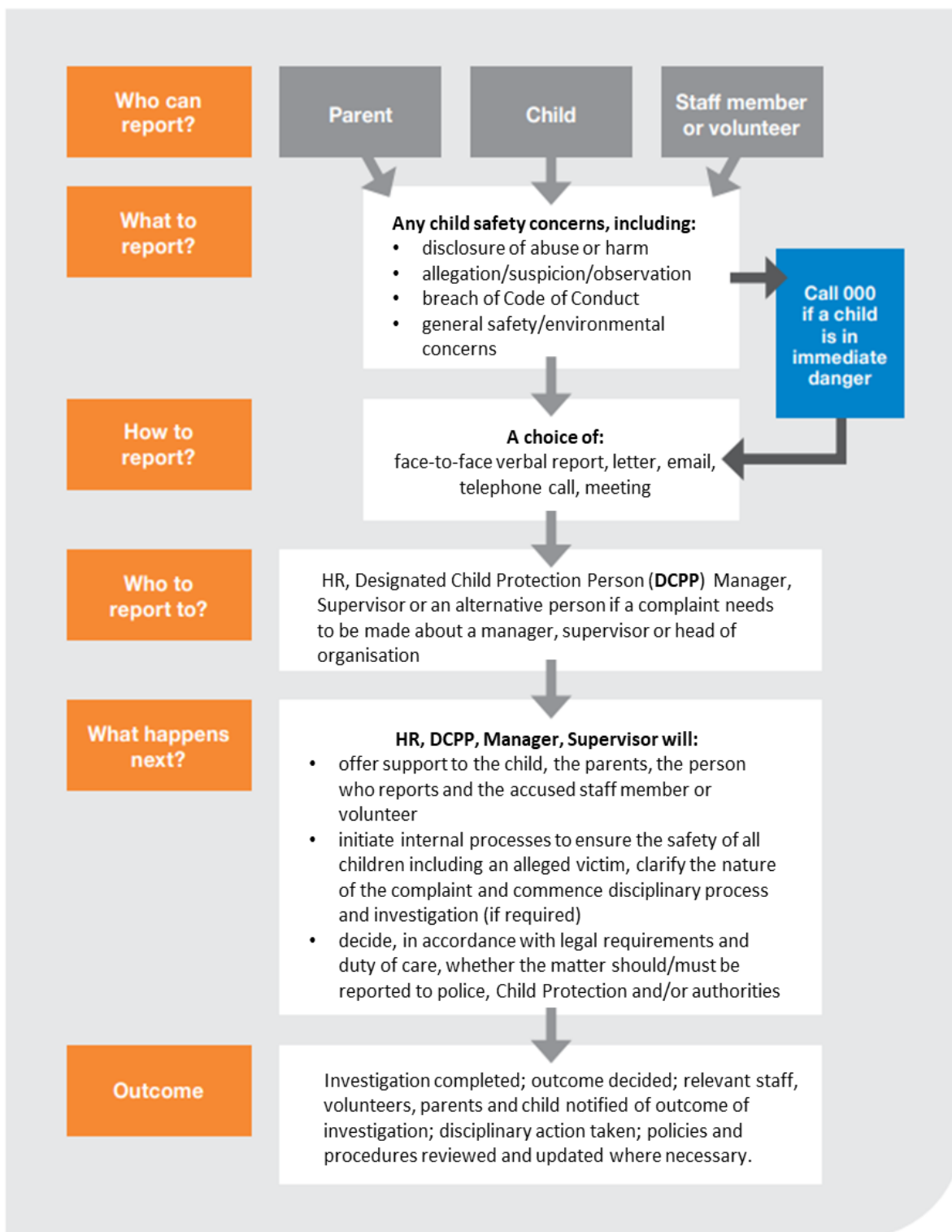
8.1 Belgravia Group staff may provide feedback about this document by emailing msmith@belgravialeisure.com.au.

9 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

9.1 Approval and review details are available in the Policy Portal document properties.

10 APPENDIX 1 – Reporting child safety concerns

This chart outlines the process for reports to be made by parents, children, staff members and volunteers.



APPENDIX 2 – Mandatory reporters by jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Who is mandated to notify	What is to be notified
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	Doctors, dentists, nurses, teachers, police, school counsellors, child-care providers, public servants providing services relating to the health or wellbeing of children, young people or families, the community advocate, or the official visitor	A reasonable suspicion that a child or young person has suffered or is suffering <i>sexual abuse</i> or non-accidental <i>physical injury</i>
New South Wales (NSW)	Persons who deliver health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services or law enforcement to children	Current concerns that a child aged under 16 is at risk of harm
Northern Territory (NT)	Police; all other people with reasonable grounds	Reasonable grounds to believe that a child has suffered or is suffering <i>maltreatment</i>
Queensland (QLD)	Doctors; nurses. Officers employed to implement the Act 1999; all staff of residential care services. Educational staff (teaching and non-teaching staff in government and non-government schools).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aware of or reasonably suspects a child has, is, or is <i>likely to suffer harm</i>. Reasonable suspicion of <i>abuse</i> or <i>neglect</i> to a child in residential care. Aware of or reasonably suspects <i>sexual abuse</i> of a child under 18 by an employee of the school.
South Australia (SA)	Doctors, pharmacists, nurses, dentists, psychologists, police, community corrections officers, social workers, teachers, family day care providers, employees/volunteers in a government department, agency or instrumentality, or a local government or non-government agency that provides health, welfare, education, child care or residential services wholly or partly for children	Reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being <i>abused</i> or <i>neglected</i> .
Tasmania (TAS)	Professionals working with children and employees or volunteers working in government or government-funded organisations. Medical professionals, principals and teachers including kindergartens, persons concerned in the management of an approved education and care service.	Reasonable grounds to believe or suspect that a child is suffering, has suffered or is likely to suffer <i>abuse</i> or <i>neglect</i> , or is being exposed to <i>domestic violence</i>
Victoria (VIC)	Police, doctors, nurses and teachers	Reasonable grounds that <i>physical</i> or <i>sexual abuse</i> is occurring
Western Australia (WA)	Court personnel, counsellors and mediators. Licensed providers of child care or outside school hours care services.	<p>Allegations or suspicions of <i>child abuse</i> in Family Court cases.</p> <p>Allegations or suspicions of <i>child abuse</i> in a child care service.</p>

<p>New Zealand (NZ)</p>	<p>Anyone who is over 18 and who is aware of child abuse occurring in a household they live in, or are a member of, must take reasonable steps to protect that child from death, serious harm or sexual assault. Practically, this means they must report child abuse that is serious.</p>	<p>Section 16 of the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act (1989) protects people who notify concerns of abuse in good faith from civil and criminal proceedings.</p> <p>The maximum penalty for not taking reasonable steps to protect a child from death, serious harm or sexual assault is 10 years in prison.</p> <p>Any abuse of a child is a serious matter. If you suspect a child is being abused it is important that you notify your local Police or Oranga Tamariki–Ministry for Children.</p>
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