

**FLEMINGTON SCHOOL PROCEDURE - NAG 5**  
**VULNERABLE CHILDREN – Keeping Children Safe**  
**Definitions and Management Procedures**

**OVERVIEW**

- All children are to be treated with dignity and respect and have the right to have their needs met in a safe environment.

**GUIDELINES – More details of these guidelines are outlined in the procedural directions from pages 2-10, and Appendices A, B & C**

1. Staff will use the checklists attached (Appendix One and Appendix Two) to help when making decisions around identifying children possibly at risk.
2. Individual records already kept on children include observations on social development.
3. Any general incidents or concerns will be entered on the Schools SMS (Student Management System) under the Pastoral tab of their personal file.
4. Any concerns of a more serious nature are to be kept in the Principal's Filing cabinet in the Vulnerable Children's file.
5. Parents may be consulted about changes in behaviour to try to identify a reason. It may be caused by a change in the family's home circumstances.
6. All information is confidential to the staff involved. Data relating to abuse will be stored confidentially in the Vulnerable Children's File by the Designated Person for Child Protection (Principal) and this data will be kept for the duration of the child's stay at the school. It will be forwarded on to relevant agencies at the discretion of the Designated Person for Child Protection.
7. Where a teacher is concerned about a child they may discuss it with Senior Staff. If any further investigation or action is felt necessary, then the Designated Person for Child Protection (Principal) will be informed. The Principal will contact the appropriate agency without identifying the child and seek advice on the appropriate action.
8. Once an agency has been involved, that agency and where appropriate the Police, will investigate and the School will act on the advice from those agencies.
9. Support for staff and the child concerned will be sought from the agency involved.
10. Whenever an interview is held with a child at the school an adult on the staff, whom the child has confidence in, must be present. The welfare of the child must be first priority and whenever that is compromised the interview should be terminated. Any staff members attending such interviews would need to have the ability to make this judgment.
11. Local appropriate agencies are;
  - School Public Health Nurse
  - Child and Youth and Family Service
  - Police
  - Care and Protection Resource Panel
  - Resource Teacher for Learning and Behaviour (RTLB)
  - Truancy Service

In cases of complaints against employees involving physical or sexual abuse the following procedures will be followed:

- The Designated Person for Child Protection (Principal) will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees immediately.
  - Guidelines as stated in Policy 'Discipline' will be followed.
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## 1. Purpose

1.1 The most effective way to safeguard children is to have a comprehensive and effective policy, with attached practices and guidelines. This procedure is written under the principle that children and young people attending Flemington School have a right to feel safe and comfortable in that contact.

1.2 The purpose of this procedure is to provide Flemington School staff guidelines by which to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of abuse and neglect, and to understand their role in keeping children safe.

1.3 This procedure has been developed in accordance with the following legislation:

- Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act, 1989
- Crimes Act, 1961
- Domestic Violence Act, 1995
- Health Act, 1956
- Health and Disability Sector Standards Regulations, 2001
- Privacy Act, 1993
- Health Information Privacy Code, 1994
- Vulnerable Children's Act, 2014
- Care of Children Act, 2004
- Employment Relations Act, 2000

1.4 This procedure will be reviewed annually, and updated regularly in the light of operational experience and in line with changes in legislation and associated policies.

## 2. Scope

2.1 This procedure includes all staff of Flemington School who have direct or indirect contact with children. This includes those staff employed directly by Flemington School, as well as those professionals contracted or invited to provide services to children on Flemington School premises. This includes teaching and non-teaching staff.

2.2 Any parents and/or volunteers supporting overnight Education Outside of the Classroom events (e.g. Camps) are to be submitted for the same Police Vetting procedures as outlined for any staff employed by Flemington School. This will include: a police vet, including identity verification.

## 3. Definitions

3.1 For the purposes of this procedure **"Child"** means a boy or girl under the age of 14 years, **"Young person"** means a boy or girl of or over the age of 14 years but under 17 years; but does not include any person who is or has been married or in a civil union (Children, Young Person, and Their Families Act 1989, Section 2).

3.2 For the purpose of this Procedure **"Staff"** means people employed directly by Flemington School such as teachers, teacher aides, ancillary staff, caretakers and ground keepers, whether working on a full time, part time, casual or temporary basis.

