

Responding to Child Abuse Reports and Allegations Policy

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1. Purpose

1.1. Christian Schools Tasmania (CST) is committed to protecting the children and young people to whom it delivers a service. Accordingly, we have developed this policy on responding to child abuse reports and allegations as a guide to all our people in meeting their responsibilities in this area. Our staff are required to identify, report, and respond to any concerns about or incidents of child abuse or neglect towards children or young people to whom we provide services. Our staff are required to respond to abuse or neglect perpetrated by staff within our organisation or by other persons.

CST will promote equity and respect diversity of the children and young people and their parents who access our services as part of our reporting policy.

This Policy supports our obligations under the *Reportable Conduct Scheme*, the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*, the *Child Safe Standards* recommended by the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse* and is aligned with the *Australian Human Rights Commission National Principles for Child Safe Organisations*.

As an organisation tasked with the privilege of providing education, we take our responsibility seriously to deliver a Christ-centred and rich learning environment that is caring, nurturing and safe. Our Board is committed to ensuring the safety of all children and young people to whom we provide services or who participate in our programs.

As part of that commitment, our Board endorses this policy.

2. Scope

2.1. All staff within our organisation are required to meet the Policy's requirements on responding to child abuse reports and allegations.

2.2. No one within our organisation is exempt from meeting the standards and requirements set out in the Policy.

2.3. Consequences of breaching the Policy:

2.3.1. If staff fail to report instances, allegations, disclosures or concerns about abuse or neglect of a child or young person – by staff within our organisation or by others – we view such failure as a serious matter that, depending on the circumstances, may result in disciplinary action or be grounds for dismissal.

2.3.2. The Policy prohibits all staff from:

- Discussing any concerns or allegations with unauthorised staff within or outside our organization. Such prohibition is not being designed to limit, in any way, their rights and responsibilities to report their concerns or allegations, but rather as part of our organisation's commitment to ensuring privacy, confidentiality and natural justice.
- Making deliberately false, misleading or vexatious allegations.

2.3.3. Staff are obliged to raise any concerns they might have concerning:

- Our organisational policies designed to safeguard children and young people such as outlined in CST's Staff Code of Conduct Policy and this Policy.
- Actions of other staff within our organisation that contravene our policies or that may otherwise have the potential to harm a child or young person.

3. Policy

3.1. Definition of terms for the purpose of this Policy:

- **Bullying** involves the inappropriate use of power by one or more persons over another less powerful person or group and is generally an act that is repeated over time. Bullying has been described by researchers as taking many forms which are often interrelated and include:
 - Verbal (name-calling, put-downs, threats)
 - Physical (hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting)
 - Social (ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating)
 - Psychological (spreading rumours, stalking, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions)
- **Child or young person** is a person under the age of 18 years.
- **Emotional or psychological abuse** occurs when a child does not receive the love, affection or attention they need for healthy emotional, psychological and social development. Such abuse may involve repeated rejection or threats to a child. Constant criticism, teasing, ignoring, threatening, yelling, scapegoating, ridicule and rejection, or continual coldness are examples of emotional abuse. These behaviours continue to the extent that they result in significant damage to the child's physical, intellectual or emotional wellbeing and development.
- **Family Violence** occurs when children are forced to live with violence between adults in their home. It is harmful to children. It can include witnessing violence or the consequences of violence. Family violence is defined as violence between members of a family or extended family or those fulfilling the role of the family in a child or young person's life. Exposure to family violence places children and young people at increased risk of physical injury and harm and significantly impacts their well-being and development.
- **Grooming** means befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child (and/or the child's guardian, family or friend or a worker) for the purpose of establishing trust to normalise sexually harmful behaviour or engage in an unlawful act, criminal offence or sexual misconduct against a child. Grooming occurs in a pattern of manipulative or controlling behaviours. These behaviours can take place in a range of settings.

Examples of grooming behaviour include:

- isolating a child from their peers to spend time alone
- befriending a child in person and continuing to communicate with the child online
- giving gifts, money or alcohol to a child, parent or friend to gain access to a child
- inappropriate touching of a child, including tickling and play fighting
- asking a child not to tell anyone about their behaviour.

For the purpose of:

- establishing trust to normalise sexually harmful behaviour or engage in an unlawful act, sexual offence or sexual misconduct against a child.

