



## Child Protection - Policy Statement

# Contents

---

1. Preface.....	3
2. Responsibilities.....	4
3. Good Practice Guidelines.....	6
4. Professional Conduct and Behavior.....	7
5. Complaints Procedure .....	7
6. Recognizing Child Abuse .....	10
7. Taking Action.....	12
8. Physical Contact with Students .....	13
9. Whistle-blowing .....	14
10. Monitoring and Review .....	14
11. Appendix 1: Student Welfare Concern Form.....	15

## **Preface**

Our school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We endeavor to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. The policy applies to all staff members.

The School's safeguarding principles are:

- the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance;
- safer children make more successful learners;
- representatives of the whole-school community of students, parents, staff and the School Board will be involved in policy development and review; and
- policies will be reviewed every year unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

## **Purpose of the Policy**

Collegiate School seeks:

- to raise awareness of individual responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse among students;
- to provide a systematic means of monitoring, recording and reporting of concerns; and
- to provide guidance on recognizing and reporting suspected child abuse.

## **Scope of the Code**

The policy applies to Collegiate School's faculty, management, and all other persons involved in the daily functioning of School.

## Section 1. Responsibilities

The school will have a team of teachers, which may include the school counselor, who will be called as Designated Teacher for child protection. If a child or parents need to make a disclosure, the Designated Teacher should be consulted, either directly or after consulting with another teacher. In an emergency, if these teachers are not available then it is advised that the parents contact the principal.

### 1.1 The Designated Teacher

- 1.1.1 The Designated Teacher ensures that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to child protection issues. He/she will also act as a dedicated resource available for other staff, volunteers and the principal, regarding any child protection matter.
- 1.1.2 Has an understanding of the school procedures.
- 1.1.3 Keeps written records of all concerns and ensures that such records are stored securely.
- 1.1.4 Coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans.
- 1.1.5 Develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies.
- 1.1.6 Ensures that the child protection policy is updated annually.
- 1.1.7 Liaises with the school principal and class supervisors.
- 1.1.8 Makes the child protection policy available to parents.
- 1.1.9 Ensures that new staff members receive child protection induction within 7 working days of commencement of their contract.
- 1.1.10 Acts as the first point of contact for any staff member, who wants to report his/her concerns about a student.
- 1.1.11 Decides upon the appropriate level of response to specific concerns about a child e.g. holding a discussion with parents or starting an investigation to address the problem.

## **1.2 The School Board**

- 1.2.1** Ensure procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the principal;
- 1.2.2** A training strategy that ensures all staff members, including the principal, receive child protection training, with refresher training at three-yearly intervals. The Designated Teachers should receive refresher training at two-yearly intervals;
- 1.2.3** Ensure arrangements to ensure that all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection; and
- 1.2.4** Ensure School Board reviews the policy every year.

## **1.3 The Principal**

- 1.3.1** Ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff.
- 1.3.2** Allocates sufficient time and resources to enable the Designated Teachers to carry out their roles effectively.
- 1.3.3** Ensures that all staff members feel able, and at ease to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and those concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the 'Whistle-blowing' procedures.

## **1.4 Other Employees**

- 1.4.1** Duty to protect students from abuse.
- 1.4.2** Duty to be aware of the school's child protection procedures and to follow them.
- 1.4.3** Duty to know how to access and implement the procedures, independently if necessary.
- 1.4.4** Duty to keep a sufficient record of any serious complaint, conversation or event.
- 1.4.5** Duty to report any matters of concern to the Designated Teacher.

## Section 2: Good Practice Guidelines

To meet and maintain responsibilities towards students, the school lists down standards of good practice. Good practices include:

- 2.1 Treat all students with respect.
- 2.2 Setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately.
- 2.3 Involving students in decisions that affect them.
- 2.4 Encouraging positive and safe behavior among students.
- 2.5 Being a good listener when students want to talk about issues that are private in nature.
- 2.6 Being alert to changes in students' behavior.
- 2.7 Recognizing that challenging behavior may be an indicator of abuse.
- 2.8 Reading and understanding the school's child protection policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact and information sharing.
- 2.9 Maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between students as avoiding the use of derogatory language.
- 2.10 Being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some students lead to an increased risk of abuse

### Section 3: Professional Conduct and Behavior

- 3.1 All adults working with children and young people have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. It is therefore expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the public in general and all those with whom they work.
- 3.2 It could be possible, for example, for an adult's behavior or actions in their personal life to come under scrutiny from local communities, the media or public authorities through what has been published on the internet. This could be because their behavior is considered to compromise their position in their workplace or indicate an unsuitability to work with children or young people. Misuse of drugs, alcohol or violence would be examples of such behavior.

