



<b>Child Safe Reporting Policy and Procedures</b>		
Adopted by: Guildford Grammar School Council On the 28 July 2015		Next Review Date: 2024
<i>Revised</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Endorsed by Council</i>
11/1/2016	Managing Sexually Concerning Behaviours included.	
17/03/2016	Mandatory Reporters extended to include Boarding Supervisors in line with the revision of the Children and Community Services Act 2004, Part 4 Division 9A, February 2016.	June 2018
25/08/2016	P17 Headmaster to inform DES of mandatory report via Critical Incident Reporting form.	
October 2019	Headmaster revised to Principal. Provided to Childwise for review	
May 2020	Title revised to Child Safe Reporting Policy and Procedures	28 July 2020
July 2021	2. Addition of Statement of Commitment, written by Student Child Safety Committee  4.1.4 and 4.2.4 updated to include "At any point, where there is any concern that a crime may have been committed, a report will be made to the Police. If in doubt, a report should still be made to enable the Police to decide on further action."	July 2021
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## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to outline the Guildford Grammar School (the School) responsibilities and approach to Child Safe Reporting.

The Policy provides the School, its Staff, Fellows of Council, Contractors and Volunteers with an outline of what to do in the event of incidents, disclosures or allegations of Child Abuse against a student or child in the care of the School. The document also outlines the approach to Historical Abuse and historical child protection reports.

The Policy must be read in conjunction with the Guildford Grammar School Child Safe Policy.

## 2. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Guildford Grammar School is committed to the care, safety and protection of all young people. The school promotes an open and inclusive culture that supports everyone to feel safe, happy and empowered.

## 3. POLICY

### 3.1 Policy Scope

The policies and procedures contained in this document cover both contemporary and historical Child Abuse matters. The document applies to all Staff, Fellows of Council, Contractors, Volunteers and all students at Guildford Grammar School.

All School Staff, Fellows of Council, Contractors and Volunteers must familiarise themselves with this Policy document and respond appropriately and in accordance with the provisions of this Policy.

Where a student is over the age of 18 and discloses or is the alleged victim of any type of abuse, as outlined in this policy, the School will provide support to the student and contact the Police immediately for further investigation.

### 3.2 Policy Definitions

**Child** – A child is defined in the *Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)* as a person who is under 18 years of age, and in the absence of positive evidence as to age, means a person who is apparently under 18 years of age. For the purposes of this Policy the words 'child' and 'student' are used interchangeably.

**Child Abuse** – Is an act or omission which endangers a child's physical or emotional health or development. Child Abuse can be a single incident, or more than one incident over time.

**Disclosure** – A disclosure is when a child tells someone that he or she feels unsafe or has been harmed. A disclosure can also be made by adults including Parents/Caregivers or any person in contact with the child, where that person reveals that they believe a child has been harmed or is likely to be harmed.

**Historical Abuse** – A complaint or disclosure from an Old Guildfordian where they disclose historical sexual abuse directly or indirectly to the School.



**Parent(s)/Caregiver(s)** – A person who is the mother, father, stepfather, stepmother of the child; or at law has responsibility for the care, welfare and development of the child or is specified as the child's adoptive parent under the *Adoption Act 1994*.

**Mandatory reporting** – As defined in the *Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)*, the legal obligation of doctors, nurses/midwives, police officers, teachers and boarding supervisors who form a belief based on Reasonable Grounds of child sexual abuse during the course of their work, either voluntary or paid, are mandatory reporters (Mandatory Reporter(s)). If Mandatory Reporters fail to report they may be fined and/or incarcerated. In Western Australia, the legislation covering Mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse is the *Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)*. This legislation focuses on child sexual abuse. Other forms of abuse (physical, emotional and neglect) should also be reported, but there is no penalty if a report is not made.

**Reasonable Grounds** – A concern or belief about the welfare of a child based on the observation of indicators or information that leads to form a realistic belief that a child has been the subject of abuse or may become subject to abuse.

**Staff or Staff member** – Paid School employees including those in leadership, teaching, boarding, administration and support roles.

**Fellow of Council** – Member of the School Council, the governing body of Guildford Grammar School.

**Boarding Supervisor** (includes Housemothers) – a person who holds an office or position in the School Boarding facilities the duties of which include the supervision of children living at the facility.

**Stakeholders** – All parties internal or external the School community that has a stake in the scope, policy or effect of this document.

**Volunteers** – Unpaid people assisting with activities undertaken by the school.

**Contractors** – People that are engaged by the School to undertake services at the School.

**School Child Protection Manager** – The Principal, the designated School representative responsible for handling questions, concerns or reports about a child's safety and/or wellbeing.

**Child Safe Champion** – School leaders designated to promote child safety and lead training and development in their respective areas across the School.

### 3.3 Policy Statement

The School recognises that it is essential that the safety, health, welfare and wellbeing of its students are safeguarded at all times. Every person working or visiting the School is responsible for the ongoing care and protection of its students.



The School is committed to ensuring all incidents, disclosures or allegations of Child Abuse are reported immediately to the appropriate authorities and the child's wellbeing is at the centre of any actions or decisions that ensue.

