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Child Protection Responsibilities for a School

This overview is a guide to the areas of focus for a school's Child Protection program.

This resource outlines the key categories for Child Protection in a school. It is designed as a guide for planning and evaluation to help schools understand the full scope of their Child Protection responsibilities.

This overview is not intended as an exhaustive list of Child Protection measures and requirements. Additional areas of focus may be required based on the unique circumstances of each school. Further, each category and subcategory listed are only descriptors. Each contains greater depth and complexity that need to be addressed by the school.

Child Protection Categories

School Culture	Roles & Responsibilities	Student Wellbeing
Procedures	Documentation	Record Keeping
Personnel Oversight	Training	Environmental Security
Local Context & Connections	External Resources & Services	Evaluation

School Culture

The set of Child Protection beliefs and values shared and demonstrated in the school community.

- **Child Centric Culture** - The shared understanding that decision making is centered on the best interests of the children in the school community.
- **Guiding Statements** - The inclusion of Child Protection in guiding documents, such as Mission, Vision, and Values.
- **Leadership Commitment** - Leadership provides resources, support, and strategic oversight for Child Protection that safeguards children in the school community.
- **Organizational Culture** - Actions, statements, and decisions show the school's commitment to keeping Child Protection a key responsibility of the school community.

Roles and Responsibilities

All adults in the school community have a role to play in Child Protection.

- **Duty of Care** - The school demonstrates that all adults within the school community have a responsibility to safeguard, protect, and look after the wellbeing of all students.
- **Staff Child Protection Responsibilities** - Every employee has a defined responsibility for Child Protection.
- **Responsibility Holders** - Key roles that have oversight responsibility in the school are defined, resourced, and staffed.
- **Specialist Roles** - Specialist roles within the school, such as school medical staff and counsellors, are included in the Child Protection training, operational, and communications programs.

Did you know?

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Student Wellbeing

Students' wellbeing is accounted for in academic programs and across all activities within the school community.

- **Academics** - Child Protection education is included in academic programs for all students.
- **Student Support Services** - School organized services are available and sufficient to meet the support needs of all students.
- **Field Trips and Homestays** - Child Protection rules, policies, and procedures are adhered to on all excursions outside of the school.
- **Guardianship Supervision** - Child Protection policies and monitoring procedures for students on long term guardianship arrangements where parents do not live with the student.

Documentation

Child Protection information is well documented and readily available to members of the school community.

- **Access to Resources** - Publicly available Child Protection resources and policies are accessible to the school community, typically through the school's website.
- **Written Policies** - Appropriate and sufficient policies are in place to govern Child Protection in the school community.
- **Internal and External Communications** - The school engages in timely and informative communication that demonstrates the school community's supportive culture towards Child Protection.

Procedures

Key procedures for managing Child Protection in the school community are defined.

- **Incident and Reporting Framework** - Procedures, decision trees, responsibilities, and record keeping practices are defined for handling Child Protection reports and incidents.
- **Reporting Pathway** - Channels, procedures, and personnel are known to the school community for reporting Child Protection concerns.
- **Communications Plan** - The school has an established plan for information dissemination, including channels and timing, to keep key stakeholders informed during Child Protection incidents.

Record Keeping

Adequate systems are used by the school to maintain and provide appropriate access to Child Protection records.

- **Child Protection Recording System** - The school maintains a system for recording and managing Child Protection information.
- **Incident Recording System** - The school uses a system for communication and information management related to Child Protection incidents.
- **File Management System** - The school maintains a system for managing and providing secure access to all files, policies, and communication related to Child Protection.

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Personnel Oversight

All staff, vendors, and volunteers at the school are appropriately trained and monitored in the area of Child Protection.

- **Safer Recruitment and Contracting** - Recruitment of staff, vendors, and volunteers includes a focus on Child Protection and adequate screening.
- **Personnel Record Keeping** - Sufficient personnel files that address backgrounds, training, and behaviors related to Child Protection are kept up to date for all adult staff and volunteers at the school. Similar requirements are placed on vendors.
- **Monitoring of Staff, Vendors, and Volunteers** - All staff, vendors, and volunteers are consistently monitored for behavior around children and given feedback when appropriate.

Environmental Security

The protective measures on the school campus align with best practices for Child Protection.

- **Campus Monitoring** - Processes, personnel, and tools are in use to sufficiently monitor the entirety of the school campus.
- **Signage** - Signage indicating key Child Protection information are present throughout the campus.
- **Identification** - All adults on campus wear visible identification.
- **Visitor Procedures** - Procedures and documentation are used to inform visitors of Child Protection procedures and to identify and monitor them.
- **Campus Evaluation** - Regular evaluations are conducted to identify and remedy areas of the campus that pose Child Protection risks.

Training

The school engages in training that meets the Child Protection responsibilities of all members of the school community.

- **Child Protection Skills Training** - Periodic training is provided that ensures all adults in the school community are up to date on Child Protection.
- **Specialist Training for Key Child Protection Responsibility Holders** - Specific training is provided to members of staff that hold key responsibilities for Child Protection at the school.
- **Local Context Specific Training** - The school engages in training that informs key position holders on specific information and regulations related to the local context.

Local Context and Connections

Knowledge, resources, and relationships are used to understand the local conditions of Child Protection and student wellbeing.

- **Legislation** - The school understands and adheres to legislation and guidance from the local context that apply to Child Protection and student wellbeing.
- **Network** - The school extends its Child Protection network to local, national, and international resources that support its Child Protection work in the local context.
- **Legal** - The school maintains access to legal professionals offering services related to Child Protection who are specialists in the local context.

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External Resources and Services

The school maintains access to resources and services outside of the school community to support and enhance Child Protection.

- **Child Protection Resources** - The school maintains access to external Child Protection resources, such as professionals or knowledge bases, which help the school stay up to date with Child Protection practices.
- **Crisis Management** - The school maintains access to crisis management professionals who can be activated if needed.
- **Professional Support and Supervision** - The school establishes relationships with Child Protection professionals to support and offer supervision of Child Protection in the school community.
- **Insurance** - Sufficient insurance is held by the school to address Child Protection needs.

Evaluation

The school regularly evaluates conditions, incidents, and elements of Child Protection and takes action to remedy identified risks.

- **Regular Reviews** - Child Protection at the school is regularly reviewed and updated when necessary.
- **Risk Assessment** - The school maintains processes and resources to assess Child Protection risk.
- **Process for Incident Inquiry** - The school conducts reviews of Child Protection incidents including analyses of the school's incident response.

Child Protection is the commitment and actions taken to protect children from abuse. It involves all aspects of the school community and everyone has a role to play.

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