



Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty. Ltd (GPSP)

Child Safe Environment Policy

Authorised by	Diana Bleby - Director
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Description	This policy sets out the principles, objectives and responsibilities for Good Prospects Speech Pathology to provide Childsafe environments



Child Safe Environment Policy

Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. aims to provide an environment that minimises the risk of children being harmed in any way whilst in the care of Good Prospects, and to protect staff from the possibility that allegations of child maltreatment could be falsely made against them, as a result of their work. Child abuse thrives in secrecy, therefore to prevent child abuse; Good Prospects will continue to develop and maintain an open and aware culture where staff and children are aware of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. believes it has a responsibility to all clients to defend their right to care and protection. To support this right Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. will follow any procedures recommended by child protection authorities, when dealing with any allegations of abuse or neglect of children, and will ensure that all staff undergo appropriate professional development in this area. Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. will also document any evidence of neglect or abuse which may have occurred outside of Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. and follow procedures to ensure the child is protected from harm.

Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. believes it also has a responsibility to its staff to protect their right to confidentiality unless allegations of abuse against them are substantiated.

Rationale

Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. understands it has a duty of care to act immediately to protect and preserve the safety and wellbeing of the children in its care. All staff will be fully informed about their responsibilities to implement and adhere to Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. child protection policies and procedures.

Child abuse includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Staff need to learn about the nature of child abuse, and develop an awareness of how and why some children are victimised.

Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. believes that the best way to ensure children's protection at Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. is to establish an environment that minimises risks and sets out clear safeguards for staff to follow. It is for this reason and the commitment to being a part of a community that takes responsibility for children's safety that Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. has developed this policy.

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Strategies

Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. will ensure clear observation of child occupied areas through the following means:

- Inclusion of parent/guardian or primary support person at all times unless there is a compelling reason not to do this
- Where the parent/guardian or primary support person is not present in the room, all doors are kept open and visual and/or at a minimum auditory monitoring must be ensured.
- Where the above conditions are unable to be met for compelling reasons, an agreement must be written up with the parent that ensures appropriate measures are taken and a strategy is in place (for example: real time video monitoring or recording).

Validity of Students and Volunteers

All persons other than employed staff who perform duties during Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. hours of operation (paid or unpaid) will be required to present a current DCSI working with children check.

Recruitment of Staff

Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. will ensure all staff provide a current DCSI working with children and working with vulnerable people check (See Staff Requirements policy) as well as evidence that they have undergone RAN (Reporting Abuse and Neglect) training

All staff will be oriented to Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. policies and procedures and code of conduct. Whenever possible new staff will have a period of time to work alongside current staff to familiarise themselves with the clients, families and Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. procedures prior to taking up their new role in a full capacity.

Staff Training

Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. requires all staff to participate in training on child protection organised by relevant child protection authorities or support agencies.

Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. will:

- ensure that staff are knowledgeable about current legislation and reporting requirements related to child protection and maltreatment and that a system for reporting and recording suspicious incidents is in place
- understand their responsibility as mandated reporters

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- access current information about the procedures to be taken in relation in allegations of child abuse or neglect
- Maintain RAN (Reporting Abuse and Neglect) 3 yearly training updates
- Ensure a guide book to recognising signs of abuse or neglect will be made available to all staff to remind them of the possible signs of child abuse, and the procedures they should follow if a child in their care displays behaviour or physical signs that could indicate abuse has taken place (Reporting Abuse and Neglect – Participants Handbook)
- regularly remind educators about Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. policies, procedures and confidentiality requirements in regard to child protection

Children’s education and empowerment

Staff will:

- foster children’s self-esteem and positive self-image through their interactions and relationships with children
- role model appropriate behaviour and language
- build relationships with all children based on trust and will empower children to discuss and communicate their needs and concerns

Practices and Procedures

General principles to be applied in the event that protective concerns arise

Any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection may report their concerns to the Child Abuse Report Line. This means any person, including non-mandated licensed children’s services are able to make a report when they believe that a child or young person is at risk of harm and in need of protection, and the child’s parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child. Good Prospects employees are all mandated reporters.

Reporting concerns

1. In the course of work hours, if the Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. staff member forms the view that protective concerns exist; they must discuss these concerns as soon as possible with the Director (or delegate)
2. Following discussions with the Director, a decision will be reached about whether a report will be made and the report will be made by the staff person directly.

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3. The staff person involved will be informed of any additional outcomes, but no other staff will be given identifying information about the family unless the Director feels that they need to know. The Director may be present while the staff person makes the report if required. Note that an educator or any other person may independently make a report, regardless of whether the Director or Business Manager decides to do so.
4. The Director or staff person has discretion whether and if so when to notify the family involved that they are making a report. When the suspected abuse involves severe physical injury or sexual abuse, the family will generally not be notified before a report is made. Good Prospects will in these cases be guided by Child Protection as to if, and when to notify the family.
5. Good Prospects Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. and each staff member has a right to take any action to ensure that children and staff are safe at all times. This may involve contacting the police if any person or family makes threats against staff.
6. As part of the standard procedure, staff, the Director or Practice Manager, will make careful documentation of concerns and any action taken.

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