

Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens

CHILD PROTECTION

RESPONSE AND REPORTING PROCESS POLICY

CONSIDERATIONS:

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| NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS | 2.1, 2.2, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 7.1, 7.2 |
| NATIONAL LAW ACT & NATIONAL REGULATIONS | Law: Sections 162(A), 165, 166, 167 and 174 Regulations: 84 – 87, 151, 155, 156, 165, 166, 167, 168 and 170 |
| OTHER | Child Protection Act 1999 Child Protection Regulation 2023 ECA Code of Ethics United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2020 Queensland Statement of Shared Commitment |

POLICY STATEMENT:

Lady Gowrie Qld and the Kindergarten Service teams are aware of and implement a response and reporting process to support the safety and wellbeing of children in the instance that child abuse or a circumstance which poses a risk to a child is disclosed or observed.

All staff of Lady Gowrie Qld and the Kindergarten Service are aware of their legislative responsibilities and are able to act, when required, in undertaking mandatory reporting when these apply. Lady Gowrie Qld and the Kindergarten Service provides a supportive environment for the individual to undertake mandatory reporting when required.

RELEVANT FORMS/MATERIAL:

- Notification of Serious Incident (ACECQA)
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Injury on Arrival Form
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Behaviour Guidance Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Child Protection Prevention and Considerations Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Child Safety, Child Wellbeing and Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Environmental Hazards and Critical Incident Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens First Aid Administration Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Grievance for Families Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Incident, Injury and Trauma Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Interactions with Children Policy
- Lady Gowrie Qld Personal Electronic Device, Mobile Phone, Tablet and Smart Watch Usage Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Safety and Supervision Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Safe Use of Digital Technology and Interactive Media with

Children Policy

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Student and Volunteer Policy
- Record of Service Compliance Log
- Visitor Register
- Lady Gowrie Qld Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy
- Service Community Support Information
- The Child Protection Guide (online Reporting Tool)
- Sexual Behaviours in Children and Young People – A guide to identify, understand and respond to sexual behaviours brochure

POLICY SPECIFIC SOURCES:

- Department of Families, Seniors Disability Services and Child Safety (www.dcssds.qld.gov.au)
- Queensland Family and Child Commission (www.qfcc.qld.gov.au)
- The National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) (www.napcan.org.au)
- The State of Queensland (Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety) (2024). Protecting Children and Supporting Families – A guide to reporting child protection concerns and referring families to support services.
- Bravehearts (www.bravehearts.org.au)
- ACECQA (2023) Review of Child Safety Arrangements under the National Quality Framework – Final Report and Executive Summary
- National Office for Child Safety (www.childsafety.gov.au)

(Accessed 2025)

POLICY GENERAL SOURCES:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Early Childhood Australia (2016) Code of Ethics
- Australian Human Rights Commission www.humanrights.gov.au
- Australian Human Rights Commission (2018). National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Queensland Government (2025) Statement of Shared Commitment

REVIEWED: August 2025

DATE TO BE REVIEWED: August 2026

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

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| BACKGROUND | <p>It is an offence under the National Law to subject a child being educated and cared for by an Approved Service to any form of corporal punishment or any discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances. (Section 166- 167)</p> <p>Early Childhood Education and Care Services have a critical role to play in building resilience, support, linking families to support services and promoting the safety and wellbeing of children.</p> <p>Reflective of the serious nature of child protection and content involved, the Service holds two separate policies, this one which focuses on response and reporting process and another which focuses on prevention and considerations.</p> <p>All forms of abuse are harmful, whether it is visible or not.</p> <p>Child abuse may be physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, family violence (including Domestic violence as a subset). Abuse may occur in person, online or both.</p> <p>Disclosure from a child may be direct or indirect. ECEC staff, as mandatory reporters, will report on receipt of a direct or indirect disclosure from a child, on receipt of information from another person or observation that a child is at risk of harm.</p> <p>Bravehearts shares the following process to support people responding to a disclosure of abuse from a child (see policy attachment)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen • Affirm • Reassure • Support • Protect • Document • Check • Act |
| <p>QUEENSLAND CHILD PROTECTION GUIDE</p> <p>WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW</p> | <p>The Queensland Child Protection Guide (CPG) is a web-based decision support tool collaboratively developed across both government and non-government sectors. The guide aims to assist professionals to report their concerns to the appropriate statutory agency or refer children and their families to family support services.</p> <p>The Child Protection Guide has been designed to complement rather than replace a professional's critical thinking and does not prevent a professional from any course of action they believe is appropriate.</p> <p>The guide can be found on the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety website.</p> <p>Please note, when you first access the Child Protection Guide the following information will appear and should be actioned if relevant to the individual situation.</p> <p><i>Call '000' and ask for the appropriate service to respond to an emergency and/or seek immediate medical or mental health care, if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>child has a serious illness or injury requiring immediate medical attention</i> • <i>a crime has just been or is about to be committed</i> • <i>a child has just caused or is about to cause serious harm to self or others.</i> <p>When the situation is under control, proceed to using the CPG to guide your decision if required.</p> |