The School adheres to the Mandatory reporting legislation as set out in the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (WA). All School doctors, nurses, teachers and boarding supervisors, either voluntary or paid, who form a belief based on Reasonable Grounds of child sexual abuse, during the course of their work are directed to make a Mandatory Report to the Department of Child Protection and Family Support (DCPFS) immediately via the online reporting system, [Mandatory Reporting Online Portal](#)

In addition to Mandatory reporting the School requires **all** School Staff members, Fellows of Council, Contractors and Volunteers, whether required by the legislation or not, who have formed a belief on Reasonable Grounds of any Child Abuse (sexual, physical, emotional/psychological, neglect, grooming or domestic violence), or who have had a student disclose Child Abuse directly to them or indirectly through a friend, to report to the Principal immediately.

### **3.4 Policy Responsibilities**

#### **Mandatory Reporters**

All teachers, boarding supervisors, nurses and doctors that are engaged by the School are Mandatory Reporters and must report any concerns they have in relation to child sexual abuse to the DCPFS and then to the Principal.

#### **Non-Mandatory Reporters**

The School requires all other concerned persons (which includes Staff, Fellows of Council, Contractors, Volunteers and parents) who are not legally required to do so, to report child sexual abuse and any other abuse set out in this Policy directly to the Principal immediately.

#### **Principal**

The Principal is the designated School Child Protection Manager responsible for handling all School child safety matters and is responsible for the effective operation of this Policy. The Principal is the key liaison person with external authorities and will also inform the School Council when an incident, disclosure or allegation has been made.

#### **Child Safety Champions**

The Child Safety Champions are the designated School leaders responsible for promoting child safety across the School. The Child Safety Champion's liaise regularly with the Child Protection Manager and are involved in leading child safety training and development in their respective areas across the School

## **4. REPORTING PROCEDURES**

Everyone in the School community must be aware of the immediate needs of a child when listening to disclosures or allegations or forming a belief on Reasonable Grounds and respond accordingly. To facilitate this the reporting procedures are split into different categories of Child Abuse.



To ensure all parties understand the steps that will be undertaken a step by step flow chart of each procedure can be found in [Section 5](#) – Reporting Flow Charts, of this document.

Adults should be aware that hearing a disclosure from a child can arouse personal feelings of shock, anger and helplessness in the adult. It is important to conceal these feelings at the time of a disclosure. They can be worked through at a later time.

*Please refer to the Child Safe Policy for more information about listening to a disclosure.*

#### **4.1 Sexual Abuse – Sexual abuse against a current school student**

To be followed where a complaint, allegation, disclosure or belief is formed on Reasonable Grounds that a student has been sexually abused or is continuing to be sexually abused.

##### **4.1.1 Initial Report**

Where the Staff member is a Mandatory Reporter to whom the allegation or Disclosure was made or who has formed a belief on Reasonable Grounds that a child has been subjected to sexual abuse or is the subject to ongoing sexual abuse will immediately contact DCPFS and provide DCPFS with a verbal and/or written report. If the initial report is verbal, the legislation requires the reporter to follow up with a written report via the DCPFS [Mandatory Reporting Online Portal](#).

DCPFS is available to provide support to the student, his/her family, and to enable a risk assessment to be made for other students in the School community.

After the report has been made to DCPFS the Mandatory Reporter will brief the Principal and provide written records. They will work with the Principal, the student's teacher and other relevant Staff to develop a Student Care Plan.

Where the person to whom the allegation or disclosure was made or who has formed a belief on Reasonable Grounds that a child has been subjected to sexual abuse but is **not a Mandatory Reporter** they will make detailed notes of the disclosure, allegation or complaint and immediately report the matter to the Principal. This may be done via email until a discussion can take place.

Written records of the allegation, disclosure or complaints provided to the Principal will include authorship, any direct quotes made by the child, names of alleged perpetrator and relevant locations and dates (where available).

The Principal will make a report to the DCPFS and seek advice about the most appropriate next actions. At any point, where there is any concern that a crime may have been committed, a report will be made to the Police. If in doubt, a report should still be made to enable the Police to decide on further action.

If the allegation is against the Principal, the Staff member will advise the Chair of Council who will take over from the Principal in regard to the reporting procedures.

##### **4.1.2 Ensuring the child is safe and providing support**

The School will act to remove the alleged perpetrator from any child interactions.

Where an alleged perpetrator is a Staff member they will be immediately advised of the allegations by the Principal and suspended from duty immediately and removed from all contact with the School community, pending the outcome of the investigation by DCPFS and other relevant authorities.



If the Staff member is suspended from duty, he/she will usually remain on full pay. This will not occur if the Staff member is summarily dismissed. The School's Allegations of Misconduct against Employees Policy will apply.

Support will be offered to the victim, the reporting Staff member and the alleged perpetrator (in line with the Allegations of Misconduct against Employees Policy). This support may be in the form of in-house support by the School Counsellor or School Chaplain and/or outside agencies. Such support will not in any way impact the other responsive actions set out in this policy and procedures document.

#### **4.1.3 Consulting with and informing Stakeholders and authorities**

When a Mandatory Report has been made the Principal must seek advice from DCPFS and the Police.

It is the responsibility of the DCPFS or the Police to notify the child's Parent(s)/ Caregiver(s) of the allegation and any proposed police action.

However, the Principal may, after consultation with the Police, notify the Parent(s)/Caregiver(s), the School Staff and the broader School community. The victim's identity must remain confidential.

