



Central Coast
Conservatorium
Of Music

Child Safe Policy

Principles

The Central Coast Conservatorium of Music (CCCM) is committed to the education and nurturing of children and young people to achieve musical excellence through a structured program of one on one lessons, group lessons, small and large ensemble training and performance.

Students in our programs and their families are the number one priority for CCCM. Their safety, welfare and wellbeing are paramount to the organisation.

CCCM respects that the parents/guardians of our students have primary responsibility for their care. Our guidelines and procedures recognise this role and call on parents/guardians to communicate proactively and honestly with CCCM about issues and concerns.

CCCM is a child-related employer registered with the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian and follows the guidelines to be a Child Safe Organisation.

Under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998, children are legally defined as under 16 years of age and young people are legally defined as 16 and 17 years of age.

1. Overview

1.1 Purpose

The CCCM Child Safe Policy, Codes of Conduct and related Guidelines and Procedures aim to:

- Create a safe place for all students to get the most from our programs and activities.
- Provide clarity for all those working at CCCM (on staff, on contract or as volunteers) about their responsibilities to promote and ensure an environment of mutual respect and child safety, welfare and wellbeing.
- Provide a clear and consistent pathway for dealing with issues that may arise which compromise the safety, welfare and wellbeing of our students.

- Provide staff with clear instructions to follow where Risk of Significant Harm is identified or suspected through Recognising and Responding to Risk of Significant Harm training.

Ensure CCCM is compliant with NSW Child Protection Legislation regarding employment of staff and contractors:

- Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998
- Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998

This legislation introduces a process for helping employers to decide whether people are suited to work in child-related positions in NSW. The legislation prohibits persons found guilty of committing a serious sex offence from working in such positions and require that some people must be subject to background checking when applying for such paid positions. Checking includes current Working with Children Checks and relevant employment references, and other checks as required.

1.2 Scope

The Policy and its related documents are binding on all staff, sub-contractors and volunteers working with CCCM who have direct interaction with our students. They are also binding on students in our programs who are over the age of 18.

The Policy and its related documents are also binding on sub-contractors, volunteers and students of CCCM.

All students, parents and/or guardians are required to comply with CCCM Student Code of Conduct, which sets out expected ways of behaving and working together to create a safe and supportive working environment.

The Policy and related documents form the framework for all procedures and guidelines relating to CCCM programs and activities including;

- One on one lessons
- Group lessons
- Small and large ensembles
- Weekly rehearsals
- Tours and camps (regional, interstate and international)
- Special events (e.g. CCCM Schools Day Out, Bandfest)
- Concerts
- Small groups and workshops

1.3 Duty of Care

- CCCM is responsible for the wellbeing of children and young people (under 18) while under its care. The wellbeing of children and young people in our programs is CCCM's primary concern.
- CCCM has a duty to take reasonable care of the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all children and young people while they are engaged in our programs and activities.
- This duty extends to CCCM staff, volunteers and contractors engaged in child-related employment.
- "Reasonable care" includes taking such measures as are reasonable to protect against risk of harm that reasonably ought to be foreseen, from both known and foreseeable hazards.
- CCCM's duty includes taking preventative and protective actions related to risk of harassment or abuse.
- CCCM develops risk assessment for each project the organisation undertakes in planning stage of the project, and strategies and plans are developed to mitigate risks as appropriate.
- CCCM supports staff, volunteers and contractors in child-related employment to maintain and support a safe environment, through required checks and screening, appropriate induction and regular training.
- The key role of CCCM staff, volunteers and contractors is to create a safe learning environment, encouraging children's independence and using professional judgement, to ensure children are not at unreasonable risk.
- staff, volunteers and contractors are expected to exercise discretion and judgement in interacting with children and young people, and maintain professional boundaries (See the CCCM staff, Contractor and Volunteer Code of Conduct).

1.4 Role of parents and students

- CCCM regularly communicates with students and parents/guardians about our expectations and their role and responsibilities under the Child Safe Policy and related guidelines and procedures.
- Students and their parents/guardians are encouraged to raise issues with each other first and then with CCCM staff, who have clear pathways for resolution of issues. We will work to resolve issues in a timely manner, in line with this policy's objectives.

1.5 Working with Children Checks

CCCM is responsible for ensuring all staff recruited to CCCM are appropriately screened through reference checks, and current Working With Children Checks (WWCC). Under the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1988 and Commission for Children and Young People Act 1988, CCCM is required to obtain WWCC for all staff, contractors and volunteers directly engaged with children and young people.