Grooming behaviour can also be a sexual offence under section 125D of the *Criminal Code Act 1924*.

If you are unsure if an allegation of grooming behaviour is a criminal offence, you should contact Tasmania Police.

- **Leader of an organisation**, for the purpose of this policy means the same thing as what the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 calls a Head of entity. This is a person who is primarily responsible for the decision making of the Organisation. For the purpose of this policy, the CEO is the Leader of CST.
- **Physical violence** means:
 - actual physical violence: the intentional or reckless application of physical force to a person without lawful justification or excuse; or
 - apprehended physical violence: any act which intentionally or recklessly causes a person to apprehend immediate and unlawful violence to the person.Examples of actual physical violence include hitting, punching, pushing, kicking and spitting.
Examples of apprehending physical violence include words or actions which indicate that physical violence will occur to the child *in the future*.
- **Relevant offence** is other types of conduct that needs to be reported. Under the Reportable Conduct Scheme, a relevant offence is:
 - A sexual offence under the Criminal Code Act 1924
 - failing to report the abuse of a child
 - female genital mutilation
 - inciting or attempts to commit crimes that are inciting or attempts to commit offences listed above
 - accessories after the fact for crimes that are inciting or attempts to commit offences listed above.
- **Reportable allegation** means information that leads a person to form a reasonable suspicion that a worker of an entity has committed reportable conduct, whether or not the alleged reportable conduct occurred within the course of the worker's duties in respect of the entity, and regardless of whether the alleged reportable conduct occurred before the commencement of the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*.

- **Reportable conduct** includes a range of conduct committed against or in the presence of children, including criminal and non-criminal behaviour. Reportable conduct involves:
 - significant emotional or psychological harm
 - significant neglect
 - physical violence
 - a sexual offence
 - sexual misconduct
 - grooming
 - relevant offences such as failing to report child abuse and female genital mutilation.

- **Reportable Conduct Scheme** requires leaders of specific organisations to notify an independent regulator when concerns are raised about conduct related to child abuse involving a worker, and conduct investigations.

- **Reportable Conviction** means a conviction for an offence that involves reportable conduct, regardless of whether the conduct or conviction occurred before the commencement of the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*.

- **Sexual misconduct** is conduct that may overlap with criminal conduct. When performed in a sexual manner or with a sexual intention, sexual misconduct includes:
 - inappropriate behaviour
 - physical contact
 - voyeurism (which means watching someone or others)
 - speech or other communication, including electronic communication.

Sexual misconduct is conduct that doesn't meet the acceptable standard of behaviour by a worker or volunteer and is committed in a sexual manner or with sexual intention. Sexual misconduct may occur in a variety of settings, including in person communication and online communication. Examples of sexual misconduct include inappropriate comments to a child about an area of their body in a sexual manner and inappropriate touching of a child. Another example would be intentionally showing a sexually explicit movie to a child for sexual gratification.

- **Sexual offences include:**
 - bestiality (given this often co-occurs with sexual abuse of people)
 - penetrative sexual abuse of child or young person
 - person permitting penetrative sexual abuse of child or young person on premises
 - persistent sexual abuse of child or young person
 - indecent act with child or young person
 - procuring child or young person for sexual abuse
 - communications with intent to procure child or young person
 - penetrative sexual abuse of person with mental impairment
 - indecent assault
 - procuring a person for penetrative sexual abuse by threats or fraud
 - involving person under 18 years in production of child exploitation material
 - production of child exploitation material
 - distribution of child exploitation material
 - possession of child exploitation material
 - accessing child exploitation material
 - incest
 - indecency

- rape
- inciting or attempts to commit crimes that are inciting or attempts to
- commit offences listed above
- accessories after the fact for crimes that are inciting or attempts to
- commit offences listed above
- willfully and obscenely expose one's person in public.

- **Significant emotional or psychological harm:** Emotional or psychological harm means harm to a child's:
 - wellbeing
 - development
 - or both.

Significant means the harm is more than trivial. It is also important to know that something doesn't have to have a permanent impact or effect to be considered significant. Examples of significant emotional or psychological harm include:

- direct and indirect exposure to domestic and family violence
- verbal abuse, such as telling a child they are worthless
- humiliating a child in front of their peers.