### Section 4: Complaints Procedure

#### 4.1 Complaints against Staff

- 4.1.1 The school's complaint procedure will be followed where a student or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a student that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action.
- 4.1.2 Complaints are managed by class supervisors and the principal. An explanation of the complaints procedure is included in the Complaint Redressal Policy statement.
- 4.1.3 Procedures for managing allegations of abuse by a teacher, principal or other member of the academy staff or volunteer:
  - Where an allegation is made against any staff member, volunteer or other adult on the school premises, it will be taken up as a special case, as mentioned in the **Complaint Redressal Policy** and appropriate formal procedure will be followed to address the complaint.

#### 4.2 Staff Initiating a Complaint

- 4.2.1 **Initial Complaints:** A staff member suspecting or hearing a complaint of abuse:
  - must listen carefully to the young person and keep an open mind. Staff should not take a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place;
  - must not ask leading questions, that is, a question which suggests its own answer. Must reassure the young person but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality.

- The staff member should explain that they need to pass the information to the Designated Teacher who will ensure that the correct action is taken; and
- must keep a sufficient written record of the conversation, using the **Student Welfare Concern Form**, given in the appendix. The record should be signed by the person making it and should use names, not initials. The record must be kept securely and handed to the Designated Teacher.

#### 4.2.2 Helpful responses are:

- Remain calm, approachable and receptive. Do not pre-judge.
- Listen carefully, without interrupting.
- Make it clear that you are taking them seriously.
- Acknowledge their courage and good sense and reassure them that they are right to tell you.
- Explain that you cannot keep things a secret but will have to record and pass on what they have said.
- Reassure them that they should not feel guilty and that you're sorry that this has happened to them.
- Let them know that you are going to do everything you can to help them and what may happen as a result of their disclosure.

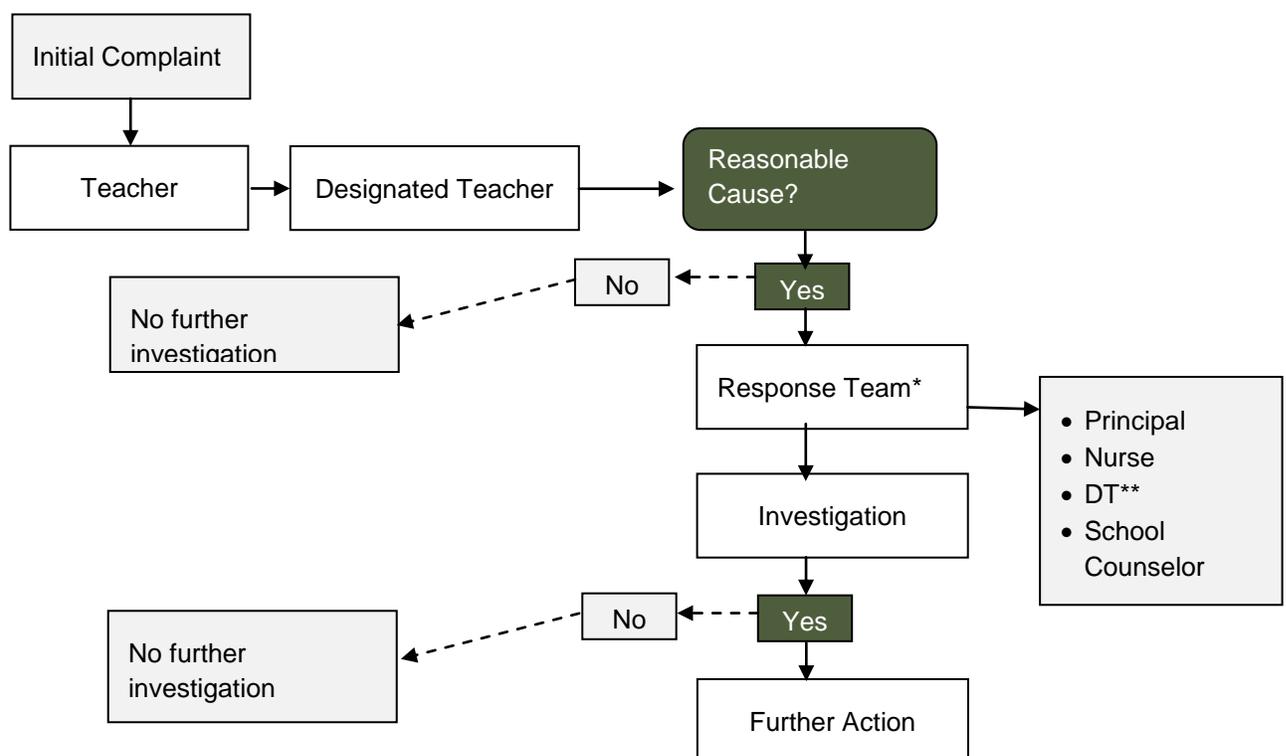
#### 4.2.3 What to avoid:

