NAG 5
HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE PROCEDURE
REPORTING OF SUSPECTED OR ACTUAL CHILD ABUSE
AND NEGLECT

Purpose
In regard to student safety the National Education Guidelines (NAG 5) require a school board of trustees and principals of each state and integrated school in New Zealand to:

- Provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students; and
- Comply in full with any legislation currently in force or that may be developed to ensure the safety of students and employees.

The purpose of this protocol is to establish an agreed approach to the reporting of child abuse and neglect by those working within schools.

The protocol will ensure that:

- The welfare and interests of the child or young person are the first and paramount considerations;
- Suspected and actual abuse of a child is responded to and recorded appropriately; and
- Effective child protection requires a full, accurate and prompt sharing of information (as permitted within the law).

Definitions

Child and Young Person:
A child is someone under the age of 14 years and a young person is someone aged 14 years and over, but under 17 years who is not or has never been married or in a civil union (section 2, CYP&F Act)

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Child abuse:
Child Abuse means the harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation of any child or young person (section 2, CYP&F Act).

Child abuse/neglect includes:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse.
- Emotional/psychological abuse e.g. family violence, exposure to illegal activities, rejection.
- Neglect e.g. medical neglect, abandonment, neglectful supervision.

GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE / NEGLECT

- The child’s safety should always be the paramount consideration in the notification process.
- No decisions or actions in respect of suspected or actual child abuse are to be made by any staff member in isolation unless there are concerns for the immediate safety of the child.
- A consultative approach is essential to ensure the safety of the child and the staff member. Staff must discuss their concerns with the principal or nominated person/advocate. Where applicable follow the board’s complaint policy.
- Decisions about informing parents or caregivers should be made after consultation between the school and CYF.

Note: a robust discussion between the school and CYF (at the time of reporting the incident/child) that a decision about informing parents/legal guardian/caregivers should be made at this time, and noted in writing.

Key Contacts
Child, Youth and Family - 0508 FAMILY (0508 326 459)
Local Police
MoE - 0800 TI TEAM (0800 848326)
NZSTA - 0800 STAhelp (0800 782435)
ED ASSIST – 0508 ED ASSIST (0508 332 774)
Specific Actions when Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect

- If the child or young person is in danger or unsafe, act immediately to secure their safety.
- Listen to the child or young person and reassure them they did the right thing in disclosing.
- Write down what the child says; check that comments and events surrounding the concern are also recorded.
- Do not formally interview the child or young person. Obtain only necessary relevant facts for when clarification is needed.
- Inform the principal (or acting principal) and agree on an appropriate course of action, in a timely manner.
  - If the child or young person is not in immediate danger and is not upset reinvolve the student in usual school activities.
  - If the child or young person is visibly upset provide appropriate activity for them under supervision with someone familiar (i.e. teacher) until they are able to re-join classroom activities.
  - Hold immediate discussion with guidance counsellor, school social worker or student support personnel.
  - Inform the principal, nominated person, or other staff member if the allegation concerns the principal.
  - Notify CYF Contact Centre or the Police.
    - CYC Contact Centre: 0508 EDASSIST (0508 332 774)
    - Email: CyfCallCentre@cyf.govt.nz

This is a secure email notification system. Use this email address for reports of concern. Use the CYF Referral Form.
- For other education email enquiries, use edassist@cyf.govt.nz
- For an urgent referral, call the CYF Contact Centre 0508 EDASSIST (0508 332 774), or the Police.
- For a non-urgent referral, fax or email the CYF Referral form.

- Deciding when and who will inform the parent(s) and/or caregiver should be determined by CYF and Police, in consultation with the school (Note: a robust discussion between the school and CYF (at the time of reporting the incident/child) that a decision about informing parents/legal guardian/caregivers should be made at this time, and noted in writing)
- After making the referral, get support for yourself from appropriate persons, if needed.
- Advise the Board Chair
- Keep records documenting concerns, conversations, actions taken and any warnings issued

Refer to the NZSTA Reporting Process for Suspected or Disclosed Child Abuse
Refer to Safer Organisations, Safer Children: Guidelines for child protection policies to build safer organisations

Note: any person can make a direct referral to the Police, or Child, Youth and Family, if they believe a child is being abused

Information Required for Reporting

When a notification is made to Child, Youth and Family the school needs to provide the following information in the attached notification:

- Name of child/children (also known as/nicknames).
- Date of birth (if known).
- Ethnicity (if known).
- Name of caregivers, parents and other family members and current living situation.
- Current legal custodians.
- Reasons why it is believed that the child or young person is at risk.
- Other significant background information.
- The name of the contact person for Child, Youth and Family.
What Happens Once Reporting is made

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CYF Contact Centre will generate a letter to the person named as ‘notifier’ acknowledging the reporting, and advising which CYF site the matter was referred to recommending either further action or no further action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CYF site will make the final decision as to whether or not further action will be taken and by whom. Depending on the assessed level of needs for the child/young person and their family a referral may be made to a non government organization (NGO) social service for their support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>If further action is to be taken the social worker allocated to the case will develop an investigation plan. This may require input from the notifier.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Once the reporting has been investigated CYF will contact the notifier to advise if any further action has been taken or will be taken or whether a referral will be made to an NGO for either an assessment or for provision of family support.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 5    | **If reporting is urgent** the above actions will take place **immediately.**  
  
  - Decisions concerning after school arrangements and notifying the parents will be made by Police and social workers in consultation with the school. |
| 6    | The notifier may contact the CYF Contact Centre at any stage to obtain information on the status of the notification. |

Confidentiality of the Notifier

A person’s name will not normally be released in the absence of a request under the Official Information Act or Privacy Act. If a request is made the information will be released unless there is a reason to withhold such as:

- The client has a history of violence and has threatened or abused staff on previous occasions; or
- The client is closely related to the notifier.

However we cannot guarantee confidentiality.
(Refer to Appendix 1: Release of notifier details under the Official Information Act 1982 and Privacy Act 1993)

______________________________    ______________________________
Chairperson                        Principal

Date Adopted on: _____/_____/____   Review Date: _____/_____/_____