Other people onsite may include contactors, consultants, students, associates and volunteers and these groups will abide by the guidelines of best practice set out by Flemington School Safe Practices Guidelines.

3.3 The Children, Young Persons and their Families Act, 1989, defines **child abuse** as "...the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person".

3.4 **Child protection** – activities carried out to ensure that children are safe in cases where there is suspected abuse or neglect or are at risk of abuse or neglect.

3.5 **Designated person for child protection** – the Principal or designated person responsible for providing advice and support to staff where they have a concern about an individual child or who want advice about the Health and Safety Policy and/or the Vulnerable Children's Vulnerable Children's Definitions and management Procedures.

3.6 **Disclosure** – information given to a staff member by a child, parent or caregiver or a third party relation to abuse or neglect.

3.7 **Child, Youth and Family** – the agency responsible for investigating and responding to suspected abuse and neglect and for providing care and protection to children found to be in need.

3.8 **New Zealand Police** – the agency responsible for responding to situations where a child is in immediate danger and for working with Child, Youth and Family in child protection work and investigating cases of abuse or neglect where an offence may have occurred.

## 4. Principles

4.1 The Health and Safety Policy along with this Child Protection Procedure confirms the commitment of Flemington School to the protection of children and proceeds to:

- outline the standards and principles by which all staff will abide
- define child abuse
- outline the action to be taken by staff where any form of abuse or ill-treatment is known or suspected
- establish what action is required when allegations are made against staff
- explore the implications for staff training

4.2 Flemington School will ensure that:

- Staff are carefully selected with the principles of the Health and Safety Policy in mind.
- Staff are appropriately trained in issues of child protection.
- Staff are aware of the Health and Safety Policy and these Child Protection Procedures and/or guidelines.

4.3 Flemington School recognises that all staff and Trustees have a full and active part to play in protecting students from harm. Overall responsibility, implementation and review of the Health and Safety Policy rests with the Principal of Flemington School.

4.4 All services provided by Flemington School for the safety and wellbeing of children adhere to the principles of partnership, protection and participation; and the rights and responsibilities accorded by Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

## 5. Responsibilities

5.1 Any member of staff, paid or voluntary, may directly witness child abuse or have allegations, made by a child or an adult, relayed to them. There may also be disclosures of abuse that have occurred prior to attending Flemington School. Sustained abuse and neglect of children, wherever it occurs, can have major long term effects on all aspects of children's health, development and well-being and their ability to sustain stable and meaningful relationships in the future.

It is the intention of Flemington School to ensure that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in ensuring the safety of children at all times. This is achieved through consistent and agreed protocols regarding child protection, as well as the regular undertaking of awareness raising training.

5.2 Each member of staff must:

- be aware of, and alert to, potential indicators of abuse or neglect
- record a factual account of any concerns they have, or that are brought to their attention
- appropriately seek advice and support from their Designated Person for Child Protection who will then contact external agencies if appropriate
- work in co-operation with the parents and caregivers, unless this compromises the safety of the child.

**5.3 It is the primary responsibility of staff to be vigilant, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators or neglect, potential or actual abuse and to report any concerns, suspicions or allegations of suspected abuse immediately and ensure that the concern is taken seriously and reported.**

5.4 The statutory responsibility to investigate allegations of child abuse rests with Child Youth and Family and the Police.

### Role of the Principal

5.6 The role of the Principal is to:

- Ensure the needs and rights of children come first i.e. the safety and wellbeing of each child is paramount.
- Ensure that all allegations are managed appropriately. No investigation will occur without appropriate consultation and a decision whether a response from Child Youth and family or the Police is required.
- Ensure that the Health and Safety Policy is effectively implemented throughout Flemington School.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of, and have access to, full copies of the procedures for reporting child abuse.
- Ensure that all staff are recruited and employed in accordance with the guidelines identified in the Employment Policy to identify those people safe to work with children.