- **Significant neglect:** Neglect of a child means the deliberate or reckless failure to meet one or more of that child's basic needs. Significant means the neglect is more than trivial or insignificant, but is not required to be deemed serious or to have a lasting permanent effect.

There are several types of neglectful behaviour. These include:

- supervisory neglect: for example, leaving a child in a hot car in summer time
- physical neglect: a child being extremely dirty and suffering a skin condition as a result of poor hygiene
- educational neglect: preventing a child from attending school for no valid reason
- emotional neglect: rejecting a child from a family, home, school or other situation for no valid reason.

- **Worker** is a person over the age of 18 who is employed by an organisation, whether or not the person is employed in connection with any work or activities of the organisation that relate to children engaged by the organisation to provide services, including as a volunteer, contractor, subcontractor, consultant, director, member of a management committee, office holder, alderman, councillor, MP, student or trainee, and/or minister of religion or religious leaders. The Reportable Conduct Scheme covers all workers in an organisation –not only those that work or volunteer with children.

3.2. Responsibilities:

3.2.1. Chief Executive Officer:

- implement policies and procedures across the organisation;
- report and abide by the legislative requirements of the Reportable Conduct Scheme
- ensure Principals/Executive have access to and understand the Policy and related procedures; and
- ensure all managers/supervisors have access to support and advice to understand and implement policies and procedures.

3.2.2. Principals/Executive:

- ensure workers have access to and understand the Policy and related procedures
- ensure all managers/supervisors have access to support and advice to understand and implement policies and procedures
- report any instance of reportable allegation or reportable conviction or reportable conduct to the CEO.

3.2.3. Human Resources:

- ensure policies and procedures are followed and implemented.
- review and update the policy and supporting resources in consultation with relevant stakeholders;
- support the coordination of the SCYP framework and implementation; and
- provide training and advice in the application of policies and procedures.

3.2.4. Worker - All Staff/Volunteers/Contractors:

- compliance with the Policy and procedures;
- reporting any suspicion that a child’s safety may be at risk to the CEO or School Principal (or, if the School Principal is involved in the suspicion, to the CEO) or (if the CEO is involved in the suspicion to the CST Board Chair).

3.3. **Mandatory Reporters:** prescribed persons or Mandatory Reporters have a special duty to inform Child Protection Services if they believe, suspect or know that a child has been abused or neglected.

Teachers and employees of CST that provide education or care for children are Mandatory Reporters. If Mandatory Reporters fail to report any reasonable belief or suspicion of child abuse, then you may be subject to a fine or imprisonment. This applies to all states and territories in Australia.

Mandatory reporting legislation and summary	Relevant staff who must comply
Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 is to provide for the care and protection of children in a manner that maximises a child’s opportunity to grow up in a safe and stable environment and to reach their full potential.	All staff, registered teachers, early childhood education and care workers, registered psychologists, employees, volunteers or other persons who work or participate in education.
Information Sharing	Chief Executive Officer/Principals

The following legal mandatory reporting requirements apply to staff within our organisation:(please refer to aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect).

3.4. **Key Requirements:** If any staff member within CST suspects harm to a child, they will, in the first instance, make this known to the Principal or their delegate.

If the concern involves a staff member or worker, the person reporting i.e. staff member, contractor, volunteer etc. will make their concerns known to the Chief Executive Officer. The CEO or their delegate must notify the Independent Regulator within three business days and abide by the requirements of the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

All concerns must be escalated to the relevant person as soon as is practicable after the concern becomes apparent or if that is not possible, no later than before ending that person’s day of work within CST.

If a child or young person is at **imminent risk** of harm or in **immediate danger**, staff are required to report the situation directly to:

- The Tasmanian Police 131 444.
- Child Protection Services on 1800 000 123. This state-wide number can be used 24 hours a day to report concerns about children. However, outside of usual business hours (8.30am to 5.00pm) it should only be used to report emergencies or urgent concerns regarding the risk of immediate harm.

If a child or young person is at immediate risk and Police or medical assistance is required dial 000.