The following CCCM procedures will include reference to this required process:

- Recruitment and employment of staff
- Engagement of contractors (including musical staff)
- Engagement of volunteers.

1.6 Recognising and reporting risk and harm

CCCM is a mandatory reporter under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect>), which requires staff to be trained and aware of indicators that a child may be at risk of significant harm. CCCM will provide Recognising and Responding to Risk of Significant Harm training to all staff in a child-related role. (See Recognising and Responding to Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) Guidelines)

CCCM staff must report to the CCCM CEO/ AD (Head of Agency) or Board (via the CCCM President) if they believe a child or young person is at risk of harm or concerns exist in regard to the safety, welfare and wellbeing of the child or young person. Effect of harm can be either physical and behavioural or both.

All staff, contractors and volunteers are required to bring these matters to the attention of the CCCM CEO / AD (Head of Agency) or Board (via the CCCM President), who will report to relevant parties at the earliest possible time.

1.7 Reasonable suspicion

Reasonable suspicion means fair and practical reason to believe an incident involving sexual abuse has occurred based on either verbal communication, hearsay, rumour or observance of behaviour.

There is a procedure for dealing with and reporting complaints and/or reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse which includes:

- The appointment of a person, independent of the alleged incident, to investigate
- A documented reporting process with escalating procedures including:
- the automatic suspension of an employee from work or other duties if they are under investigation (internally or by the police) for committing sexual abuse; and
- the automatic termination of employment or involvement if found guilty of committing sexual abuse (either by an internal investigation or by a court).

On report of reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse to the Board, police authorities and Ansvar Insurance will be notified. The details of those reporting sexual abuse will be kept private and confidential.

To make a report, please refer to Section 4: *Reportable Conduct Procedure*.

1.8 Keeping records and privacy

CCCM ensures that an appropriate audit trail is kept of all appointments and contracts of those in child-related employment (in paid and volunteer roles). CCCM will keep appropriate records of all incidents reported by staff, volunteers or students. CCCM will keep this information private (in accordance with the Privacy Act) except for purposes of reporting risk and harm.

2. Child Safe Guidelines

2.1 Purpose

CCCM (CCCM) has developed the following set of guidelines to support staff, contractors and volunteers to promote and ensure the safety of all students. The aim of the guidelines is to provide greater clarity in developing CCCM programs and procedures. CCCM staff, contractors and volunteers are to:

- Ensure the safety, wellbeing and protection of all CCCM students.
- Ensure children and young people are not exposed to foreseeable risk.
- Take precautions to minimise risk.
- Ensure appropriate supervision and staff/student ratios.
- Follow policies and procedures for reporting incidents.
- Report if they observe others acting inappropriately.
- Treat each student with respect, sensitivity, fairness and consistency.
- Demonstrate professional relationships with students that cannot be misinterpreted as overly personal or intimate.
- Review the guidelines and procedures annually.

2.2 Accidents and emergencies.

Parents/guardians are required to provide up to date contact information (e.g. mobile phones and email) and medical information (including allergies) at the beginning of the year and before all camps and tours.

In the event of an accident or emergency occurring that requires medical attention or first aid:

- CCCM staff will make the best efforts on the information available to address the situation and care for the student.
- The CCCM First Aid Officer present will be informed, and appropriate treatment offered.
- If an ambulance is required, the First Aid Officer is to be informed at the earliest possible time.
- CCCM staff will accompany the student for treatment until the parents/guardians are notified and can attend.
- The CCCM First Aid Officer will:
 - Inform the students' parents/guardians at the earliest possible time.
 - Inform the CEO/ AD at earliest point if incident is serious.

- Complete an incident report form to document the details of the incidents, which includes statements by all people involved.
- The incident and actions will be recorded in the activity report.

2.3 Accommodation and rooming

When CCCM students are involved in activities which require accommodation, such as camps and tours:

- Students will be separated by gender for accommodation purposes.
- CCCM staff will have the final decision on accommodation allocation.
- Whenever possible, accommodation arrangements will be single rooms or 3+ per room.
- Parents/guardians will be asked to advise in advance if there is an existing relationship between students (e.g. siblings, friends, couples etc.) that will impact room assignments.
- CCCM staff will change room assignments at their discretion if issues arise during camps or on tours.
- CCCM will not billet students in homes of families.

2.4 Age appropriate activities

CCCM staff will:

- Arrange for age-appropriate socialisation during CCCM activities.
- Arrange for separate social areas during camps and tours for those students under 18 and those students over 18 where appropriate.
- Tailor social activities (showing films etc.) with the age of students in mind.