- Do not allow your shock or distaste to show.
- Do not probe for more information than is offered. You must not ask the pupil leading questions or attempt to counsel the pupil.
- Do not speculate or make assumptions.
- Do not make negative comments about the alleged person.
- Do not make any promises that you cannot keep, such as promising that 'everything will be alright'.
- Do not agree to keep the information a secret. Make it clear, in a sensitive way that confidentiality cannot be promised to a pupil disclosing. Note down all

- information in the Student Welfare Concern Form and let the pupil know that it is mandatory to note down the information.
- Never let allegations by a child or young person go unrecorded or unreported including any made against you. In all instances the Designated Teacher is informed.

**4.3 Preserving Evidence:** All evidence, (for example, scribbled notes, and mobile phones containing text messages, clothing, and computers) must be safeguarded and preserved.

**4.4 Reporting:** All suspicion or complaints of abuse must be reported to the Designated Teacher or if the complaint involves the Designated Teacher, to the principal.



*\*The response team will vary according to the nature of the complaint. It is a temporary team formed to address a complaint when it arises.*

*\*\*Designated Teacher*

## Section 5: Recognizing Child Abuse

**5.1** To ensure that students are protected from harm, the school has defined what types of behavior constitute abuse and neglect. There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

### **5.2 Physical Abuse**

**5.2.1** Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

### **5.3 Emotional Abuse**

**5.3.1** Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include:

- interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability;
- overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning;
- preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
- seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;
- serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children; and
- some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

### **5.4 Sexual Abuse**

**5.4.1** Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (for example, rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

## **5.5 Neglect**

**5.5.1** Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; or failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate caretakers.

## **5.6 Bullying**

**5.6.1** Bullying can be defined as using deliberately hurtful behavior usually over a period of time, where it is difficult to for those bullied to defend themselves. The three main types of bullying are:

- Physical
- Verbal
- Emotional

**5.6.2** All incidents of bullying should be dealt with by the classroom teacher in the first instance, and immediately referred to the Designated Teacher.

**5.6.3** If a child is engaging in repeated bullying behavior they should be monitored closely.

## **5.7 Self Harm**

**5.7.1** If it comes to the attention of a teacher/ staff member that a child is harming his or her self, they should alert the Designated Teacher for child protection. Actions by the Designated Teacher might include:

- Speaking to the school nurse
- Contacting parents

## **5.8 Fabricated and Induced Illness**

**5.8.1** There are three main ways of the guardian fabricating or inducing illness in a child. These are not mutually exclusive and include:

- fabrication of signs and symptoms, which may include fabrication of past medical history;
- fabrication of hospital charts and records, and specimens of bodily fluids, which ultimately might lead to fabrication of letters and documents; and
- induction of illness by a variety of means.