The Principal must inform the Chair of Council of the allegations. Where it appears that more than one child may have been the subject of abuse, coordinated action must be taken at the School level, in ongoing consultation with the Chair of Council.

As the Department of Education Services (DES) considers all Mandatory Reports to be critical incidents, the Principal must report these to DES as soon as possible using the [NGS Critical Incident Report Form](#) which is completed to notify of any critical and emergency school incidents, including circumstances that pose a critical risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of one or more students or Staff or death, or life-threatening injury, of a student or Staff member at school, or following an incident that occurred while being educated.

The Principal will then seek further and ongoing advice, from the Police and/or the DCPFS on the appropriate action to take in respect of the alleged perpetrator, the child, and the child's Parent(s)/Caregiver(s).

#### **4.1.4 Investigations**

Mandatory Reports of sexual abuse will be investigated by DCPFS and/or the Police. Where a non-mandatory report is made an investigation may be undertaken by DCPFS and/or the Police, the Director of Professional Standards Unit (PSU) or an externally appointed investigator. If the investigation is undertaken by the PSU or an external investigator, referral to the Police may be made at any time, or where allegations are substantiated by the investigative body.

At any point, where there is any concern that a crime may have been committed, a report will be made to the Police. If in doubt, a report should still be made to enable the Police to decide on further action.

#### **4.1.5 Legal Action**





Any decision to take legal action is a matter for the student's family. In circumstances where the student wishes to take legal action and the Parents/Caregivers are unwilling, the Principal will consult with the DCPFS as to an appropriate course of action.

#### **4.2 Other Child Abuse reporting against a current school student including physical, psychological/ emotional, neglect, grooming and domestic violence.**

To be followed where a complaint, allegation, disclosure or belief is formed on Reasonable Grounds that a school student is at risk of Child Abuse other than sexual abuse.

##### **4.2.1 Initial Report**

The initial report may be made by any concerned person, including School Staff member, Fellow of Council, Contractor, Volunteer, student or Parents/Caregivers.

Where the concern is raised by a School Staff member, Fellow of Council, Contractor or Volunteer they should make detailed notes of their concern and inform the Principal immediately. The School Staff member (if a Mandatory Reporter) or Principal shall make a report to DCPFS.

Where the concern is raised by a student/Parent/Caregiver they should report their concerns to a trusted School Staff member or Head of School or the Principal, whomever they feel most comfortable in talking to.

Where a trusted Staff member or Head of School is informed, they will immediately inform the Principal. The Principal shall make a report to DCPFS.

At any point, where there is any concern that a crime may have been committed, a report will be made to the Police. If in doubt, a report should still be made to enable the Police to decide on further action.

If the allegation is against the Principal, the Staff member will advise the Chair of Council who will take over from the Principal in regards to the following procedures.

##### **4.2.2 Ensuring the child is safe and providing support**

The School will act to remove the alleged perpetrator from any child interactions.

Where the alleged perpetrator is a Staff member they will be immediately advised of the allegations by the Principal and depending on the severity of the risks posed by the allegation, suspended from duty immediately and removed from all contact with the School community, pending the outcome of the investigation by DCPFS and other relevant authorities.

If the Staff member is suspended from duty, he/she will usually remain on full pay. This will not occur if the Staff member is summarily dismissed. The School's Allegations of Misconduct against Employees Policy will apply.

Support will be offered to the victim, the concerned person and the alleged perpetrator (in line with the Allegations of Misconduct against Employees Policy).



This support may be in the form of in-house support by the School Counsellor or School Chaplain and/or outside agencies. Such support will not in any way impact the other responsive actions set out in this policy and procedures document.

#### **4.2.3 Consulting with and informing Stakeholders and authorities**

When a report has been made the Principal must seek advice from DCPFS.

It is the responsibility of the DCPFS to notify the child's Parent(s)/Caregiver(s) of the allegation.

The Principal after consultation with the DCPFS and where it poses no further risk to the child will notify the Parent(s)/Caregiver(s) about the concerns.

The Principal, the student's teacher, Parent/Caregiver and other relevant Staff shall develop a Student Care Plan

Depending on the risks posed by the allegation the Principal may inform the School Staff and the School community. The victim's identity must remain confidential.

The Principal must inform the Chair of Council of the allegations. Where it appears that more than one child may have been the subject of abuse, coordinated action must be taken at the School level, in consultation throughout with the Chair of Council.

If the allegation is made against a School Staff member the Principal will inform the Department of Education Services (DES) as soon as possible.

#### **4.2.4 Investigations**

Allegations of non-sexual abuse will be investigated by the DCPFS. Referral to the Police may be made at any time, or where allegations are substantiated by the investigative body.

At any point, where there is any concern that a crime may have been committed, a report will be made to the Police. If in doubt, a report should still be made to enable the Police to decide on further action.

#### **4.2.5 Legal Action**

Any decision to take legal action is a matter for the family. In circumstances where the student wishes to take legal action and the Parents/Caregivers are unwilling, the Principal will consult with the DCPFS as to an appropriate course of action.

### **4.3 Historical Abuse - abuse against a former student**

To be followed where a complaint, allegation or disclosure is made to the School about Historical Abuse of a former student.

#### **4.3.1 Initial Report**

Any member of the School Staff, Fellows of Council, Volunteers or people working at the School may receive disclosures and/or allegations of abuse by a past student against a current



or former Staff member or by another student. If this occurs the matter must be reported to the Principal immediately.

