



## Mountain community children's centre inc.

### Child Protection Policy

**Rationale:** At Mountain Community Children's Centre educators are committed to the physical and emotional well-being of children. Educators believe that children may be vulnerable and that child protection is community responsibility.

**Aim:** To provide guidelines to follow in the event of an allegation regarding the well-being of a child being compromised by a family member, member of the community or educators and to clarify suspected indicators of a child at risk of serious harm.

#### **Procedure:**

All educators/staff members as well as unpaid volunteers and students at Mountain Community Children's Centre must comply with the NSW Working With Children Check as set out by the NSW Children's Guardian. The fee for paid workers is \$80 payable to the Roads and Maritime Services. Paid workers and volunteers or students are to present themselves to the Roads and Maritime Services with identification and if applicable payment. You will then be provided with a number and confirmation email that you will present to the centre. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure the contact telephone numbers for the Helpline and for local Community Service Centres are displayed in the office to enable ready contact for queries. The contact telephone number for Child Protection Helpline is **132627**, the contact number for Community Services Gosford is **4336 2400**.

#### **If a child makes an allegation about someone other than an educator**

If a child makes an allegation (shares information) with educators about a situation that is happening to him / her that causes concern for example physical injuries, emotional trauma or sexual encounters, the educator is not to ask any questions or lead the child with prompting.

The educator is not to promise they can solve the situation, instead they may ask the child "How do you feel about this?" The educator is not to promise they will keep the information a secret, they must let the child know that they will need to tell someone.

The educator is to notify the Nominated Supervisor of the allegation as soon as possible and participate in compiling a clear record of the events that have taken place. This information is to be treated with strict confidence and must not be shared with anyone – including the child's family. It is mandatory for the Nominated Supervisor (or notified educator) to **complete the Mandatory Reporter Guide Decision Tree on the Keep Them Safe NSW website or to contact the Child Protection Helpline on 132 627**.

#### **If the child makes an allegation about an educator or member of staff**

If the child makes an allegation (shares information) with educators about a situation that is happening to him / her that causes concern for example physical injuries, emotional trauma or sexual encounters regarding an educator or member of staff, the educator listening is not to ask any questions or lead the child with prompting.

The educator is not to promise that they can solve the situation, instead they may ask the child "How do you feel about this?" The educator is not to promise they will keep the information a secret, they must let the child know that they will need to tell someone.

The "listener" is to notify the Nominated supervisor of the allegation as soon as possible and participate in compiling a clear record of the events that have taken place. This information is to be treated with strict confidence and must not be shared with anyone – including the child's family. If the allegation involves the Nominated supervisor the educator may contact the President of the Management Committee who will then **complete the Mandatory Reporter Guide Decision Tree on the Keep Them Safe NSW website** or to **contact the Child Protection Helpline on 132 627**.

If an educator observes events concerning another educator or member of staff and the well-being of any child at the Centre they must inform the Nominated Supervisor immediately and compile a report. This information is to be kept confidential. The Nominated Supervisor must then follow the appropriate mandatory reporting guidelines as outlined in the Child Protection in the Workplace – Responding to allegations against employees Folder (kept in the office). If the allegation involves the Nominated Supervisor the member of educators may contact the President of the Management Committee who will then follow the appropriate mandatory reporting guidelines as outlined in the same manual.

If a family member approaches educators with a complaint regarding an educators or member of staff they are to be directed to the Nominated Supervisor who will request the complaint be made in writing and then follow the appropriate mandatory reporting guidelines as outlined in the Child Protection in the Workplace – Responding to allegations against employees Folder (kept in the office). If a parent initiates any grievance educators are to follow the Grievance / Complaints Policy which outlines that any situation involving a child protection issue is to be treated within the Child Protection Policy guidelines. If the complaint involves the Nominated Supervisor the family member is to be directed to the President of the Management Committee who will follow the appropriate mandatory reporting guidelines as outlined in the same manual.

### **Indicators that may concern educators**

- \* a child is injured on a regular basis
- \* a child demonstrates injuries consistent with hitting, punching, biting, scratching etc.
- \* a child discloses specific information regarding harm to their well-being.
- \* a child is bruised or has bleeding from their genital area
- \* a child displays characteristics of neglect such as poor personal or physical hygiene.
- \* a child is very fearful of / discloses fear of someone
- \* a child discloses information or demonstrates through play – characteristics of inappropriate sexual behaviour.
- \* any reason that leads educators to be concerned for the well-being of a child.

The Nominated Supervisor and Certified Supervisors will regularly complete a course in child protection approved by the NSW Regulatory Authority.

Policy Updated May 2014: Reference Material: Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011, Office of Children's Guardian,  
Working With Children Check, Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012, NSW Government Keep Them Safe Online Mandatory  
Reporter Guide  
Education and Care Services National Regulations 84  
National Quality Standard 2