### Role of the Designated Person for Child Protection

5.7 The role of the Designated Person for Child Protection is to:

- Ensure the needs and rights of children come first i.e. the safety and wellbeing of each child is paramount.
- Receive information that suggests potential or actual risk of harm to a child who attends Flemington School, irrespective of whether the alleged abuse is current, past or likely to occur. The Designated Person for Child Protection is also expected to advise and support staff and, on the basis of the initial detail, will make a decision as to whether or not to consult with the Principal for further action.
- Ensure and safeguard clear, confidential, detailed and dated records on all child protection cases. These must contain all available information relating to the cause for concern and any subsequent action taken, including when it has been decided not to make a notification to Child Youth and Family or the police. These records will be kept separate from student's records for the purpose of confidentiality.

- Establish a close link with the relevant local agencies to ensure clear and effective communication and be a recognised contact within Flemington School for agencies to contact regarding concerns.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of, and have access to, full copies of the procedures for reporting child abuse.
- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate child protection training.
- Ensure that all staff are supported appropriately when dealing with child protection concerns.
- Notify any concerns of child abuse to Child Youth and Family.

## 6. Child Protection Procedures

6.1 All staff will respond to concerns of child abuse by following the identified procedures, consulting appropriately and collaborating with external agencies.

6.2 The procedures set out below will help staff with:

- the identification of abuse
- handling disclosures, whether verbal or behavioural, from a child
- reporting procedures

### Identification of abuse

6.3 If the Designated Person for Child Protection is unavailable for advice and guidance then staff should consult with the Principal. At any time staff may seek advice from Child Youth and Family (0508 FAMILY) regarding child protection concerns.

Further information regarding signs and indicators of abuse is included in the Appendix A.

### Handling disclosures from a child

6.5 If a child makes a verbal disclosure to a member of staff it is important that staff take what the child says seriously. This applies irrespective of the setting, or the member of staff's own opinion on what the child is saying.

Further information regarding responding to a disclosure is included in the Appendix B.

6.6 Under no circumstances should a member of staff attempt to conduct an investigation or deal with concerns regarding child abuse alone. Any incidents, concerns or suspicions must be reported following the procedures set out below.

### Child-on-Child Harmful Behaviours

6.7 It is important to be aware that children can harm other children. These behaviours are outside of what may be considered the normal range, and can extend to bullying, violence or sexual assault. Therefore when a child alleges inappropriate harmful behaviour by another child then the child protection procedures outlined in this procedure must be followed for both the children.

## Reporting procedures

6.8 All concerns of potential, suspected or alleged abuse must be brought to the attention of the Designated Person for Child Protection. If the Designated Person for Child Protection is unavailable then consultation should occur with the Principal (this is often the one and the same person). A decision will be made as to whether to seek further advice or notify Child Youth and Family.

When reporting an incident staff should:

- Inform the Designated Person for Child Protection (Principal) as soon as possible
- Record in writing all conversations and actions taken

6.9 Effective documentation, including referrals and notifications, must include the following:

- Record of facts, including observations, with time and date
- What was said and by whom, using the person's words
- What action has been taken, by whom and when

## Keeping the child's family informed and involved

6.10 Although the parent or caregiver of the child will usually be informed of concerns, there may be times when those with parental responsibility may not be initially informed. This may happen when:

- the parent or caregiver is the alleged perpetrator
- it is possible that the child may be intimidated into silence
- there is a strong likelihood that evidence will be destroyed
- the child does not want their parent or caregiver involved and they are of an age when they are competent to make that decision

## Action to be taken by the Designated Person for Child Protection

6.11 Concerns regarding alleged or suspected abuse will first be raised to the Designated Person for Child Protection (Principal). If further guidance is required then consultation will occur with the Principal, if not the Designated Person for Child Protection. A decision will be made whether this information needs to be escalated to Child Youth and Family.

6.12 All decisions taken, including if the concern does not require notifying Child Youth and Family, must be recorded in writing and kept securely in a Child Protection file with the reasons clearly identified and explained.

6.13 The flowing flowchart will assist staff in making decisions around the reporting of alleged or suspected abuse as defined in Appendix A.

## Child Abuse Reporting Flowchart

Abuse of a child is suspected or disclosed to a staff member.  
Do not interview the child but record Dates, times, statements made by the child and observations.  
Listen and recognise concerns from the child.