Upon receipt of the historical report or upon being advised of the disclosure and/or allegation the Principal will:

- Formally acknowledge in writing to the former student or parent.
- Make personal contact with the former student or parent by phone and offer to meet with the person.
- At all times be sensitive to the former student or parent's wishes.
- Document the allegations in detail with the former student or parent and/or confirm understanding of the written complaint or detail provided by the former student or parent.
- Offer funded counselling support to the victim and family members provided by Anglicare. Where an individual prefers to use their own counselling services, financial support may be provided to the individual.
- Keep appropriate supportive contact with former student and/or parent.
- Maintain a log of all communications with all parties.

The Principal will provide advice to the former student or parent on where and how to make a formal complaint to WA Police, and any other relevant avenues (e.g. 2014-2017 Royal Commission process – See [Section 5](#) of this document).

#### **4.3.2 Consulting with and informing Stakeholders**

The Principal will:

- Retrieve School files of the former student and the alleged perpetrator from the School Archives.
- Review the allegations with School personnel including Chair of Council, Director of Finance and Legal Advisor.
- In the case of sexual abuse, if the allegation occurred after 1st January 2009 the Principal must make a Mandatory Report to DCPFS. However, in the case of sexual abuse prior to that day, the Principal can and will make a report to DCPFS.
- Where there is any concern that a crime was committed, a report will be made to the Police. If in doubt, a report should still be made to enable the Police to decide on further action.
- Inform DES using the [NGS Critical Incident Report Form](#) which is completed to notify of any critical and emergency school incidents, including circumstances that pose a critical risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of one or more students or Staff or death, or life-threatening injury, of a student or Staff member at school, or following an incident that occurred while being educated.
- Inform School Council regarding the allegation with a reminder about the sensitivity and confidentiality, limiting where possible the number of personnel that know details of the case.
- Inform the Director of Professional Standards Unit (PSU) and the Archbishop of Perth. Follow established Protocol of Understanding procedures.
- Notify the School Insurers.



- Encourage third party support to the former student and/or parent including legal support, counselling offered through Anglicare or a Counsellor of their own choosing.

### 4.3.3 Investigations

Mandatory Reports of sexual abuse may be investigated by DCPFS and/or the Police. Where this is not undertaken an investigation may be undertaken by the Director of Professional Standards Unit (PSU) or an externally appointed investigator. Referral to the Police may then be made when warranted or where allegations are substantiated by the investigative body.

### 4.3.4 Legal Action

Any decision to take legal action is a matter for the victim and family. They should be encouraged to engage with their own independent legal advice.

## 3.4 Managing Sexually Concerning Behaviours

To be followed where a complaint, allegation, disclosure or belief is formed on reasonable grounds that a student has displayed sexual inappropriate or abusive behaviour.

The School takes the responsibility of building a respectful, safe and healthy environment for all students very seriously. In the School boarding and day room environment it is important that appropriate sexual behaviours are displayed.

### 4.4.1 Respectful Sexualised behaviours

In any environment healthy sexual behaviours meet all four (4) of the following criteria:

- **Consent** - All people involved in the behaviour have given consent.
- **Age** - All people involved are of the right age to give consent, according to the law.
- **Respect** - All people involved treat each other with respect, and are not “taking advantage”
- **Equality** - There are no unequal power relationships between the people involved. (eg: cognitively impaired or age gap)

### 4.4.2 Harmful Sexual Behaviours

The practice definition of a child *exhibiting* harmful sexual behaviours is when:

*“a person or persons have engaged another party in sexual activity that is either unwanted or where, due to the nature of the situation, the other party is not capable of giving consent (eg. children who are younger or who have a cognitive impairment)”.*

Harmful Sexual Behaviours includes:

- Physical force or threats
- Sexual exposure, peeping
- Fondling, masturbation and unwanted touching
- Oral sex, penetration of a vagina or anus using a penis, finger or object
- Exposure to pornography

Please refer to Attachment A for an outline of age appropriate behaviours.



#### **4.4.3 Ensuring the child is safe and providing support**

Where sexually inappropriate or abusive behaviours are recognised or suspected the Staff member, Fellows of Council, Volunteers or people working at the School must inform the Head of School or the Principal immediately.

The report should include the names of all students that are suspected of being involved. Support will be offered to all students.

#### **4.4.4 Using the traffic light model**

In the first instance the Head of School and/or the Principal will interview the students involved to assess the behaviour and impacts of the behaviour. After these discussions the Principal will use the “traffic light model” to make an assessment of where the behaviour is rated in terms of normal child and adolescent development and the behaviour in the school context. See Attachment A.

#### **4.4.4 Determining next steps**

Where Students behaviours are deemed to be in the “Green” or “Orange” zones, the School will provide all students involved with counselling and support. This may be in the form of in-house support by the School Counsellor or School Chaplain and/or outside agencies, with usual notification and consent processes put in place with parents.

Where students are displaying behaviours that are clearly deemed to be in the “Red” zone. That is, sexual behaviours outside the ‘norm’ and/or behaviour that is excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive or degrading.

Either the Teacher, as a mandatory reporter, or the Principal will make a report to DCPFS. Supports will also be provided to the student however this will not in any way impact the other responsive actions set out in the Schools Child Protection policy and procedures.