3.5. Responding to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse – four critical actions:

STEP 1 – Identify and Respond:

In situations where a child or young person is making an allegation, our staff are required to:

- listen to the allegation or disclosure supportively, without dispute;
- clarify the basic details, without seeking detailed information or asking suggestive or leading questions;
- explain to the child (if present) that other people may need to be told in order to stop what is happening;
- provide reassurance that our organisation will take immediate action in response to the allegation;
- report any instance of a reportable allegation or reportable conviction or reportable conduct to the Principal or their nominated delegate immediately, or if that is not possible, no later than before ending that that person's day of work within CST; and
- remember, the safety and welfare of the child or young person is paramount at all times.

The Principal or their nominated delegate will complete our organisation's online 'Child Abuse Incident Report Form' in consultation with the person who reported the allegation or abuse.

In situations where a child or young person makes a disclosure in a group situation or to another child, our staff are required to:

- acknowledge that you have heard the student;
- indicate support by explaining that what the student has said sounds important and that it would be better to talk about it privately with the Principal later;
- arrange an appropriate time as soon as possible to see the student away from other students; and
- explain you want to protect their privacy.

Do NOT:

- confront the person believed to be the perpetrator;
- commence an investigation into the alleged abuse or neglect with any other staff, children or young people or persons outside CST.
- discuss any concerns or allegations without authorized staff within or outside the organisation to ensure our organisation's commitment to privacy, confidentiality and natural justice.

STEP 2 - Report:

- All staff are responsible for making it known if they have 'reasonable grounds' to suspect that a child, or a class of children, is at risk of significant harm from abuse or neglect.
- 'Reasonable grounds' refers to the existence of an objective basis for suspecting a risk of significant harm based on:
 - first-hand observations of the child, young person or family;
 - what the child, young person, the parent or another person has disclosed; and
 - what can reasonably be inferred based on professional training and/or experience.
- Our staff are required to report any instance of reportable allegation or reportable conviction or reportable conduct to the CEO/Principal or their nominated delegate immediately, or if that is not possible, no later than before ending that person's day of work within CST.
- In making this known to the CEO/Principal or their nominated delegate, they will include in the information a statement of the observations, information, opinions, and other grounds upon which the belief, suspicion, or knowledge is based.
- All our staff retain the right to report directly to relevant authorities, such as police or child protection, any concerns they may have in relation to the safety and welfare of a child or young person, regardless of whether or not they have also reported that matter internally.
- We ask that our staff also inform the CEO/Principal of any report they make to those authorities, to enable our organisation to best provide support to the child or young person, their family and our staff, where appropriate.

In taking a report of concern or incident from others within our organisation, our staff are:

- not to assess the validity of such allegations or concerns, but to report all allegations or concerns to the nominated person or persons within our organisation as described in this policy (the validity of an allegation will then be assessed in the manner described in this Policy);
- to disregard factors such as the authority or position of the persons involved and any pre-existing views about the good character, or otherwise, of any person involved or under investigation;
- not to confront the person believed to be the perpetrator; and
- not to commence an investigation into the alleged abuse or neglect with any other staff, children or young people or persons outside CST.

STEP 3 - Contact:

- Tasmania Police 131 444 for Police Assistance and Child Protection Services on 1800 000 123 immediately (i.e. before the end of the workday).
- If a child is at immediate risk and Police or medical assistance is required, dial 000
- For urgent matters where a child or young person needs immediate protection, please call 1800 000 123 at any time.
- Child Protection Services should be contacted regardless if a reporter is unsure if they should report a concern or not.
- If a report is made to the Principal, a Child Abuse Incident Report Form must be completed by the Principal with the person who reported the allegation of abuse.
- The Principal, (if required), will ensure that the incident is reported to Tasmanian Police and Child Protection Services immediately (i.e. before the end of the workday). If the Principal is unavailable (or they are the subject of the complaint), our staff are required to report the matter to the Chief Executive Officer.
- If the report is in regards to a worker, the Principal must contact the CEO immediately (i.e. before the end of the workday).
- If the report is in regards to a worker, The CEO or their delegate will contact the Independent Regulator and follow the procedures as outlined in 3.7.
- All our staff retain the right to report directly to relevant authorities such as police or child protection any concerns they may have concerning the safety and welfare of a child or young person, regardless of whether or not they have also reported that matter internally.
- We ask that our staff also inform the Principal of any report they make to those authorities, to enable our organisation to best provide support to the child or young person, their family and our staff, where appropriate.