Is an immediate response required to ensure the child's safety? (If unsure, consult with Designated Person for Child protection - Principal or Chair of the Board of Trustees) Always pass on information as soon as possible.

No

Yes

Designated Person for Child Protection to consult with Principal if further guidance required - the Designated Person maybe the principal.  
Decision whether to notify Child Youth and Family

Ensure the immediate safety of the child and contact Police or CYF immediately on **111** or **0508 326 459**  
Waipukurau Police **8589140**

Yes

No

Inform the Designated Person for Child Protection of that action - this may be the principal anyway.

Report of Concern made to Child Youth and Family

Record Actions Taken

Record Actions Taken and follow directions from lead support agency

Record Actions Taken and follow directions from lead support agency

## 7. Safe Recruitment of Staff

7.1 All appointments (permanent, fixed-term, student or casual) to positions that have direct and/or frequent contact with children or young people will be conditional on a safety checks, including a Police check.

This will include: a police vet; identity verification; references and an interview. A work history will be sought and previous employers will be contacted. If there is any suspicion that an applicant might pose a risk to a child, that applicant will not be employed.

7.3 All staff employed or engaged in positions that direct and/or frequent contact with children or young people will have a police vet done within 3 years of their last police vet.

7.4 Relieving teachers come under the same requirements for safety checking for permanent or part-time staff in that they need to have a police vet completed within 3 years of their last check. Confirmation in writing from another school that the reliever has had a safety check done, and the result shared, with permission from the reliever to do so covers this requirement.

7.5 Further information regarding Safety Checking, including vetting and screening procedures, is found in the Employment Policy.

## 8. Volunteers

8.1 Under the VCA there is no requirement to complete safety checks for volunteers, however volunteers often work with children and NZSTA recommend that a Police vet is completed for all volunteers.

8.2 Volunteers going on overnight camps or other residential trips or events which children will be attending will have police vetting done.

## 9. Training of Staff

9.1 All staff will receive child protection training at the level appropriate to their role. The Designated Person for Child Protection (Principal) will undertake more intensive training. These persons will be accessible to staff to provide advice and support.

9.2 All staff will be given appropriate training covering basic awareness of child protection. This will include an overview of signs and indicators of abuse, and also the procedure for responding to actual or suspected abuse. This training will include:

- Roles and responsibility of staff regarding child protection
- Recognising and responding to the signs and indicators of actual or suspected abuse
- Ensuring staff understand and can follow the Health and Safety Policy and the Child Protection Procedures for reporting a concern

9.3 All staff will receive updated training every three years as a minimum.

### Induction

9.4 All new staff will be given a copy of the Child Protection Policy, Vulnerable Children – Keeping Children Safe Definitions and Management Procedures and the Safe Working Practices to read and respond to as part of the induction process.

9.5 All new staff that have direct and/or frequent contact with children or young people will receive child protection training at the earliest reasonable time frame.

## 10. Safe Working Practices

10.1 A relationship between an adult and a child or young person cannot be a relationship between equals. There is a potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people. Adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

10.2 Adults should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. Adults who work with children must therefore act in a way that is considered to be safe practice.

10.3 Communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phone, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites, social networking and blogs. Adults should not share any personal information with a child or young person. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child or young person other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

10.4 Any sexual activity between an adult and a child or young person will be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action.

10.5 When physical contact is made with a child this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Adults should use their professional judgement at all times, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the child for the minimum amount of time necessary.

10.6 All staff are expected to behave in manners consistent with the Flemington School Code of Conduct.

## 11. Dealing with allegations made against members of staff regarding inappropriate actions with children

11.1 Flemington School has a duty of care to the children it provides services to. A failure to report a significant concern about a child is a breach of that child's human rights.

11.2 Anyone who has reason to make a complaint will be made aware of the Flemington School complaint process. There is potential that an issue raised as a complaint may also constitute an allegation of abuse. Any such complaint that raises a child protection issue will be referred directly to the Principal.

11.3 It must be remembered that making a disclosure or a complaint against someone in a position of power and authority is always difficult. The person making the disclosure may reconsider and express a wish to retract their allegation. At the outset it must be clearly communicated with the child or adult that their concern is being taken seriously and will be responded to in accordance with this policy.