When a Mandatory Report has been made the Principal must seek advice from DCPFS and Police. It is the responsibility of the DCPFS or the Police to notify the child’s Parent(s)/ Caregiver(s) of the allegation and any proposed police action.

The Principal must inform the Chair of Council of the reported allegations. Where it appears that more than one child may have been the subject of abuse by another student, coordinated action must be taken at the School level, in ongoing consultation with the Chair of Council.

As all Mandatory Reports are critical incidents, the Principal must report these to DES as soon as possible using the [NGS Critical Incident Report Form](#) which is completed to notify of any critical and emergency school incidents, including circumstances that pose a critical risk to the health, safety or well-being of one or more students or Staff or death, or life-threatening injury, of a student or Staff member at school, or following an incident that occurred while being educated.

The Principal will then seek further and ongoing advice, from the Police and/or the DCPFS on the appropriate action to take in respect of the alleged perpetrator, the child, and the child’s Parent(s)/Caregiver(s).

To ensure all parties understand the steps that will be undertaken a step by step flow chart of each procedure can be found in Section 5 – Reporting Flow Charts, of this document.



### 3.4.5 Investigations

Mandatory Reports of sexual abuse will be investigated by DCPFS and/or Police.

### 3.4.6 Legal Action

Any decision to take legal action is a matter for the student's family. In circumstances where the student wishes to take legal action and the Parents/Caregivers are unwilling, the Principal will consult with the DCPFS as to an appropriate course of action.

- Inappropriate interactions with a child either in person or via forms of media and electronic devices.
- Asking a child to keep a secret of any aspect of their relationship.
- Testing of or ignoring professional boundaries or rules.

Grooming behaviour typically involves a graduation from attention giving and non-sexual touching to increasingly more intimate and intrusive behaviours.

Grooming is not a single act of unprofessional or inappropriate conduct, but rather a pattern of behaviour where the trust of a child is gained and a 'special relationship' is developed between the adult and the child.

Grooming involves making the child feel important and special, often by giving the child extra attention, privileges and gifts. In many cases, the child's family is engaged by the adult to gain access to the child outside of school hours and the child is encouraged to see the adult as a friend.

*Please refer to attached Guideline 2 - Indicators of Child Abuse.*

## 5. RESOURCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

### Department of Child Protection and Family Support Offices

Midland: Cale house, Level 1/52 The Crescent, Midland WA 6056  
Phone: 08 9274 9411

Mirrabooka: 8 Sudbury Road, Mirrabooka WA 6061  
Phone: 08 9344 9666

Perth: 190 Stirling Street, Perth WA 6000  
Phone: 08 9214 2444

### DCPFS

Central Intake Team on 1800 273 889 (business hours)  
Crisis Care Unit on 9223 1111 (after hours)

[Mandatory Reporting Online Portal](#)

### Department of Education Services

General enquiries  
Phone: 08 9441 1900 Fax: 08 9441 1901



Email: [info@des.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@des.wa.gov.au)  
PO Box 1766, Osborne Park, WA 6916.  
DES [NGS Critical Incident Report Form](#)

### **Child Wise**

Child Abuse Prevention, Advice and Referral and Royal Commission support National Child Abuse Prevention Helpline 1800 244 539 or [www.childwise.org.au](http://www.childwise.org.au)