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| | <p>All staff should be familiar with accessing the Queensland Child Protection Guide and the format of the decision report and recommendations which is provided after completing the online guide.</p> |
| <h2 style="text-align: center;">RESPONDING TO AN INCIDENT AT THE ECEC SERVICE</h2> | |
| <p>WHAT YOU SHOULD DO</p> | <p>The Service is committed to supporting the safety and wellbeing of children at all times. A range of policies, procedures and staff training including ongoing discussions and reflection on practice supports this commitment.</p> <p>Where a family or visitor (including students and volunteers) have concerns regarding an interaction or incident, which they observe or a child discloses to them, we encourage that this is reported to the Responsible Person of the Service as soon as possible. The Responsible Person will then inform the Nominated Supervisor and Executive Committee as the Approved Provider as soon as possible. The raising of concerns will support the Service to review practices and support the safety and wellbeing of all children attending the Service.</p> <p>The Child Protection Act 1999 defines harm to a child as any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect, or by sexual abuse or exploitation.</p> <p>When staff witness or receive a disclosure from a child/parent/visitor that an incident /alleged incident of child harm, abuse or neglect has occurred.</p> <p>If staff witness an incident they will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take immediate action to support the safety and wellbeing of the individual child, by directing the person to stop the action which may be causing harm, abuse or neglect. • Where the incident is a child harming themselves or verbally threatening self harm staff will take immediate action to support the safety and wellbeing of the child and access emergency services or other mental health support services as needed. • Notify the Responsible Person of the incident. • Reassure and support the child as needed. • Follow the direction from the Responsible Person/ Nominated Supervisor/ Approved Provider. • Complete an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record and hand to the Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person. If the incident is an interaction between two or more children, an IITI Record is completed for each child and only the child the IITI Record is being completed for is named on their IITI Record, the other child involved will be referred to on the IITI as 'another child' or 'a peer'). • Ensure all documentation and information is regarded confidential. • Where an incident is between two or more children, staff will access resources and discussions with the Responsible Person/ Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider as relevant in consideration if the interaction was developmentally age appropriate and ways to support children to understand this exploration behaviour. <p>If staff receive a disclosure of an incident/alleged incident they will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take into account, and document what parents and child/ren tell them and what they observe. • Record observations and/or conversations accurately and objectively as |

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| | <p>soon as possible after the incident has occurred.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not assume an investigative role and record all observations factually without any editorial comment, suppositions, interpretations, or allegations. • Consult immediately with the Responsible Person who will in turn immediately consult with the Nominated Supervisor / Approved Provider. • Complete an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record and hand to Responsible Person. • Ensure all documentation and information is regarded as confidential. <p><u>The Responsible Person will:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take immediate action if necessary to ensure the safety of the child at the Service. • Request that all staff working with the group and if applicable, staff working with other groups in the same indoor or outdoor environment, where the incident/alleged incident occurred, complete an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record. Staff are to complete these independently and without consultation with other staff. • Notify the Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor who will then notify the Regulatory Authority, requesting guidance regarding further action. • The Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor complete any further documentation required for submission to the Regulatory Authority. • Notification to the Regulatory Authority will be undertaken within 24 hrs for serious incidents, incident or allegation of physical or sexual abuse. • Collaborate with the Approved Provider/ Nominated Supervisor regarding strategies for informing families involved and management of staff where required. • The Approved Provider will discuss debriefing and or counselling support as needed for children, families and or staff. • Please note all further notification or management, is the responsibility of the Approved Provider and staff will be advised of requirements as the situation is managed. • As referred to in the Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Grievance for Families Policy, for any complaint / grievance that raises concern regarding the wellbeing and safety of children, all staff should be supported to review and revisit their understanding of the key policies, procedures and support information as pertaining to the context of the complaint/grievance. The sharing of this information can be undertaken through a staff memo from the Nominated Supervisor/s or senior staff as delegated by the Nominated Supervisor. • The Nominated Supervisor / Approved Provider will arrange for the review of any policies or procedures as relevant to the circumstances of the alleged incident. • The Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider will arrange for any further staff training including professional readings where this is identified to support the prevention of any further incidents. |
| RESPONDING TO SUSPECTED HARM OUTSIDE OF THE ECEC SERVICE | |
| MANDATORY REPORTING BY ECEC PROFESSIONALS | <p>From 1 July 2017, Early Childhood Education and Care Professionals are mandated by law to report child safety concerns to the Department of Families, Seniors, and Child Safety where there is a reasonable suspicion that the child has suffered, is suffering, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse, <u>and</u> there is not a parent <u>willing and able</u> to protect the child from harm.</p> <p>The meaning of 'may not be able and willing' is important. A parent may be willing to protect their child, but not have capacity to do so (that is, they are 'not able'). Alternatively, a parent may have the capacity and be able to protect their child, but may choose not to do so (that is, they are 'not willing'). In many serious cases, the</p> |