STEP 4 - Support:

Experiences of child abuse, including exposure to family violence, can cause trauma and significantly impact the mental health and wellbeing of children. In addition to reporting and referral to relevant authorities, CST staff play a central role in addressing this trauma and have a duty of care to ensure that student feels safe and supported at school including:

- offering support which can include direct support and referral to wellbeing professionals and community services and should involve the development of a student support plan;
- principals must ensure that other impacted students are offered and provided appropriate support; and
- support must also be provided to any impacted staff members.

In relation to reportable cases of abuse where Child Protection Services and/or Tasmania Police have been notified, they may wish to carry out student interviews, sometimes jointly, at school.

- Principals are responsible for ensuring students are supported during interviews at school conducted by Tasmania Police or Child Protection Services.
- Before allowing any officers access to information or students, the Principal or their nominated delegate should sight the officer's identification and may also wish to confirm this with a phone call to their station.
- No student will be interviewed at the school against the wishes of the student. It is the Principal or nominated delegate's responsibility to inform the student of this.
- In writing or via electronic mail, the officers must produce for the School official confirmation of an investigation involving a particular child. At the commencement of the interview, the Principal should ask the investigating officers to explain to the student the purpose of the interview and their role in the presence of the Principal, or their nominated delegate.
- The Principal, or their nominated delegate, will inform the student of his or her right to choose a supportive adult to be present at the interview. If a person is nominated by the student, the interview must not commence until that person has arrived. What takes place in the interview becomes part of the investigation and must remain confidential.
- Except in cases which involve a member of the family, it is expected that a parent of the child concerned will be present at any interview with the child. Should the allegations be made against a family member, the parents will be informed of the interview as soon as possible after it has commenced by the relevant authorities or the School if permission has been granted.
- Child Protection Services or Police officers are responsible for communicating with parents about any further matters related to an interview.
- Students should be provided with support and a safe space before and after any such interview.

Please refer to the Four Critical Actions Flowchart in the Appendix for a summary of these four actions.

3.6. Additional Requirements:

3.6.1. Reporting of concerns or allegations regarding abuse involving child-to-child conduct: there are a range of circumstances in which child-to-child conduct may be reportable, either to Child Protection Services or to the Tasmania Police.

In the case of mandatory reporting to Child Protection Services, Mandatory Reporters are required to report circumstances of problematic sexual behaviour by a child or young person toward another child or young person (that is, conduct outside the bounds of normal sexual behaviour), including child-to-child sexual abuse.

Child-to-child sexual abuse can occur when a child or young person involves another child in sexual activity. It can be physical, verbal or emotional and can include but is not limited to a child:

- kissing or holding another child in a sexual manner;
- exposing a sexual body part to a child;
- having sexual relations with a child;
- talking in a sexually explicit way;
- making obscene phone calls or remarks to a child;
- sending obscene messages to a child via technology, including social media; and/or
- fondling a child in a sexual manner.

If you have any concern that problematic sexual behaviour by a child or young person toward another child or young person (including child-to-child sexual abuse) is occurring, you must immediately inform the Principal or their nominated delegate. If you are not sure whether the sexual behaviour is problematic, you should report the behaviour to the Principal or their nominated delegate.

The issue of bullying by a student is dealt with in the Anti-Bullying Policy, policies and procedures and where applicable, found in the student handbooks and Learner Protocols. However, depending on the seriousness and nature of the alleged conduct – e.g. physical assault or threats of violence - the matter may also be reportable to Tasmania Police. In such instances, you must immediately advise the Principal or their nominated delegate.

3.7 Reportable Conduct Scheme:

The Reportable Conduct Scheme is about creating a culture where organisations that engage with children and young people investigate concerns about their wellbeing in a thorough, transparent, safe and child-centred way.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme requires leaders of specific organisations to notify an independent regulator when concerns are raised about conduct related to child abuse involving a worker, and conduct investigations.

While leaders of organisations covered by the Reportable Conduct Scheme are legally required to report instances of reportable conduct, the Independent Regulator can receive voluntary reports from anyone.

This includes people who aren't leaders of organisations, and children and young people themselves.

