



### Purpose

These procedures set out how NMGC will respond to allegations of suspected child abuse where a student is alleged to be involved in an incident of child abuse either as a victim or as a perpetrator and the allegation:

- is made by or in relation to a student, College staff, visitors or other persons while connected to the NMGC College environment;
- requires compliance with mandatory reporting obligations by an NMGC staff member, or
- leads a College staff member while undertaking child-connected work to form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a student under 16.

Fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained in these procedures is not intended to displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.

### Scope

This policy applies to all staff of North Melbourne Grammar College's (NMGC).

North Melbourne Grammar College is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children. We have zero tolerance for child abuse.

Everyone working at NMGC is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse.

We have published a Statement of Commitment to Child Safety which acts as a guiding document in terms of all stakeholder's interactions with children.

Our Mission and Aims and Core Values will also reflect our commitment to child safety.

### Definitions

<i>sexual abuse</i>	<i>Sexual abuse is when someone involves a child or young person in a sexual activity by using their power over them or taking advantage of their trust. Often children are bribed or threatened physically and psychologically to make them participate in the activity. Child sexual abuse is a crime. It includes child grooming, which refers to actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child.</i>
<i>physical abuse</i>	<i>The intentional or reckless use of physical force which causes or could cause harm.</i>
<i>emotional &amp; psychological abuse</i>	<i>This is a common form of abuse with children, where children integrity and self-worth is diminished</i>

<i>neglect</i>	<i>Failure on the part of the caregiver to provide sufficient attention. Includes health care, supervision, housing &amp; nutrition</i>
<i>COM</i>	<i>Committee of Management</i>
<i>NMGC or college</i>	<i>North Melbourne Grammar College</i>
<i>child safety team</i>	<i>Principal, SWO &amp; designated member of COM</i>
<i>student</i>	<i>An individual person who is formally enrolled to study at the NMGC. The individual person is that who appears on the enrolment documents and who is assigned an NMGC student ID</i>
<i>SWO</i>	<i>Student Welfare Officer</i>
<i>disability</i>	<i>Defined by the Disability Act 2006. incorporates sensory, physical or neurological impairment, intellectual or developmental delays and impairments.</i>
<i>aboriginal</i>	<i>Term inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</i>
<i>cultural &amp; linguistic diversity</i>	<i>Refers to the range of different cultural and language groups represented in the population who identify as having particular cultural or linguistic affiliations.</i>
<i>reasonable belief</i>	<i>A reportable allegation is made where a person makes an allegation, based on a reasonable belief that a worker or volunteer has committed reportable conduct or misconduct that may involve reportable conduct. This includes where a reportable allegation is made against the head of the organisation. A reasonable belief is more than suspicion. There must be some objective basis for the belief. However, it is not the same as having proof and does not require certainty.</i>

## Commitment to Child Safety

North Melbourne Grammar College (NMGC) strives to create a safe, respectful, nurturing environment where each member of the College community plays an important role in promoting student wellbeing.

NMGC:

- has zero tolerance for child abuse
- actively works to listen to and empower children
- has systems to protect children from abuse, and will take all allegations and concerns very seriously and respond to them consistently in line with the College's other policies and procedures
- is committed to promoting physical, emotional and cultural safety for all children
- is committed to diversity and cultural differences and is fully compliant with Child Safe standards.

These procedures form part of NMGC's commitment to child safety and cover all forms of child abuse, sexual assault and mandatory reporting obligations that apply to all College staff at NMGC.

## Valuing of Diversity

NMGC values diversity and does not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:

- support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and their families.
- support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families.
- welcome children with disabilities and their families.
- seek to recruit appropriate staff from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- welcome all people regardless of religion, culture and sexual preferences.

## Recruitment of staff & Volunteers

NMGC applies best practice in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers. As such NMGC ensures that child safety requirements are addressed in the recruitment process. this includes:

- National Police checks
- Working with Children checks
- VIT registration (where applicable)
- Role descriptions
- Qualification checks
- Orientation/induction process
- Advertised positions carry Child Safety information
- Referee checks
- Code of conduct signed
- Ongoing Professional development in Child Safety processes and procedures

## Procedural Roles & Responsibilities

The Principal has ultimate responsibility for managing the response of NMGC to any allegations or disclosures of child abuse and for monitoring overall College compliance with this procedure.

The Principal and members of NMGC Child Safety Team are the key persons to whom allegations or disclosures of child abuse should be reported. They are also responsible for responding appropriately to a child who makes or is affected by an allegation of child abuse.

## Reporting Procedures

Upon being informed of any allegation or disclosure of child abuse all College staff must immediately inform the Principal or another member of the NMGC Child Safety Team.