11.4 Allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against staff, volunteers or representatives of other agencies must be taken seriously and reported to the Principal who will deal with them immediately, sensitively and expediently within the procedures outlined in this policy. Concerns may be raised a number of ways e.g.:

- Directly by staff hearing or observing issues of concern or behaviour of concern
- Direct disclosure by the child or young person
- Indirect disclosure e.g. through written or art work or through friends
- Complaint from a parent or caregiver or whanau member
- Reports by other colleagues or agencies
- As an anonymous report

11.5 It is **NOT** the responsibility of staff to investigate allegations of child abuse. Allegations against staff will be discussed with the Chair of the Board of Trustees where a decision will be made if a notification to Child Youth and Family is appropriate.

11.6 In all child protection cases Flemington School will co-operate fully with both Child Youth and Family and the Police in their investigations and assessments.

11.7 If the Police decide to undertake a criminal investigation then the member of staff may be suspended, without prejudice, as a precautionary measure. It is important that no internal investigation is undertaken, and no evidence gathered that might prejudice the criminal investigation.

11.8 If there is insufficient evidence to pursue a criminal prosecution, then a disciplinary investigation may still be undertaken if there is reasonable cause to suspect that abuse or inappropriate behaviour may have occurred. The allegation may represent poor practice by a member of staff which needs to be considered under internal disciplinary procedures.

11.9 It is important that no one person has the responsibility for dealing with both the reporting issues and employment issues as there is a potential for there to be tension between the two.

The employer must meet the Mandatory Reporting requirements for EDUCANZ, including reported suspected serious misconduct once allegations are made (i.e. before a disciplinary process begins). This serious misconduct is as defined by rule 9 <http://www.educationcouncil.org.nz/content/criteria-reporting-serious-misconduct> (in essence it is any conduct that is: abuse / neglect of a child or animal (physical, sexual, psychological), drugs, sexual conduct, neglect, theft / fraud, criminal conviction).

Deciding when and who will inform the parent(s) and/or caregiver will be determined by CYF and Police in consultation with the school.

If there is a disruption to the school or community, negative impacts on other children and/or staff, media interest or a public profile, seek support from *Special Education Traumatic Incident Coordinator 0800 848 326*.

11.10 All staff have a responsibility to understand what constitutes appropriate behaviour in relation to children and young people. All staff have a responsibility to maintain appropriate standards of behaviour and to report lapses in these standards by others. Any concerns or reasonable suspicions of abuse should be reported to the Principal.

11.11 A person tendering his or her resignation, or ceasing to provide their services, will not prevent an allegation of abuse against a child being followed up in accordance with these procedures.

## 12. Confidentiality and information sharing

The Privacy Act 1993 and the Children, Young Persons, and their Families Act 1989 allow information to be shared to keep children safe when abuse or suspected abuse is reported or investigated.

Flemington School will seek advice from Child, Youth and Family and/or the Police before identifying information about an allegation is shared with anyone, other than the Designated Person for Child Protection and the Principal. Staff should be aware that:

- Under sections 15 and 16 of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989 any person who believes that a child has been or is likely to be, harmed physically, emotionally or sexually or ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived may report the matter to Child, Youth and Family of the Police and provided the report is made in good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against them.
- When collecting personal information about individuals, it is important to be aware of the requirements of the privacy principles, - i.e., the need to collect the information directly from the individual concerned and when doing so to be transparent about: the purposes for collecting the information and how it will be used; who can see the information; where it is held; what is compulsory/voluntary information; and that people have a right to request access to and correction of their information.
- Staff may, however, disclose information under the Privacy Act / Health Information Privacy Code where there is good reason to do so – such as where there is a serious risk to individual health and safety (see privacy principle 11/Code rule 11). Disclosure about ill-treatment or neglect of a child/young person may also be made to the Police or Child, Youth and Family.