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| | <p>severity of the harm or risk of harm itself could be an indication that there may not be a parent able and willing to protect the child.</p> <p>It is the individual staff member to whom the abuse or neglect was disclosed to or who has the reasonable suspicion (that the child has suffered, is suffering, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse, and there is not a parent willing and able to protect the child from harm) that has the responsibility to ensure that the mandatory reporting is undertaken.</p> <p>The Kindergarten Service will at all times provide an environment which enables staff to undertake this mandatory reporting requirement and the individual staff member is able to seek assistance from the Service Manager / Nominated Supervisor / Responsible Person and Executive Committee (Approved Provider) in relation to undertaking the mandatory reporting.</p> <p>While the reporting of psychological, emotional abuse or neglect or any other type of abuse or neglect is not mandated, under their Duty of Care, staff are encouraged to also report reasonable suspicion of this when there is not a parent willing and able to protect the child from harm.</p> |
| WHAT YOU SHOULD DO | <p>Staff responding to a disclosure or have reason to suspect that a child in Queensland is experiencing harm or is at risk of experiencing harm or being neglected will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take into account, and document what parents and children tell them and what they see. • Record observations and/or conversations accurately and objectively as soon as possible after the incident has occurred/been disclosed. • Not assume an investigative role and record all observations factually without any editorial comment, suppositions, interpretations, or allegations. • Consult immediately with the Responsible Person who will in turn immediately consult with the Nominated Supervisor and Approved Provider. • Complete an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record and hand to the Responsible Person who will forward this to the Nominated Supervisor and Approved Provider. This IITI is for Service records and is not required to be discussed with or signed by the child's parent / guardian. • Ensure all documentation and information is regarded confidential. <p>The staff member or Nominated Supervisor / Responsible Person responding will:</p> <p>In a life threatening situation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the staff member or Nominated Supervisor / Responsible Person believe the child is in immediate danger, or is in a life threatening situation, contact the Queensland Police Service immediately by calling Triple Zero (000). • Notify Approved Provider this is being actioned. <p>Not an immediate life threatening situation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended where possible staff use the Queensland Child Protection Guide (this online guide will help you decide whether to report to Child Safety Services or refer to Family and Child Connect or other agency). The decision report, from using this online guide can be printed and filed at the Service as a record of the action advised. • Review and action the recommendations of the report from using the Child Protection Guide. Please note that if the report does not recommend notifying Child Safety Services, a staff member can still use their professional judgement and undertake a notification where they feel this is required. |

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| | <p>Reporting to Child Safety Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification can take place verbally over the phone or via online lodgement. • During normal business hours contact the Regional Intake Service (9am to 5pm) • After hours contact the Child Safety After Hours Service Centre 1800 177 135 • Online lodgement is via the online reporting form on the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety website <p>Further considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support will be provided to the staff engaged in responding to child harm/ abuse/neglect and for staff team as assessed by the Nominated Supervisor / Approved Provider. • Protect the anonymity of staff whom are required under legislation to report their concerns. • Be aware that Authorised Officers or Police Officers investigating the allegations may lawfully visit the Service or child's home, and have the responsibility of informing at least one of the child's parents/guardians. If required, gain further support for staff engaged in responding to child harm and protection issues. • Where possible, seek to consult with, and support parents/guardians throughout the process. The confidentiality of parents/guardians and families will be maintained at all times. |
| CHILD SAFETY SERVICE CENTRES | <p>Child Safety Service Centres are located in communities throughout Queensland. Child Safety Service Centres provide support and a range of services to children, young people, families and carers to ensure children's safety and wellbeing and to prevent children from being harmed.</p> <p>A Child Safety Service Centre is the contact point during business hours when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you have an enquiry or support need and are an existing client (you or your family currently have contact with a child safety officer working in the service centre) • as a member of the public, you would like to talk to a child safety officer as you have information about a child or young person in contact with the Child Safety Service Centre • you are a carer of a child who is involved with the Child Safety Service Centre. <p>Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, Regional Intake Services are available Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm. Staff should contact the Regional Intake Service for their community to report.</p> <p>Regional Intake Services:</p> <p>Brisbane (1300 682 254) Ipswich (1800 316 855) South East (Logan, Gold Coast and Bayside) (1300 679 849) South West (Darling Downs) (1300 683 390) South West (West Moreton – Ipswich) (1800 316 855) Far North Queensland (1300 684 062) North Queensland (1300 706 147) North Coast (1300 703 921) Sunshine Coast and Central Queensland (1300 703 762)</p> <p>After Hours Service Centre – 1800 177 135</p> |
| CONTACT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES, | <p>In the instance contact is received from the Department of Families, Seniors Disability Services and Child Safety, staff should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record the name of the Officer, date and time of the contact (staff may ask to return the call to the Officer if the program is in operation and a confidential |