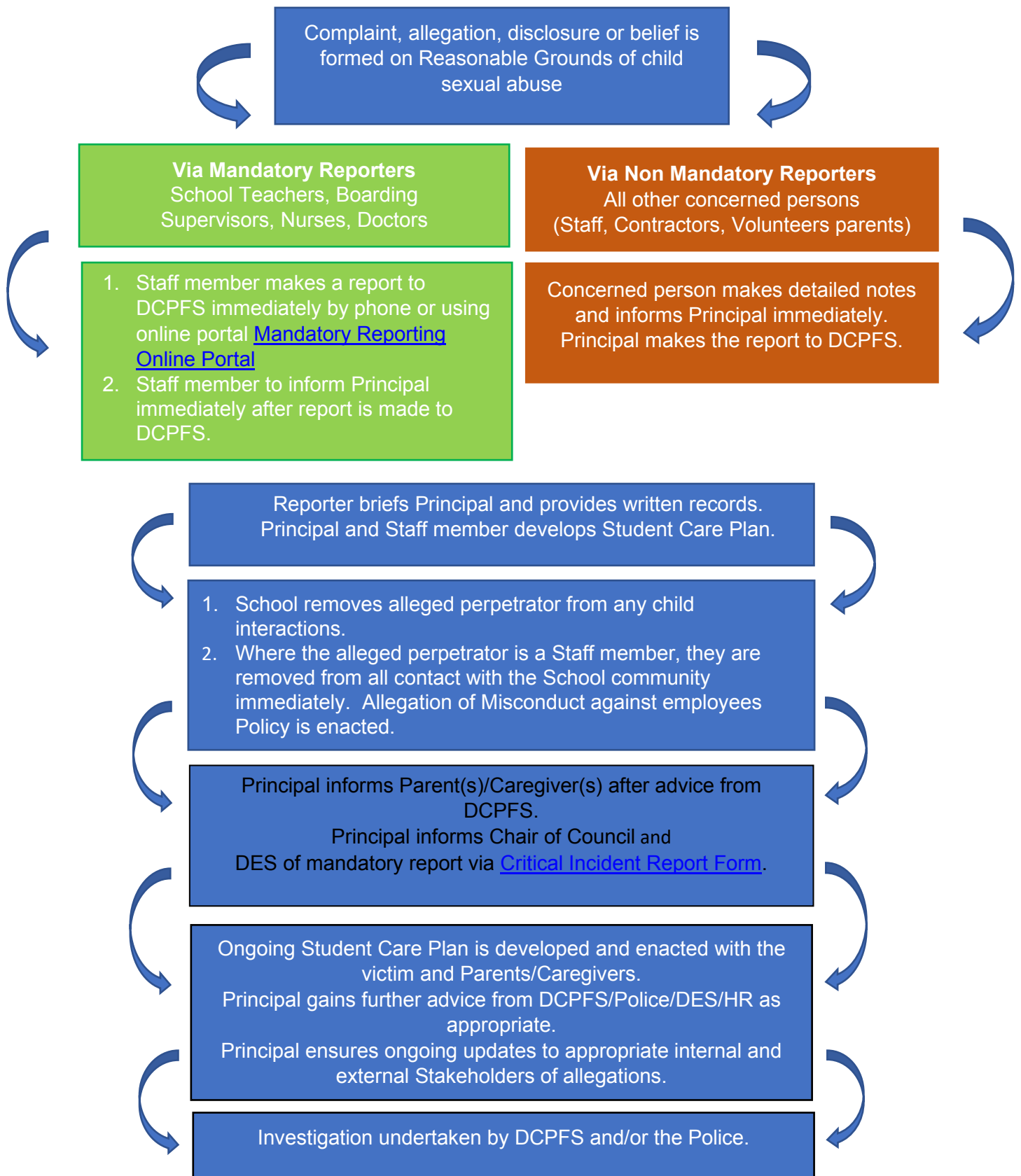
### **Royal Commission**

Free Legal Service - Know More 1800 605 762  
Free Disclosure Advice Service - Child Wise - 1800 244 539



## 6. REPORTING FLOW CHARTS

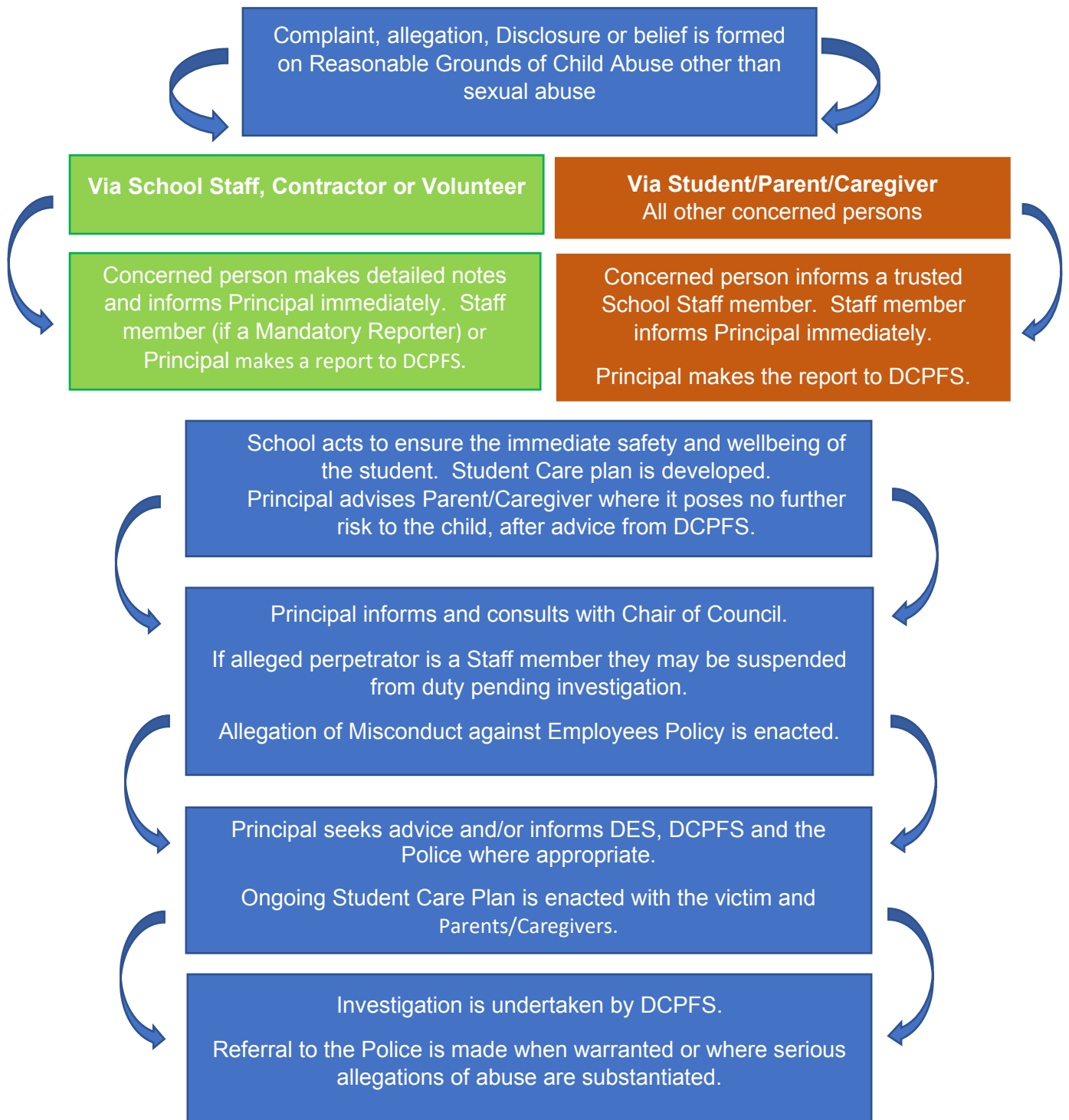
### Guildford Grammar School Sexual Abuse Reporting