2.5 Aggressive behaviour

Aggressive behaviour between CCCM students, or from parents, volunteers or staff will not be tolerated and may lead to exclusion from CCCM activities on a temporary or permanent basis.

Aggression includes:

- Words or actions (both overt and covert) that are directed towards another and intended to harm, distress, coerce, intimidate or cause fear.
- Yelling, name-calling, insults, derogatory comments, physical interaction with the intention to annoy or harm and all forms of violence.

CCCM staff will remove any students demonstrating aggressive behaviour during CCCM activities, including camps or tours, and contact parents/guardians immediately. This includes behaviour that has been reported by other students or volunteers.

2.6 Child Safe Incident Reporting

Inappropriate behaviour will be recorded on a CCCM Child Safe Incident Report (CSIR) – attached to these guidelines as Attachment A.

CCCM staff (including Conductors where relevant) will:

- Complete a CSIR on the day of the incident.
- Discuss with the student on the day with two CCCM adults present (conductor, board member or CCCM staff member) the inappropriate behaviour. The student will be given the opportunity to have a support person in attendance. This may be a parent/ guardian in the case of children (legally defined as under 16 years of age) or young people (legally defined as 16 and 17 years of age). In the case of an adult they may wish to have a support person in attendance.
- Email the CSIR to the CCCM CEO/ AD for record keeping.

The CCCM CEO/ AD will meet with the student and their parents/guardians to discuss the behaviour and decide whether the student is allowed to continue to attend CCCM activities. This should take place within ten working days of the incident.

2.7 Boundaries

CCCM staff will maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students. These boundaries include (but are not limited to):

- Ensuring appropriate communication
- Avoiding threatening, demeaning or discriminatory language
- Not making disclosures of personal information, beyond what is required for the role
- Maintaining appropriate physical boundaries including contact (see below) and presence – that is, not being in change rooms, bedrooms or other places inappropriately; not being alone with children or young people
- Transporting students only with the written permission of their parents/guardians and as a group of 3 or more in cars or on public transport. Individual staff will not transport students.
- Not targeting or singling out children or young people for special treatment
- Not taking on a role of counsellor or similar beyond duties
- Not developing relationships outside scope of CCCM duties
- Not recording images (photos or videos) of children or young people for private records
- Not communicating with students directly through email, texting or social media on issues that are not CCCM related.

2.8 Bullying and harassment

CCCM has a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying and harassment.

Bullying is defined as unwanted, aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time.

Harassment is defined as behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability, and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment.

Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act. It may be directed randomly or towards the same person/s. It may be intentional or unintentional (i.e. words or actions that offend and distress one person may be genuinely regarded by the person doing them as minor or harmless).

CCCM staff and volunteers have a duty of care to report all actual or potential incidences of bullying and harassment by completion of a Child Safe Incident Report. (See Child Safe Incident Reporting for full process).

2.9 Clothing and cleanliness

CCCM staff, contractors and volunteers are not to make comments in general about students' appearance, especially not comments that would be considered derogatory.

CCCM staff:

- Will communicate in writing with students and parents/guardians about any specific requirements for an activity, e.g. clothes for concerts or performances, clothing for tours or camps.
- May contact the students, parents/guardians if they believe a student is inappropriately or inadequately dressed or prepared for an activity.
- Request a meeting with parents/guardians of the student if the student's inappropriate or inadequate dress is a recurring issue.
- Will work with the student and the family to rectify the situation.

3. Child Safe Management Procedures

3.1 Complaints management

CCCM staff will encourage students to give feedback (positive and otherwise) about their programs and activities. In this way students should feel empowered to raise issues as they occur. CCCM staff will:

- Handle all complaints, including potential breaches of the Code of Conduct that cannot be resolved between students.
- Brief students at the beginning of a program or activity on who and how they should raise issues and complaints.
- Listen respectfully to all complaints and make best efforts to resolve any issues including those between students.

- Refer any complaint to the CCCM CEO/ AD.
- The CCCM CEO/ AD will meet with all affected parties to mediate or resolve the issue to the satisfaction of all parties.
- If the issue is not resolved, the complaint will be referred in writing to the CCCM Board for consideration. This should take place within ten working days of the incident.