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| <p>SENIORS, DISABILITY SERVICES AND CHILD SAFETY</p> | <p>call is not able to take place or to verify that the call is from the Department).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer the Officer's questions accurately and objectively. • Enquire if the family are aware of the contact with the Service, will be advised of this, or seek advice on how to respond if the family enquire with the Service. • Only share information regarding the call with other staff members who work directly with the child where the information is relevant in supporting the ongoing welfare of the child during their time at the Service. • Staff are to advise the Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider that information has been shared with the Department only providing further information where this is necessary in supporting the ongoing welfare of the child during their time at the Service and that this information is kept confidential. • It is to be noted that under Section 17 of the Child Protection Act 1999 Officers from time to time may visit the Service and request to interview or meet with the child. <p>17 Contact with children in school, child care centre, family day care etc.</p> <p>(1) This section applies if—</p> <p>(a) an authorised officer or police officer is investigating an allegation of harm, or risk of harm, to a child; and</p> <p>(b) the officer reasonably believes—</p> <p>(i) it is in the child's best interests that the officer has contact with the child before the child's parents are told about the investigation; and</p> <p>(ii) the child's parents knowing in advance about the proposed contact with the child is likely to adversely affect or otherwise prevent the proper and effective conduct of the investigation; and</p> <p>(c) the child is at a school, or place where child care is provided, when the officer is to have contact with the child; and</p> <p>(d) the officer has lawfully entered, and is lawfully remaining at, the school or place.</p> <p>(2) The officer may have contact with the child for as long as the officer reasonably considers necessary for investigating the allegation.</p> <p>(3) Before exercising a power under subsection (2), the officer must notify the principal or other person in charge of the school or place of the intention to exercise the power. s 18 24 s 18 Child Protection Act 1999</p> <p>(4) As soon as practicable after the officer has had contact with the child, the officer must tell at least 1 of the child's parents that the officer has had contact with the child and the reasons for the contact.</p> |
| <p>CHILD AND YOUTH RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY</p> | <p>The Kindergarten Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy assists the Kindergarten to meet their obligation under the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act, 2000 and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulations, 2020. This document supports Services to implement risk management strategies to identify and minimise the risk of harm to children and young people in the Service environment.</p> <p>All Service Managers / Nominated Supervisors / Responsible Persons and Staff should be aware of where this organisational document is located and the implementation of the content.</p> <p>This document includes the Statement of Commitment of the Service to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm.</p> |
| <p>PERSON UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE</p> <p>WHAT STAFF</p> | <p>The Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld) defines a child as an individual under 18 years of age.</p> <p>It is acknowledged, that the Service may host placement of students or volunteers or engage staff members, including school based trainees, who are under 18 years</p> |

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| SHOULD KNOW | <p>of age. In this context, the Service will hold and staff will be aware of the Risk Assessment Supporting Placement and Supervision of Students, Volunteers, Staff Member Under the Age of 18 years of Age or School Based Trainees. The Risk Assessment shares strategies in supporting all stakeholders in their engagement with the Service.</p> <p>In the instance that a person under 18 years of age makes a disclosure of abuse, staff will respond with empathy, support and undertake mandatory reporting as outlined in the policy.</p> |
| <p>ADULT SURVIVORS</p> <p>DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE</p> <p>WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO</p> | <p>Where an adult survivor discloses that they experienced child abuse, staff will respond with empathy, support and confidentiality.</p> <p>The staff member who receives the disclosure, is able to advise the Approved Provider that they have received a disclosure and discuss support services available and reporting requirements (in the instance that the survivor shares the abuse has not been reported to Child Safety previously).</p> <p>All staff have access to Employee Assistance Program (EAP), through contacting the HR team or their line manager.</p> |