### Supporting documentation

Ministry of Education: Reporting of Suspected or Actual Child Abuse and Neglect: Protocol between the MoE, NZSTA and CYF, 2009

Safer Organisations Safer Children, 2015

Child Matters Website

MoE Circular 2014/33

### Relevant legislation

Vulnerable Children's Act, 2014

The Children, young Person's and Their Families Act, 1989

Care of Children Act, 2004

Domestic Violence Act, 1995

Privacy Act, 1993

Victims' rights Act, 2002

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC)

## Child Protection Policy – Appendix A

### Definitions of Abuse

#### Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effect on the child's emotional development. This can include a pattern of rejecting, degrading, ignoring, isolating, corrupting, exploiting or terrorising a child. It may also include age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It also includes the seeing or hearing the ill treatment of others.

#### Physical Indicators:

- Bed wetting or bed soiling with no medical cause
- Frequent psychosomatic complaints (e.g. headaches, nausea, abdominal pains)
- Non-organic failure to thrive
- Pale, emaciated
- Prolonged vomiting and/or diarrhoea
- Malnutrition
- Dressed differently to other children in the family

#### Behavioural Indicators:

- Severe developmental lags with obvious physical cause
- Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
- Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
- Overly compliant
- Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
- Running away from home, avoiding attending school
- Nightmares, poor sleeping patterns
- Anti-social behaviours
- Lack of self esteem
- Obsessive behaviours
- Eating disorders

#### Caregiver Indicators:

- Labels the child as inferior or publicly humiliates the child (e.g. name calling)
- Treats the child differently from siblings or peers in ways that suggest dislike for the child
- Actively refuses to help the child
- Constantly threatens the child with physical harm or death
- Locks the child in a closet or room for extended periods of time
- Teaches or reinforces criminal behaviour
- Withholds physical and verbal affection
- Keeps the child at home in role of servant or surrogate parent
- Has unrealistic expectations of child
- involves child in adult issues such as separation or disputed over child's care
- Exposes child to witnessing situations of arguing and violence in the home

**Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, causing long term serious harm to the child's health or development. It may also include neglect of a child's basic or emotional needs. Neglect is a lack of: action, emotion or basic needs.

**Physical Indicators:**

- Dressed inappropriately for the season or the weather
- Often extremely dirty and unwashed
- Severe nappy rash or other persistent skin disorders
- Inadequately supervised or left unattended frequently or for long periods
- May be left in the care of an inappropriate adult
- Does not receive adequate medical or dental care
- Malnourished - this can be both underweight and overweight
- Lacks adequate shelter
- Non-organic failure to thrive

**Behavioural Indicators:**

- Severe developmental lags without an obvious physical cause
- Lack of attachment to parents/caregivers
- Indiscriminate attachment to other adults
- Poor school attendance and performance
- Demanding of affection and attention
- Engages in risk taking behaviour such as drug and alcohol abuse
- May steal food
- Poor social skills
- No understanding of basic hygiene

**Caregiver Indicators:**

- Puts own need ahead of child's
- Fails to provide child's basic needs
- Demonstrates little or no interest in child's life - does not attend school activities, social events
- Leaves the child alone or inappropriately supervised
- Drug and alcohol use
- Depressed

**Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is a non-accidental act on a child that results in physical harm. This includes, but is not limited to, beating, hitting, shaking, burning, drowning, suffocating, biting, poisoning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse also involves the fabrication or inducing of illness.

Physical Indicators (often unexplained or inconsistent with explanation given):

- Bruises, welts, cuts and abrasions
- Burns - small circular burns, immersion burns, rope burns etc
- Fractures and dislocations - skull, facial bones, spinal fractures etc
- Multiple fractures at different stages of healing
- Fractures in very young children

Behavioural Indicators:

- Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
- Wary of adults or a particular person
- Vacant stare or frozen watchfulness
- Cringing or flinching if touched unexpectedly
- May be extremely compliant and eager to please
- Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
- Runs away from home or is afraid to go home
- May regress (e.g. bedwetting)
- May indicate general sadness
- Could have vision or hearing delay
- Is violent to other children or animals

Caregiver Indicators:

- Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
- May appear unconcerned about child's wellbeing
- May state the child is prone to injuries or lies about how they occur
- Delays in seeking medical attention
- May take the child to multiple medical appointments and seek medical treatment without an obvious need

**Sexual Abuse**

Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities (penetrative and non-penetrative, for example, rape, kissing, touching, masturbation) as well as non-contact acts such as involving children in the looking at or production of sexual images, sexual activities and sexual behaviours.