If the CEO of CST becomes aware of a reportable allegation or a reportable conviction against a worker of the relevant entity (as identified in the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023), the CEO must

- fill in a Child Abuse Incident Report Form to ensure all relevant details are documented;
- within three business days after becoming aware of the reportable allegation or reportable conviction, notify the Independent Regulator in writing of the following:
 - that a reportable allegation has been made against, or a reportable conviction recorded against, a worker of the relevant entity; and
 - the name (including any former names or aliases, if known) and date of birth, if known, of the worker concerned; and
 - if the notification relates to a reportable allegation, whether Tasmania Police has been informed about the reportable allegation; and
 - the name, address and telephone number of the relevant entity; and
 - the name of the head of the relevant entity;
- as soon as possible, the CEO must start an investigation (or get an independent investigator to do so) and cooperate with the Police and other authorities as required
- take any action necessary to safeguard the child or young person (or other children or young people in our care) from additional harm through options such as:
 - redeploying that staff member to a position where they do not work with children;
 - additional supervision of that staff member; and
 - removing or suspending that staff member from duty until the validity of the allegations is determined.
- assist in addressing the support needs of those impacted by the allegation, including considerations of cultural safety for:
 - the child and their family (this includes any specific support needs for those from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander; culturally and linguistically diverse; or person with a disability background);
 - the person against whom the complaint is made by, for example, offering professional counselling;
 - other staff impacted by the allegations;
 - make clear to all other staff who are aware of the allegation that:
 - the allegation does not mean the person is guilty, and that the allegation will be investigated appropriately and will include the right to 'procedural fairness';
 - they are not to discuss the matter with any person, except as directed by police, child protection authorities and/or the Principal and only in direct relation to the investigation of the allegation.

- within 30 days after becoming aware of the reportable allegation notify the Regulator of:
 - all known detailed information about the reportable allegation or reportable conviction; and
 - whether or not the head of the relevant entity has taken, or intends to take, any action in relation to the worker and the reasons why the head has taken, or intends to take or not to take, any such action; and
 - any written submissions, made to the head of the relevant entity concerning the reportable allegation or reportable conviction, that the worker requested to have considered in determining what, if any, action should be taken by the head in relation to the worker.
- At the end of the investigation, the CEO must provide the following information to the independent Regulator:
 - Findings of the investigation
 - Reasons for the findings
 - Details of any actions that have been taken as a result.

3.7. **Confidentiality and privacy:** Our organisation maintains the confidentiality and privacy of all concerned (including the alleged perpetrator), except if doing so would compromise the welfare of the child or young person and/or investigation of the allegation.

3.8. **Documentation:** As part of our policy for responding to reports or allegations of child abuse, we have developed a Child Abuse Incident Report Form, which is to be used by any of our staff to document any allegation, disclosure, incident or concern regarding child abuse. In situations where our staff become aware of abuse, whether through observation of potential indicators such as bruises or cuts or by directly observing potentially abusive behaviour towards a child or young person, they are required to use the Child Abuse Incident Report Form to record their observations and concerns as accurately as possible.

The Principal will oversee the creation of a file to contain the completed 'Child Abuse Incident Report Form' and any other documentation relating to the allegation and subsequent action.

To prevent access by unauthorised persons, our organisation stores any documentation associated with an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child or young person by having:

- hard-copy documentation stored in a locked filing cabinet (or similar)
- electronic documentation stored in a password-protected folder (or similar)

We maintain and regularly monitor records of child abuse reports as part of our Incident Management processes to ensure that they are responded to effectively according to this policy and that reporting to external authorities is complied with.

3.9. **Communication:** We communicate our policy requirements to all our staff involved with children and young people in our organisation. We involve our staff in reviews of our policy requirements. We communicate any significant alterations to our policy requirements and resources to all staff.

4. References and Additional Related Documents

4.1. The following CST policies must be considered in relation to this document:

- CST's Staff Code of Conduct
- CST's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- CST's Incident Management Policy
- CST's Work Health and Safety Policy
- CST's Child Abuse Incident Report Form
- CST's Four Critical Actions Flowchart

For an outline of the mandatory reporting requirements across Australian jurisdictions, a summary can be found at aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect

4.2 Related Frameworks and Legislation:

Our guidelines comply with relevant legislation.