## Guildford Grammar School all other Child Abuse Reporting



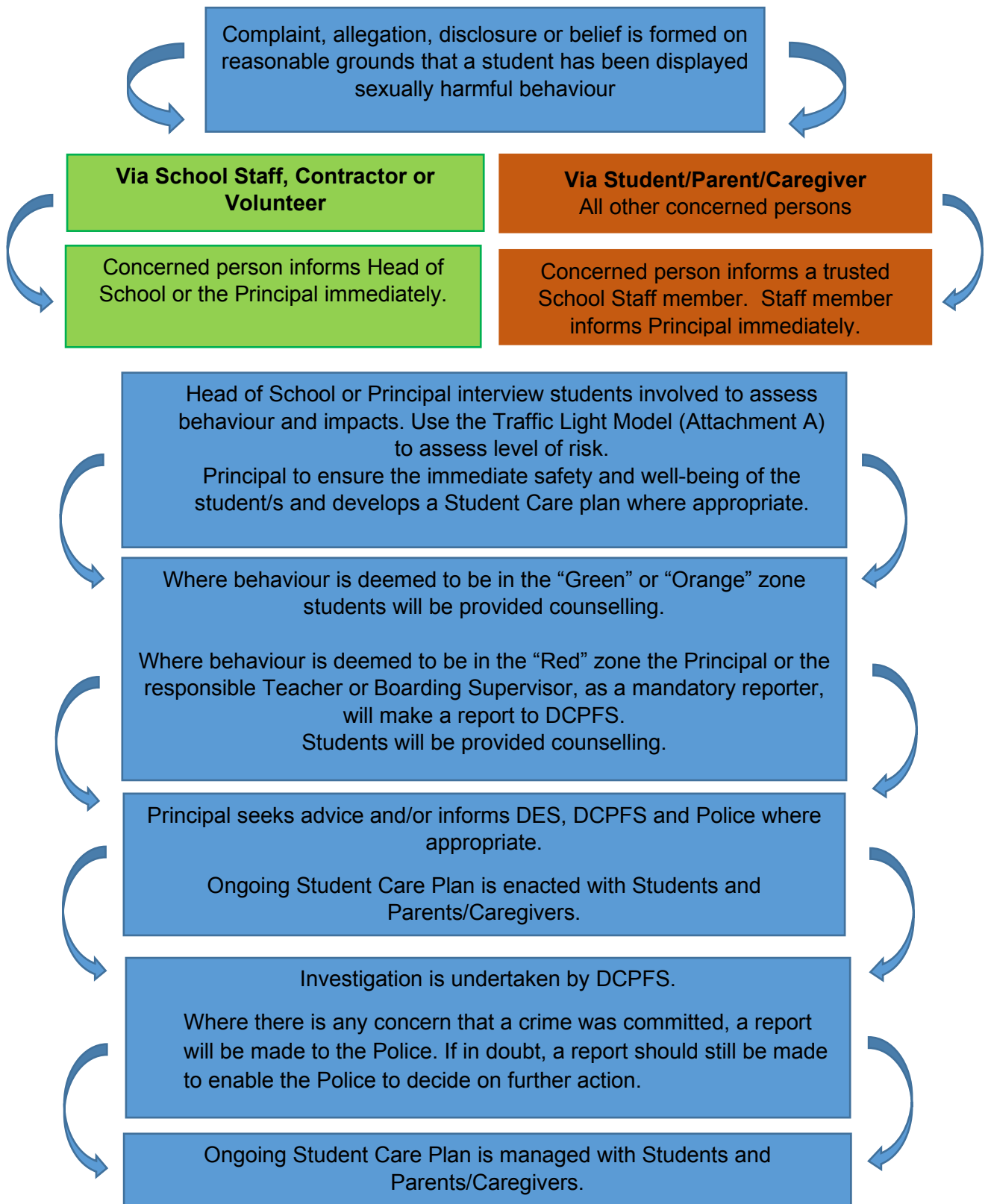


## Guildford Grammar School Historical Abuse - against a former student





# Guildford Grammar School – Managing Sexually Concerning Behaviours





## 7. ATTACHMENT A - Categorising Sexual Development using the Traffic Light Model

### Purpose

The purpose of this model is to help guide teachers and early learning educators about what is appropriate and inappropriate sexualised behaviour in children and young people.

### Using the model

There are behaviours that are considered to be appropriate and part of normal sexual development. This tool uses a traffic light model to assess the appropriateness of the behaviour and actions that should be taken.