**Physical Indicators:**

- Unusual or excessive itching or pain in the genital or anal area
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
- Bruises, lacerations, redness, swelling or bleeding in genital, vaginal or anal area
- Blood in urine or stools
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy
- Urinary tract infections
- Discomfort in sitting or fidgeting as unable to sit comfortably

**Behavioural Indicators:**

- Age-inappropriate sexual play or language
- Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge
- Refuses to go home, or to a specific person's home, for no apparent reason
- Fear of a certain person
- Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
- Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
- Overly compliant
- Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
- Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
- Eating disorders
- Compulsive behaviours

**Caregiver Indicators:**

- May be unusually over-protective of the child
- Accuses the child of being sexually provocative
- Misuses alcohol or drugs
- Invades the child's privacy (e.g. during dressing, in the bathroom)
- May favour the victim over other children

**Intimate Partner Violence or Family Violence**

Intimate Partner Violence includes threatening to harm people, pets or property, and causes family members to live in fear. Children are always affected either emotionally or physically where there is family violence even if they are not personally injured or physically present.

While some men experience violence from partners and family members, women and children are the most likely victims of family violence.

**Indicators in the Child:**

- Physical injuries consistent with the indicators of Physical Abuse
- Absenteeism from school
- Bullying or aggressive behaviour
- Complaints of headaches or stomach aches with no apparent medical reason
- Talking or describing violent behaviours

**Indicators in the Victim:**

- Physical Injuries including: bruising to chest and abdomen, injuries during pregnancy
- Depression and/or anxiety
- Inconsistent explanations for injuries
- Fearful
- Submissive

**Indicators in the Perpetrator:**

- Isolates and controls partner and children
- Threatens, criticises, intimidates, uses aggressive and physical abuse towards partner and children
- Minimises and denies own behaviour, or blames victim for the perpetrators own behaviour

## Child Protection Policy – Appendix B

### Responding to Child Abuse

#### Guidelines for responding when a child tells of his or her abuse

It is important that you as the adult remain calm and confident when a child tells you what has been happening to him or her. Every child is different in how, when and where they will tell an adult about abusive experiences so it will most likely happen when you are least expecting it! Your facial expressions and your tone of voice are as important as what you actually say to the child.

Stay calm, listen, **reassure** the child and at times you may need to **clarify** what the child has said so that you can take the appropriate action. If a child sees that you are upset or not able to cope with what he or she is telling you he or she may not continue to tell you what has been happening or take back (i.e. retract) the original statements they have made.

#### Recording unusual marks on a child

Where a staff member does not suspect abuse but has concerns over a mark on a child's body, eg. a bruise, this should be recorded using the form in Appendix C. This form should be stored in a confidential lockable storage facility. Do NOT take photographs – this is best left to professionals who are charged with an investigatory role and are experienced in how to do this effectively e.g., social workers, police and/or medical professionals.

#### Responding to a child when the child discloses abuse:

Listen to the Child	Disclosures by children are often subtle and need to be handled with particular care, including an awareness of the child's cultural identity and how that affects interpretations of their behaviour and language. Staff must be receptive and sensitive to students so that students feel listened to and believed. If the disclosures are relating to sexual abuse, avoid showering or toileting.
Reassure the Child	Let the child know that they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are not in trouble.</li> <li>• Have done the right thing.</li> </ul>
Ask open-ended general prompts – e.g., "What happened next?"	<b>Do not interview the child</b> (in other words, do not ask questions beyond opening prompts). <b>Do not make promises that can't be kept</b> , e.g., "I will keep you safe now". The Police and CYF will interview the child using a specialist's interviewer. <b>Staff are not to interview a child suspected of being neglected or abused - as data may be used in court.</b>
If the child is visibly distressed	Provide appropriate reassurance until they are able to participate in ordinary activities. <b>Notify the Principal.</b>
If the child is in immediate danger	<b>Contact the Police immediately on 111</b>
As soon as possible formally record the disclosure	Record: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word for word, what the child said</li> <li>• The date, time and who was present.</li> </ul>