3.2 Contacting students

Students will be contacted by email or by text, to the email address or mobile phone number nominated when joining CCCM, of any changes to this program. Students will be sent information at the beginning of the year regarding details such as lesson times, rehearsal times, venues, tours or camps, concerts and other matters regarding their participation in CCCM activities. For students under 18 years, this information will be sent to the email addresses of the parents/guardians as nominated when the student joins with CCCM.

3.3 Corresponding with parents/guardians

It is expected that parents and/or guardians of students are to be proactive and honest in communicating with CCCM.

Before each activity, CCCM will:

Provide parents/guardians with written advice about what to expect from CCCM and their responsibilities.

Seek from the parents/guardians the required permission in writing for a child to participate in an activity, acknowledging any special requirements.

Seek from the parents/ guardians up-to-date contact details and clear guidance (required in writing) on who has authority to take their child to and from CCCM activities.

3.4 Employee, contractor and volunteer screening

In line with NSW Child Safety Legislation, all employees, contractors and volunteers who directly interact with children in CCCM programs and activities are required to have a valid Working with Children Check. The check is to be conducted prior to any offer of employment or commencement of paid or unpaid work begins with CCCM.

3.5 First Aid (training, kit and record-keeping)

Student safety is the most important priority to CCCM.

CCCM will ensure:

- All rehearsal venues, campsites, tour buses etc will have access to a fully-equipped first aid kit
- All first aid and medication provided to a student by CCCM First Aid Officers is recorded in the First Aid Kit log, including time, date and details of dosages.
- The CCCM CEO/ AD is to be responsible for maintaining this kit, and ensuring incidents are reported appropriately.

- The First Aid Officers are provided with the opportunity to complete or update first aid training at CCCM's cost.
- Parents/guardians of students under 18, are notified in the case of first aid being administered.

3.6 Gender

CCCM is committed to creating an environment where all students regardless of gender can feel safe to learn. At CCCM:

- Students will be separated by gender for accommodation purposes and by age where possible or desirable.
- Accommodation will be allocated gender appropriately and CCCM staff will have final decision on accommodation assignments.
- Changing rooms and bathrooms will also be single gender.
- There will always be a staff member/volunteer of each gender on camps and on tour so that students have someone they can refer to regarding personal issues.

3.7 Physical interaction

CCCM staff and volunteers are to demonstrate respect for physical and emotional boundaries of all students, this includes:

- Adults (or students over 18) are not to inappropriately touch (including hugging) children under 18 years.
- Being vigilant and alert for inappropriate touching between adults and children and between students, any such touching will be immediately reported.
- Not using physical or corporal punishment.

3.8 Privacy

CCCM staff will not:

- Disclose personal and confidential information to students.
- Share address and contact details held by CCCM with other students, conductors or Teachers.
- Disclose medical, health and other personal information unless to ensure the students safety.
- Please refer to the CCCM Privacy Policy for more information.

3.9 Reporting misconduct, including sexual misconduct

All misconduct (including but not limited to breaches of the Student, and staff, Contractor and Volunteer Codes of Conduct) will be reported to CCCM staff and the CEO / AD shall be informed in writing.

If misconduct is found on the part of students:

- A warning will be issued to the student at that point, with a reminder that repeated breaches will lead to a temporary or permanent exclusion from CCCM activities.
- Misconduct will be recorded through the CCCM Child Safe Incident Reporting process.
- In the case of serious misconduct (including sexual misconduct) the student may be suspended immediately (including being removed by parents/guardians from camps or tours)
- Sexual misconduct includes but is not limited to: sexual harassment, sexual abuse, sexual assault and stalking all of which are reportable to the police and the Department of Family and Community Services if victim or perpetrator are under 18 years.

If the misconduct involves CCCM staff, Contractors and Volunteers the CCCM Reportable Conduct Procedure will be implemented.

3.10 Risk Assessment

- CCCM staff will conduct a risk assessment prior to each term, camp, tour or off-site activity involving students.
- The risk assessment needs to be signed off by the CEO/ AD and/ or President of the Board prior to commencement of activity.
- The risk assessment template is attached to this document.

3.11 Supervision

- No staff member, contractor or volunteer should be alone with a student, including during rehearsals except in the case of one to one lessons which are conducted in a studio compliant with WWCC policy.
- CCCM will arrange for sufficient adult (WWCC cleared) to children ratios at all CCCM activities.

4. Reportable Conduct Procedure

4.1 Purpose

This procedure is written in accordance with child protection legislation in New South Wales. It draws on CCCM key values in committing to the safety and protection of children and young people. It ensures that all CCCM staff, contractors and volunteers are aware of their legal and ethical rights and responsibilities in relation to any allegations of inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people that may be made against them.