## **5.9 Signs of Abuse**

- 5.9.1** The student says he/she has been abused or asks a question which gives rise to that inference.
- 5.9.2** There is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a student's injury; the injury is unusual in kind or location; there have been a number of injuries or there is a pattern to the injuries.
- 5.9.3** The student's behavior stands out from the group as either being extreme model behavior or extremely challenging behavior; or there is a sudden change in the student's behavior
- 5.9.4** The student asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons.
- 5.9.5** The student's development is delayed.
- 5.9.6** The student loses or gains weight rapidly.
- 5.9.7** The student appears neglected, e.g. dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed.
- 5.9.8** The student is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by his/her parents or guardians.
- 5.9.9** Running away from home or suicide attempts.

## **Section 6: Taking Action**

- 6.1** Key points for the staff member or parents/guardian to remember before taking any action:
  - 6.1.1** In an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 100 or any other emergency helpline number.
  - 6.1.2** Report your concern to the Designated Teacher by the end of the day.
  - 6.1.3** Do not start your own investigation.
  - 6.1.4** Share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family.
  - 6.1.5** Refer to the procedure document for reporting your concern.

## **6.2 Notifying Parents**

- 6.2.1** The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a student with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the Designated Teacher will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.
- 6.2.2** However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or make the problem worse, and then advice will first be sought from children's social care, if available.
- 6.2.3** It is important that school has an established approach to working with parents. Parents'/Guardians' and children's need for privacy should be respected. Attitudes towards and contact with parents should be non-judgmental in order to obtain the most conducive working relationship. The priority is the needs of the child and hence effective liaison is crucial.
- 6.2.4** It should be recognized that families from different backgrounds and cultures will have different approaches to child-rearing. These differences should be acknowledged and respected provided they do not place the child at risk as defined earlier in the document. The school has provisions to support parents where it is felt that this would be useful.

## **6.3 Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

- 6.3.1** The school will keep all child protection records confidential, allowing disclosure only to those who need the information in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 6.3.2** Whenever required, the school will cooperate with police and child welfare services to ensure that all relevant information is shared for the purposes of child protection investigations.

## **Section 7: Physical Contact with Students**

- 7.1** Some school activities require physical contact with children. There are also occasions when it is entirely appropriate for other adults to have some physical contact with the child or young person with whom they are working. However, it is crucial that in all circumstances, adults should only touch children in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities.
- 7.2** Not all children and young people feel comfortable about physical contact, and adults should not make the assumption that it is acceptable practice to use touch as a means of communication. Permission should be sought from a child or young person before physical contact is made.

## **Section 8: Whistle-blowing**

- 8.1** The staff members are required to report to the principal or the School Board in his/her absence, any concern or allegations about school practices or the behavior of colleagues which are likely to put students at risk of abuse or other serious harm. There will be no retribution or disciplinary action taken against a staff member for making such a report, provided that it is done in good faith.
- 8.2** The detailed policy for Whistle-blowing and its respective procedures are listed in the School's Whistle-blowing policy.

## **Section 9: Monitoring and Review**

- 9.1** All staff members in school will receive a copy of this policy and will be asked to sign to say that they have read and agree to follow its procedures. It will be discussed at least annually at staff meetings.
- 9.2** The effectiveness of the policy will be reviewed and evaluated by the School Board annually in light of any specific incidents or changes to local/national guidance.
- 9.3** The policy will be implemented through the school's induction and training program, and as part of day to day practices. Compliance with the policy will be monitored by the Designated Teachers and through staff performance measures.

## Appendix 1: Student Welfare Concern Form

Teachers and parents are advised to record any concern about a student's welfare and give it to the Designated Teacher for child protection.

If you suspect the student may be suffering abuse or neglect, or you have received a disclosure of abuse from a student, or you have heard about an allegation of abuse, you must complete the child protection record of concern form, and hand it to the designated person.

- Student's full name
- Date of this record
- Why are you concerned about this student?
- What have you observed and when?
- What have you heard and when?
- What have you been told and when?
- Date and time you handed this form to the designated person
- Are the parents/guardians aware of your concern? Yes No
- Class
- Class teacher/tutor
- Your name and designation
- Signature \_\_\_\_\_
- Have you spoken to the student? Yes No
- What did they say? Use the student's own words
- Have you spoken to anyone else about your concern? Yes No
- Who?
- Is this the first time you have been concerned about this student? Yes No
  
- Further details