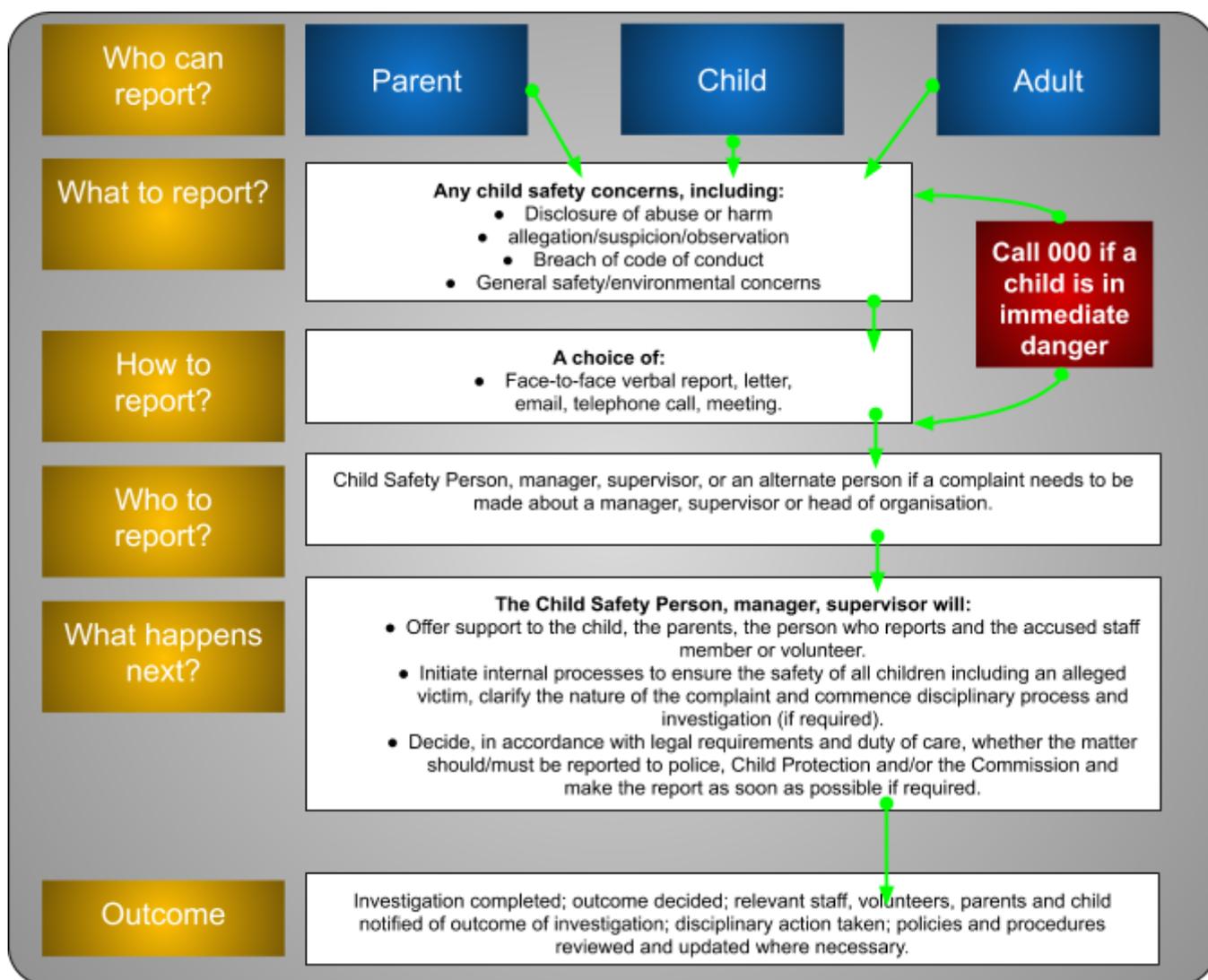
College staff are not required to assess the validity of any allegations or to prove that child abuse did indeed take place before informing the Principal or another staff member of the allegations or disclosure.

NMGC will act promptly and sensitively when informed of an allegation or disclosure of child abuse, whether or not the allegation or disclosure is made directly by a student.

Upon learning of an allegation or a disclosure of child abuse, the Principal will ensure that NMGC:

- responds to the allegation or disclosure of child abuse in a timely and sensitive way
- provides appropriate support to the student who has disclosed the child abuse
- continue to observe the child (record what you observe)
- provides clear information to the alleged victim about what NMGC will do in response to their allegations or disclosure
- provides a safe environment for the alleged victim and any other students alleged to be involved or affected
- informs the student of the obligation of NMGC to report the allegations or disclosure to the appropriate authorities
- immediately contact the parents/carers of the alleged victim, unless it is not appropriate in the circumstances to do so
- call for medical and/or police assistance in cases of emergency
- keep notes and records of all conversations, disclosures and of all follow-up actions or interactions

## Reporting Process Flowchart



## Record keeping & incident monitoring

All incident reports of child abuse are maintained by the college and kept on file. These are held by the administration to maintain strict confidentiality and privacy. Reports of child abuse and complaints will be monitored by the Committee of Management to ensure that they are appropriately managed.