CCCM is required to make a report of an alleged incident to the Office of the NSW Ombudsman. The role of the Office of the NSW Ombudsman is to ensure the allegation is responded to appropriately and the process is effective, accountable and fair.

CCCM is committed to:

- Acting fairly and without bias
- Conducting an investigation without undue delay
- Ensuring that the case is not investigated or determined by someone with a conflict of interest.
- Urging all parties to maintain confidentiality during the investigation.
- Ensuring that the outcome is supported by evidence.

4.2 Prevention

CCCM is committed to a child safe environment, and works to reduce the risk of abuse and neglect within its programs within the following ways:

- Obtaining Working with Children Checks, along with relevant reference checks prior to commencement of service for all employees and volunteers working with children.
- Organising participation by all staff, in induction and training programs of Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) Identification and Reportable Conduct
- Developing a Code of Conduct and Child Safe Guidelines for staff, contractors and volunteers to ensure they maintain professional boundaries and are aware of their reporting obligations with regards to child safety and wellbeing
- Responding to allegations against employees, contractors and volunteers.

CCCM has systems in place to respond to allegations involving employees, contractors and volunteers at all times holding paramount the safety, welfare and well-being of students and rights of the employees, contractors and volunteers to a proper investigation.

CCCM's procedures ensure fair handling, privacy, support and any necessary discipline and preventative measures are put in place in response to any allegations received.

4.3 Reporting

CCCM is required to report:

Physical Assault

Intentionally inflicting unjustified physical force against a child, or a reasonable perception of imminent harm (e.g. pushing, shoving, grabbing, hitting, kicking). (See Appendix for further detail)

Sexual misconduct (including sexual offences)

Crossing professional boundaries; sexually explicit comments and other overtly sexual behaviour; grooming behaviour; sexual offences including child pornography. (See

Appendix for further detail)

Neglect

Action or inaction that results in serious harm, or has the potential for significant harm (e.g. not providing basic necessities or responding to special needs, reckless acts, failure to protect from harm)

Ill-treatment

Excessive, unreasonable and/or inappropriate conduct (e.g. excessive discipline, inappropriate behaviour management, unreasonable demands, all to significant extent)

Psychological harm

Excessive, unreasonable and/or inappropriate conduct (e.g. excessive discipline, inappropriate behaviour management, unreasonable demands, all to significant extent)

Reportable conviction

Convictions of an offence involving reportable conduct (e.g. death, sexual assault and breach of an Apprehensive Violence Orders).

4.4 Response to allegations

CCCM's initial response will be to:

- Document the allegations in the words used.
- Document the allegation/s constitute criminal behaviour.
- Document the allegation/s reach.
- Identify if there are any potential conflicts of interest which may be of concern.
- Notify the Ombudsman within 30 days.
- Determine what risks are there to be managed.

4.5 Phases of Investigation

- Initial response to allegation
- Planning the investigation
- Carrying out the investigation
- Making a finding
- Taking action.

4.6 Procedural Fairness

CCCM will provide a staff member, contractor or volunteer who is under investigation:

- Written advice of allegation/s
- Summaries of all conversations for confirmation
- Offer of a support person

- Separate interviews in cases of more than one person in allegation
- Proposed findings for comment
- Advice of final outcome and any action to be taken in writing (including avenues for appeal).

4.7 At conclusion of investigation

CCCM will:

- Make a finding in relation to each allegation.
- Prioritise findings from most serious to less serious.
- Have sufficient evidence to support conclusions.
- Demonstrate sufficient consideration of all relevant and available evidence.
- Demonstrate consideration of procedural fairness and natural justice
- Indicate how CCCM considered or managed any potential bias and/or conflict of interest.

4.8 Possible findings and possible actions

Possible Findings

Finding	When to use
“substantiated”	There is sufficient evidence that the reportable conduct occurred
“not substantiated - insufficient evidence”	There is some evidence that reportable conduct may have occurred, however there is not enough evidence to make a conclusive finding
“not substantiated – lack of evidence of weight”	A reportable allegation has been made, but there is no credible evidence other than the allegation itself to indicate the reportable conduct occurred
“false”	There is clear evidence to show that the alleged conduct did not occur
“not reportable conduct”	Inquiries show that the conduct is not reportable conduct

Possible Actions

- No action after investigation
- Performance monitoring
- Management counselling
- Training
- Counselling (other)
- Verbal caution/warning
- Written caution/warning
- Restrict/change duties

- Demotion
- Allowed to resign
- Dismissed
- Excluded from further work in that agency (e.g. inclusion on a 'not to be employed' list)
- Other CCCM specific action.
- If it was found that reportable conduct had occurred, the Department of Education must be notified as the main funder of the CCCM.