**Responding and notifying Child, Youth and Family of suspected child abuse or neglect:**

What process to follow	For example	Key Considerations
Recording	Formally record: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anything said by the child.</li> <li>• The date, time, locations and the names of any staff that may be relevant.</li> <li>• The factual concerns or observations that have led to the suspicion of abuse or neglect (e.g., any physical, behavioural or developmental concerns).</li> <li>• The action taken by your organisation.</li> <li>• Any other information that may be relevant.</li> </ul>	Relevant information can inform any future actions.
Decision making	Discuss any concern with the Principal.	No decisions should be made in isolation.
Notifying authorities	<p><b>Notify Child, Youth and Family promptly if there is a belief that a child has been, or is likely to be abused or neglected.</b></p> <p>A phone call to the National Contact Centre is the preferred initial contact with Child, Youth and Family (see below) as this enables both parties to discuss the nature of the concerns and appropriate response options.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Phone: 0508 Family (0508 326 459)</b></p> <p>You will need to tell them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your name and contact details</li> <li>• Name of the child/children, including nicknames</li> <li>• Date/s of Birth (if knows)</li> <li>• Ethnicity (if known)</li> <li>• Name of caregivers, parents and other family members and current living situation</li> <li>• Current legal custodians</li> <li>• Reasons why you believe the child is being abused</li> <li>• Other significant background information</li> <li>• Any concerns for your safety in making the notification</li> </ul>	<p>Child, Youth and Family will make the decision to inform the parents or caregivers, in consultation with our school, and advise what, if any, immediate action may be appropriate, including referring the concern to the Police.</p> <p>Therefore, <u>do not</u> contact the parents, CYF or the police will do this.</p>
Following the advice of Child, Youth and Family	Child, Youth and Family advice will include what, if any, immediate action may be appropriate, including referring the concern to the Police.	Child, Youth and Family is responsible for looking into the situation to find out what may be happening.

		<p><i>NB: CYFS follow a non-criminal process focused on family care and protections. The Police deal with offenders which may result in a court process.</i></p>
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**Storage of Relevant Information in either circumstance above:**

<p>Storing relevant information</p>	<p>Securely (locked cupboard or cabinet) store:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Store in the Vulnerable Children’s File in the Principals filing cabinet</li> <li>• The record of the concern.</li> <li>• A record of any related discussions (including copies of correspondence, where appropriate).</li> <li>• A record of any advice received.</li> <li>• The action our school has taken, including any rationale.</li> <li>• This concern with any earlier concerns, if the notification is based on an accumulation of concerns (rather than a specific incident).</li> </ul>	<p>Records assist in identifying patterns.</p>
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## Child Protection Policy – Appendix C

### Recording Unusual Markings

Use this sheet to record any unusual markings on a child. Ensure all fields are completed. Also record your name and the name of another staff member who has witnessed the marks.

DO NOT TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS.

Childs name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name and signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Witnessed by: (name and signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Details for marking, including location, size and colour: \_\_\_\_\_

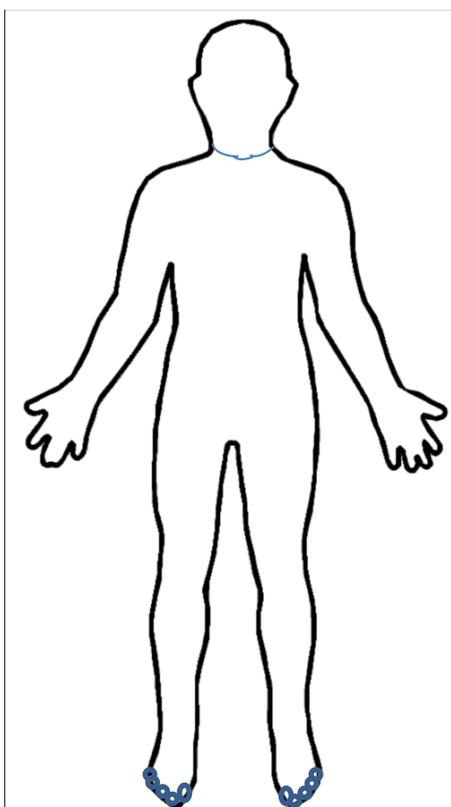
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Indicate on the diagram below, the position of the marking/s.

FRONT



BACK