<b>Green</b>	Sexual behaviours which are considered 'normal', healthy, spontaneous curious lighthearted, easily distracted, experimental, equality of age, size and ability level. <b>Action:</b> opportunity to give the child or adolescent positive feedback and information.
<b>Amber</b>	Sexual behaviours that are outside the norm in terms of persistence, frequency or inequality in age/development. <b>Action:</b> gather more information to assess the most appropriate action.
<b>Red</b>	Sexual behaviours outside the 'norm'- behaviour that is excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive or degrading. <b>Action:</b> require immediate intervention and action.

When using this tool it is important to remember the tool is evidence based and outlines what the research shows is normal and irregular sexual behaviours in children in the various stages of age and development.

### Context

Depending on the context and cultural, religious and social standards the behaviour outlined as green or amber may be considered to be inappropriate in the community in which they are occurring. The important thing is that where action is taken it is to ensure the *safety of the child or children* and the education of both the parties. Social overlays or judgements should be held in order to appropriately respond to the behaviours in the first instance.

### Considerations

There are various influences on children's sexual behaviour and development:

- Parents and Family relationships
- Media - TV, internet, radio and magazines
- Peer relationships
- How adults treat each other
- Children's services
- School environments

When assessing a child's sexualised behaviour it is important to consider the following variables:

- Is the behaviour age appropriate or concerning?
- What is the context of the behaviour?
- What is the age difference and relationship between children (2 years or more?)
- What is the vulnerability of the children? (age, cognitive ability, socio economic status)



## Age Range and Behaviours

### BIRTH TO 5 YEARS

<b>Green</b>	Thumb-sucking, body-stroking, genital holding Curious/want to touch other's private parts, i.e., when in bath Games: doctor/nurse; 'show me yours I'll show you mine' Enjoyment being nude, using slang language for toilet functions
<b>Amber</b>	Preoccupation with adult sexual behaviour Preoccupation with touching other's genitals Use of sexual adult language Chronic peeping at other's parts, pulling other's pants down/ skirt up Sexualised play with dolls
<b>Red</b>	Simulation of foreplay/sexual behaviour in play Persistent masturbation, oral sex, touch/attempt to touch other's genitals Sexual behaviour between children involving penetration with objects Forcing other children to engage in sexual play

### 5 TO 9 YEARS

<b>Green</b>	Self-touching, masturbation to self-soothe Increased curiosity about other children's genitals and adult sexuality (eg, babies, gender differences) Using 'toilet words'/body parts as swear words to be silly/tell dirty jokes Increased sense of privacy about bodies
<b>Amber</b>	Persistent/recurrent questions about sexual activity Writing sexually threatening notes Engaging in mutual masturbation, constant public touching of own genitals Use of adult language to discuss sex i.e., "do I look sexy?" Persistent use of dirty words
<b>Red</b>	<b>Persistent masturbation, especially in front of others</b> <b>Sexual behaviours engaging younger/less able children (i.e., sneaking into room of sleeping younger children to touch or engage in sexual play)</b> <b>Simulation of sexual acts sophisticated for age i.e., oral sex</b> <b>Persistent sexual themes in talk, play, art etc</b>



### 9 TO 12 YEARS

<b>Green</b>	<p>Use of sexual language and dirty words/jokes with peers          Having girlfriends/boyfriends; consensual kissing with known peers          Some exhibitionism i.e., flashing/mooning to same age peers          Increased need for privacy, occasional masturbation          Use of internet to chat online</p>
<b>Amber</b>	<p>Sudden change in behaviour, dress, mixing with new/older people          Bullying involving sexual aggression          Pseudo maturity, inappropriate knowledge/discussion of sexuality          Preoccupation with online chat, pornography          Persistent expression of fear of pregnancy/ STIs          Mutual masturbation, preoccupation with masturbation</p>
<b>Red</b>	<p>Persistent masturbation, particularly in front of others          Sexual activity, oral sex, intercourse, coercion of others into sexual acts          Sending nude/sexually provocative image of self/others online          Degradation/humiliation of self or others using sexual themes          Presence of STI          Penetration of dolls, children or animals</p>

### 13 TO 18 YEARS

<b>Green</b>	<p>Sexually explicit conversations with peers; obscenities or jokes within norm          Solitary masturbation, interest in erotica          Use of internet to chat online          Consenting sexual activity: flirt, love bites, hug, kiss, foreplay, hand-holding, oral sex, intercourse with partner of similar age (within 2 years) and development</p>
<b>Amber</b>	<p>Sexual preoccupation/anxiety-interferes with daily function          Preoccupation with pornography, online chat, meeting online acquaintance          Sexually aggressive themes/ obscenities/ graffiti          Peeping, exposing, non-consenting sexual touch, violation of other's space          Unsafe sexual behaviour i.e., unprotected, intoxicated, multiple partners          Unwanted sexual activity: flirt, love bites, hug, kiss, foreplay, hand-holding, oral sex</p>
<b>Red</b>	<p>Compulsive masturbation (especially chronic or public)          Degradation of self/others with sexual themes i.e., threats, phone, email          Preoccupation with sexually aggressive pornography          Sexual harassment: attempt/force others to expose genitals          Sexual contact/ talk with others of significant age/developmental status          Sending nude/sexually provocative images of self to others online          Genital injury to self/ others; sexual penetration/ contact with animals</p>

*Traffic Lights: Family Planning Queensland (2006) adapted from the Child at Risk Assessment Unit (2000). Age Appropriate SexualPlay and Behaviour In Children, Canberra ACT Government Community Care. 5-11*