5. Recognising and Responding to Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) Guidelines

All CCCM staff, contractors or volunteers in child-related roles are to be aware of indicators of possible risk of significant harm.

If staff, contractors or volunteers are **aware of a life-threatening situation involving a child or young person dial 000**. Staff, contractors or volunteers will need to complete an incident report for the CEO/ AD, as a report may still need to be made to the Department of Family and Community Services.

Identifying significant harm; sections 23 and 24 Child and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998.

5.1 Current Concerns

Current concerns means that the circumstances have a current impact on the child/young person. An event does not need to be recent for it to raise current concern for a child/young person. Information about one child or young person may also have implications for current concerns for a group of children.

5.2 Reasonable grounds

To have reasonable grounds staff, contractors or volunteers need to be able to identify the child (either by name or by accurate location such as an address) and to be able to explain why you think the child is at Risk of Significant Harm. staff, contractors or volunteers do not need to see a situation first hand to have reasonable grounds. staff, contractors or volunteers do need to have an objective basis for the concerns, which may come from;

- First hand observations of the child, young person or family
- What the child, young person, parent or other person has disclosed to you, or someone else
- What can reasonably be inferred based on professional training and/or experience.

5.3 Risk of Significant Harm Circumstance

The Act says that one or more of the circumstances below must be present (along with

reasonable grounds and current concerns) for a child (aged 0-15 years) to be at Risk of Significant Harm. Section 23 (2) of the Act states that the circumstances may relate to a single act or omission or to a series of acts or omissions.

5.3.1 Neglect

Lack of supervision and basic needs, such as shelter and food. Not receiving necessary medical/mental health attention and not enrolled or attending school.

5.3.2 Physical Abuse

Non-accidental injury such as bruising, welts, fractures or burns or ill treatment such as severe beatings or shaking, attempted suffocation or strangulation.

5.3.3 Sexual Abuse

Any sexual act or sexual threat imposed on a child. This includes sexual assault and exposure to pornography.

5.3.4 Psychological Harm and/or Carer Concern

Exposure to Domestic Violence, exposure to severe parental/carer mental health or substance abuse issues. Parent/carer behaviours have significant negative impact on child/young person's development.

5.3.5 Relinquishing Care

A parent/carer cannot make informal care arrangements for more than 28 days, nor can they place a child in Out of Home Care unless it is arranged by an out-of-home care agency recognised by the Office of The Children's Guardian.

5.4 Responding to a child or young person disclosing abuse or neglect.

Being trusted professionals may mean that a child/young person feels safe to discuss concerns with CCCM staff, contractors or volunteers. This may be the first person they have disclosed to, so it is important that the staff, contractor or volunteer responds appropriately. CCCM staff, contractors or volunteers are required to report concerns to the CCCM CEO/ AD as a matter of urgency. The CCCM CEO / AD will contact Police and/or the Department of Family and Community Services and they may proceed with an investigation.

Staff, contractors or volunteers SHOULD	Staff, contractors or volunteers SHOULD NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remain Calm ● Listen carefully without interrupting ● Establish the welfare and safety of the child ● Make detailed notes and document all the information received (as soon as possible after the child has disclosed) ● Support the child and reassure them they have done the right thing by talking to them ● Explain clearly what will happen next: ● The staff, contractor or volunteer will speak to someone who deals with this sort of thing all the time and arrange for a professional to come and speak to the child/young person ● Follow CCCM's child safe incident reporting and reportable conduct procedures if applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make promises they cannot keep (including keeping the disclosure a secret) ● Express panic, shock, anger or disbelief ● Ask questions (especially leading questions) ● Dismiss, minimise or challenge the disclosure ● Confront the alleged perpetrator ● Discuss with staff, parents/guardians or students unless directed by CCCM CEO/AD (Head of Agency) ● Electronically record or offer to electronically record the conversation without express consent.

The first duty of care for the staff, contractor or volunteer, is to the child/young person making the disclosure. They should equally be aware of any other children/young people who may have witnessed the disclosure, provide support and request additional support as necessary.

staff, contractors or volunteers should also be aware of their own self-care and seek support for themselves if necessary, speak with CCCM President or seek professional support.