In upholding this Policy, the following legislation and frameworks must be considered by all CST personnel:

- Children, Young People and Their Families Act 1997
- Family Violence Act 2004
- Child and Youthsafe Organisations Act 2023
- Reportable Conduct Scheme
- Child and Youthsafe Organisations Framework
- Child and Youthsafe Standards
- Australian Human Rights Commission National Principals for Child Safe Organisations
- Code of Professional Ethics for the Teaching Profession in Tasmania
- Professional Boundaries: Guidelines for Tasmanian Teachers

5. Record Keeping

5.1 This Policy is to be kept for three (3) years until review, unless there is a significant legislative or organisational change requiring earlier review.

5.2 The master copy is kept in <https://www.cst.tas.edu.au/services> under Policy Documents, online in read-only in PDF form. Any printed or downloaded copies are deemed uncontrolled.

GENERAL DEFINITION OF TERMS:

Where referred to in this document:

Christian Schools Tasmania (CST) means an association of Christians who, through their Board of Directors, are legally responsible for Calvin Christian School, Channel Christian School, Emmanuel Christian School and Northern Christian School.

The School refers to the CST school to whom the Policy applies.

The Board means the Board of Directors of Christian Schools Tasmania.

Executive is a forum including the Chief Executive Officer, Principals and the Business Manager.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the person appointed to the position of Chief Executive Officer of the Association, or a person acting from time to time in that position.

Principal means the person charged with responsibility for the operation of an Association school, or a person acting from time to time in that position.

Compliance Manager is the person appointed to the position of Compliance Manager of the Association, or a person acting from time to time in that position.

Business Manager is the person appointed to the position of Business Manager of the Association, or a person acting from time to time in that position.

Manager means a person appointed to a managerial position within CST.

Staff is any person either employed by CST either on a casual, part-time or permanent basis as well as volunteers, contractors and sub-contractors engaged in working at a CST School.

Parent is a person who is the legal guardian of a child enrolled at a CST school.

Child means any student enrolled at a CST school.

Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse

CST Is Committed to The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. We All Play A Critical Role in Protecting Children & Young People.

Any staff member who has reasonable grounds for suspecting abuse or harm to a child must report to the Principal or CEO as soon as possible or before the end of the work day and follow the four actions below.

1 IDENTIFY AND RESPOND

If there is no risk of immediate harm go to ACTION 2

Staff member becomes aware of the threat or concern to child or young person

If the child or young person is at immediate risk of harm you must ensure their safety by:

- separating alleged victims and others involved;
- administering first aid;
- calling 000 for urgent medical and/or police assistance to respond to immediate health or safety concerns;
- report to Principal or CEO (For allegations/concerns against a worker i.e. Staff member, volunteer, contractor, the CEO must be notified); and
- maintain confidentiality.

2 REPORT

All incidents must be reported as soon as possible or by the end of the workday and documented on the Child Abuse Incident Report Form

Who is the allegation/concern about or in regards to?

A family member/someone from the community

Report to the Principal or CEO who will notify Strong Families Safe Kids and/or Police and may request the staff member who informed them to be present while they make the report.

A worker of CST (e.g. Staff member/contractor /volunteer)

Report to the CEO
The CEO must notify the CST Board
The CEO must notify the Independent Regulator within 3 business days & start an investigation as soon as possible.

3 CONTACT

You must consult with Strong Families/Safe Kids and/or Tasmania Police to determine the information that can be shared with parents/carers

This can include:

- not to contact the parents/carers (e.g. in circumstances where the parents are alleged to have engaged in the abuse, or the child is a mature minor and does not wish for their parents/carers to be contacted);
- to contact the parents/carers and provide agreed information (this must be done as soon as possible, preferably on the same day of the incident, disclosure or suspicion).

4 SUPPORT

CST must provide support for children impacted by abuse which could include the construction of a Safety Plan developed in consultation with wellbeing professionals and/or Counselling staff.

Key Contacts

CST Principals:

- **Calvin:** Mr Scott Ambrose: 6229 4829
- **Channel:** Mrs Margaret Louw: 6267 2775
- **Emmanuel:** Dr Lifeas Kapofu 6247 8476
- **Northern:** Miss Bethany Armstrong 6263 4733

CST CEO: Mr David Gillman: 6224 8300

Strong Families Safe Kids: 1800 000 123

Police: 000 or your local police station on 131 444