

Glamorgan School

Child Protection Policy

Rationale and Purpose

All children have a fundamental right to be treated with dignity and respect and have their needs met in an environment that is safe and that protects them from all forms of abuse.

Abuse can be expressed as neglect, bullying by peers or adults and verbal, emotional, physical or sexual abuse. The safety of the child is paramount. Children are never responsible for abuse/neglect inflicted on them by others, either adults or other children.

This policy and associated procedures applies to all adults working, visiting or helping at school, whether employed by the Board of Trustees or not. Child protection is everyone's responsibility and ensuring the safety, welfare and rights of all children requires the constant cooperation of the entire school community.

Glamorgan School acknowledges the Treaty of Waitangi and commits to the prevention of child abuse through the Treaty principles of *protection, participation and partnership*.

Defining abuse

Child abuse means harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation of any young child or young person (Section 2, Children and Young Persons Amendment Act 1994). Glamorgan School considers this definition and examples below applicable to all staff, visitors and volunteers working in the school.

There are four main types of abuse that can affect a young person at any age. These include physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is any act that results in inflicted injury to a child or young person. Injuries caused through abuse/neglect are known as non-accidental injury (NAI). It may include, but is not restricted to:

- Shaking
- Hitting, kicking
- Throwing
- Burning
- Giving inappropriate drugs or alcohol to young people would also constitute abuse

All physical injuries to children where there is knowledge that the injury was not accidental or knowingly not prevented is abuse.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is any act or acts that result in the sexual exploitation of a child or young person, whether consensual or not. It may be perpetrated by an adult, older child or similar aged child. It may include, but is not restricted to:

- Non-contact abuse
 - Exhibitionism
 - Suggestive behaviours or comments
- Contact abuse
 - Touching breasts, genital areas or any inappropriate physical contact
 - Exposing children to any obscene or inappropriate material or images

Adults have a responsibility at all times to establish and maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their relationships with children.

Emotional/Psychological Abuse

Emotional abuse is any act or omission that results in impaired psychological, social, intellectual and/or emotional functioning and development of a child or young person. It may include, but is not restricted to:

- Rejection or isolation
- Inappropriate or continued criticism, sarcasm, persistent teasing, tormenting, threats, humiliation or accusations of the child or young person
- Exposing children to, or involvement in, anti-social or illegal activities

Neglect

Neglect is any act or omission that results in impaired psychological functioning, injury and/or development of a child or young person. It may include but is not restricted to:

- Failing to provide medical care when necessary
- Neglectful supervision – failure to provide developmentally appropriate supervision of the child or young person, leading to increased risk or harm
- Abandonment – leaving a child or young person in a situation without arranging necessary care for them and with no intention of returning

The above definitions of physical, sexual, emotional/psychological abuse are from the Children's Commissioner, 2014.

Guidelines

1. In accordance with the Vulnerable Children Act 2014 all staff will be safety checked to provide a safe and competent workforce for children at the school.
2. The prevention of child abuse is integrated into the school's curricula, primarily through the 'Keeping Ourselves Safe' programme.
3. Staff will be made aware of the signs and symptoms of suspected abuse and appropriate training will be provided.
4. Staff will be made aware of procedures to follow in the event of suspected child abuse and will use the attached flow charts when dealing with disclosures or suspected abuse.
5. All information/discussion will be confidential to the staff and other parties involved. All those involved in dealing with issues of child protection are required to respect the provisions of confidentiality which relate to their responsibility. The Privacy Act 1993 and the Health Information Privacy Code 1994, authorises disclosure of information necessary to prevent or lessen serious and imminent harm to any individual (to the extent necessary) to statutory social workers or the Police.
6. As a general rule staff should avoid children sitting on their knees, staying behind in class by themselves, hugging children or giving gifts to individual children.
7. Allegations made against a staff member must be referred to the employing authority through the Principal, unless the allegation is made against the Principal, then the allegation is made directly to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.
8. If a staff member makes an allegation against another staff member of abusing a child at the school, then the person who has been told the information will report it directly to the Principal who will then inform the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.
9. The Principal and Board of Trustees will ensure confidentiality and support of the informant within the school's powers. Further protection of the informant will be provided under Section 16 of the Child Young Persons and Their Families Act, 1989.
10. In the case of a report from a third party to the school, the first course of action will be for the school to direct the third party to a helping agency without becoming involved.

Signed: 

Date: 31/5/17

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