

#### Content warning

Reporting and responding to concerns about child harm can be emotionally challenging. Practice self-care and seek support when you need it. Looking after your own wellbeing helps you to continue to provide the best care and support for others. C&K employees can access the [Employee Assistance Program](#) at no cost.

**If you believe a child is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, telephone 000.**

#### Background

As a signatory of the [Statement of Shared Commitment – Every Interaction Counts](#) (Department of Education), C&K upholds a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child abuse, inappropriate interactions with children, and the use of inappropriate discipline.

C&K representatives must report and escalate any incident, allegation, disclosure or complaint of child harm occurring at a C&K centre, and to take immediate steps to protect the child from any further harm. All reports, including those raised by children, will be listened to, taken seriously and responded to in accordance with this procedure.

This procedure outlines the steps and responsibilities for reporting an allegation of child harm occurring at a C&K Branch Centre. For C&K Affiliated Centres, refer to [Reporting an allegation of child harm occurring at a C&K Affiliated Centre Procedure](#) (or follow the relevant procedure specific to your Affiliate if one is in place).

C&K's commitment to child protection and safeguarding aligns with the 10 [Queensland Child Safe Standards](#), and the [Universal Principle for Cultural Safety](#). This procedure aligns with Standard 2: Voice of Children, Standard 3: Families and Communities, Standard 6: Complaints Management and Standard 7: Knowledge and Skills.

This procedure is implemented alongside the [Workplace Investigation Procedure](#), [Complaint Management Procedure](#) and the [Child Safety and Protection Definitions and Indicators Guide](#).

#### What is reportable?

Any incident, allegation, disclosure or complaint of:

- Child harm (physical abuse, sexual abuse including grooming, emotional abuse and neglect) occurring at a C&K centre.
- Inappropriate discipline (corporal punishment or any disciplinary practice that is unreasonable or inappropriate) used at a C&K centre.
- A circumstance that poses an immediate risk to the safety and/or wellbeing of a child attending a C&K centre.

#### Who can report?

Any person e.g. child, employee, parent, guardian, visitor, student, volunteer, external contractor or community member. For the purposes of this procedure, this person is referred to as the complainant.

#### Procedure

##### 1. Report incident, allegation, disclosure or complaint

1. Speak with the centre Director.
2. Speak with centre's C&K Early Childhood Education Manager. Contact details displayed in centre foyer/centre profile.
3. Contact C&K's Central Office on 3552 5300 OR [feedback@candk.asn.au](mailto:feedback@candk.asn.au).
4. Complete a [C&K online form](#).
5. Contact the regulatory authority for the Qld early childhood education and care sector ([Early Childhood Education Care](#)) on 13 74 68 or [eccec@qed.qld.gov.au](mailto:eccec@qed.qld.gov.au).

Complainants can remain anonymous, but it does help if we can contact them for more details.

Children are supported to speak up and speak out about anything that makes them feel unsafe or worried and educators regularly remind children that they can speak with a trusted adult.

#### Complete the following steps within 24hrs from receipt of report

##### 2. Escalate allegation

##### Centre Director/Nominated Supervisor or RPIC will:

- Immediately notify their ECEM of the allegation. If unavailable, notify Regional Manager (RM).

#### Early Childhood Education Manager will:

- Notify RM and Human Resource Business Partner (HRBP).
- In consultation with, and under the direction of HRBP, commence gathering relevant documentation. For example:
  - Witness Statements (use Witness Statement Template) i.e. respondent(s) (person(s) subject to the allegation) and possible witnesses to the alleged child harm.
  - When applicable, Child, Centre Incident Record or Complaint Record.
  - Centre/Group Routine Overview
  - Any other relevant record

If allegation was not reported by child's parents or guardians:

#### Early Childhood Education Manager will:

- Notify child's parents or guardians (via face-to-face meeting or telephone) as soon as possible, but no later than 24hrs from the receipt of the allegation. Refer to Communication Guideline.

### 3. Notify regulatory authority

#### Early Childhood Education Manager will:

- Complete appropriate C&K Online Notification Form on the NQF intranet page:
  - Allegation of physical or sexual abuse of a child/ren has or is occurring
  - Complaint alleging a serious incident has occurred or is occurring
  - Incident of physical and/or sexual abuse of a child/ren has or is occurring
  - Any circumstance posing a significant risk to a child's health, safety and wellbeing

#### Quality, Regulation and Safeguarding team will:

- Complete notification via NQAITS.
- Email notification receipt to ECEM, RM and HRBP and with instructions of immediate actions.

### 4. Complete risk assessment

#### Early Childhood Education Manager will:

- In consultation with RM and HRBP, complete Allegation of Child Harm Involving a C&K Employee Risk Assessment, to determine whether the employee who is the subject of the allegation should remain in their current position, be moved to another area, undertake alternate duties or be stood down.
- Email the completed risk assessment to the RM, Chief Operations Officer and General Counsel for approval.

### 5. Risk and Safety Panel Assessment

#### Risk and Safety Panel (RSP) will:

- Review allegation (and initial information gathered) to determine the most appropriate response:
  - A. Enact Critical Incident Response which includes RSP reporting the allegation to Queensland Police (Child Protection Investigation Unit - CPIU) if allegation may constitute a criminal offence. An internal workplace investigation may only be initiated after authorisation has been provided by CPIU or relevant investigative authority; or
  - B. Commence an internal or external Workplace Investigation; or
  - C. Commence Performance Management.
- RSP Chair will immediately advise RM, ECEM and HRBP of decision and required actions.

### Post Steps - Reporting and escalating an allegation of child harm

#### Quality, Regulation and Safeguarding team will:

- (If allegation was not reported by a C&K employee), register allegation as a complaint via C&K's Complaint Management System and allocate appropriate case manager (usually ECEM or RM) as per the Complaint Management Procedure.

#### Early Childhood Education Manager will:

- Ensure that alleged victims are protected.
- Maintain regular communication with child's parents or guardians until the allegation has been investigated and finalised. Refer to the Communication Guideline.
- (If allegation was not reported by a C&K employee) Manage allegation as a complaint as per the Complaint Management Procedure. Maintain regular communication with the complainant until the allegation has been investigated and finalised.

#### Risk and Safety Panel will:

- Liaise with QPS to provide relevant information and updates as required.
- Set review dates to reassess risk as investigations progress.
- Adjust risk management actions as new information emerges.



#### Privacy and Confidentiality

Maintaining privacy and confidentiality when reporting allegations of harm is essential. These reports often involve personal and sensitive information, and it is vital to protect the dignity, safety, and rights of everyone involved. Information should only be shared with authorised individuals and relevant authorities responsible for managing and/or investigating the concern. Don't discuss the matter with anyone who does not have a legitimate role in the process.

Upholding confidentiality ensures trust, fairness, and the integrity of any investigation or response.

#### References and Resources

- Queensland Government - [\*Report child abuse\*](#)
- Queensland Government - [\*Indicators and signs\*](#)
- Queensland Government - [\*Child Protection Guide\*](#)
- Queensland Government - [\*Information Sheet – Mandatory reporting by early childhood education and care professionals\*](#)
- Queensland Government - [\*What is domestic and family violence?\*](#)
- Australian Government - [\*Responding to children and young people's disclosure of abuse\*](#)
- Australian Institute of Family Studies - [\*Understanding neglect\*](#)
- Bravehearts - [\*Grooming\*](#)
- Victorian Government - [\*Identify signs of child abuse\*](#)
- National Office for Child Safety - [\*Grooming\*](#)
- Raising Children - [\*How to recognise child grooming signs\*](#)