## Risk management

To reduce the potential for harm, NMGC utilises a risk management strategy. as such all existing and new activities and facilities are assessed for risks of child abuse. This includes:

- environmental risks
- vulnerability risks

Wherever risks are identified, a strategy of minimisation is implemented where actions that can reduce further are acted on. High risk outcomes are never engaged. Medium Risk outcome are only engaged with the authorisation of the Principal with special measures in place to reduce the risk.

Likelihood of Event Occuring	Level of Concern		
	Minor Concern	Moderate Concern	Great Concern
Likely	Low Risk	High Risk	High Risk
Possible	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
Unlikely	Low Risk	Low Risk	Medium Risk

## Risk management re: Outside Organisation particular to International Students

As a non-school provider to International Students, NMGC has particular risks that are related to:

- Homestay Accommodation (companies & hosts)
- Advocates (Guardians)

These added conditions present potential risks for student harm. NMGC has implemented the following procedures to reduce this risk:

- Students are not accepted as NMGC students until an Enrollment Offer Letter together with CAAW or Guardianship Visa document are in place.
- All Homestay Companies operated under agreement with NMGC and comply with Child Safe standards.
- All Homestay locations are subject for approval by NMGC via an on-site visit and this is repeated at least every 6 months for underage students.
- Homestay locations are also checked for all people living and/or regularly visiting the site to ensure that if over 18 have appropriate check such as Working with Children certification

- Reference checks are carried out by NMGC for every host. Hosts who have been with a homestay company for 12 months can be verified by the Homestay Company. External reference checks are carried out for all other hosts. Verification includes meeting and checking certifications and referees.
- NMGC communicates with hosts formally every month regarding the behaviours and conditions of students staying with them. This information is stored by the college and when issues arise that require attention they are acted on immediately.
- Guardians will be in place only where the Department of Home Affairs has issued a Guardianship Visa.
- All other forms of “Guardians” are known as Advocates as the Principal as the signer of the CAAW document carries the legal responsibilities for the students. Advocates have the same checks as Hosts carried out.
- The college’s email client holds email contact details for the following groups, which are revised for accuracy every month prior to hosts feedback forms being sent out:
  - NMGC Hosts
  - NMGC parents
  - NMGC Advocates

## Non-compliance & Code of Conduct

NMGC highly values child safety. Where an employee or volunteer fails to enforce this policy, disciplinary action will be taken which may result in restriction of duties, suspension or termination of employment.

## Legislative Context

- Child Safe Standards - <https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards>
- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000
- The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, known as ‘the National Code 2018’
- Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000

## Responsibilities

Role within NMGC	Area of responsibility
<b>Principal</b>	Approval Authority
<b>Principal</b>	Development/Review
<b>Compliance Manager</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>Compliance Manager</b>	Compliance
<b>Principal</b>	Implementation

- The Committee of Management of the College
  - Authorise all policies relating to child protection and student welfare
  - Will ensure a culture of child safety and student welfare is developed at NMGC
  - Receive reports from the Principal, the Student Welfare Officer and other staff on issues relating to child safety and student welfare on a regular basis

- Ensure strategies are developed both reactively and proactively to ensure the safety and welfare of student
- The Principal
  - the implementation of this policy/procedure
  - appointing a designated staff member with responsibility for the welfare and safety requirements of students
  - updating staff on the welfare and safety requirements of all students
  - providing supervisory support for the Student Welfare Officer
  - Authorise actions required to ensure compliance with the Child Safety standards articulated in Ministerial Order 870.
  - Promote a culture of awareness of the importance of child safety and student welfare matters amongst staff and students
- Student Welfare Officer / Student Service Officer
  - Staying up-to-date on issues relating to student welfare and child safety
  - Working with students to ensure the safety and welfare of all
  - Bringing issues to the attention of the Principal
  - Preparing regular reports for the College Management Team on the issues presenting themselves within the student body
  - Liaising with the parents/guardians of the College to ensure they understand safety and welfare issues
  - Providing professional development for staff on issues relating to welfare and child safety
  - Providing training for students on issues relating to welfare and child safety
- Staff
  - Staying up-to-date on issues relating to student welfare and child safety
  - Ensuring they are aware of the College’s policies and procedures in this area and that they are aware of the Duty of Care and Code of Conduct documents provided by the College
  - Ensuring their professional obligations are discharged in a manner consistent with the strategies developed by the College and in keeping with the intent of the Standards, Regulations and Laws of the State and Commonwealth of Australia.
- Students
  - Ensuring their actions are in line with the College’s Code of Conduct
  - Ensuring their actions at no time endanger other students, staff or members of the NMGC or broader community

Authorised by	NMGC Committee of Management
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