



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



St Francis School Lockleys

Child Protection and Reporting Child Abuse Policy

Vision

Inspired by our Catholic Faith and tradition, we are committed to growing together in Faith, Peace and Wisdom

Policy

This policy is to be read in conjunction with *Protective Practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people Guidelines for staff working or volunteering in education and care settings 2017*

The South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools has in place a Policy for the Care, Wellbeing and Protection of Children and Young People.

<http://web.ceo.catholic.edu.au/SACCS>

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The convention enshrines the entitlement of all children, regardless of race colour, sex, religion or nationality, to be protected from sexual abuse, to receive special help if they are abused, to have their opinions heard about matters that affect them to receive and share information and to be treated with dignity if disciplined.

What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse is about an adult harming a child. In South Australia the law states that a child is a person under the age of 18 years. Child abuse can occur through someone doing something hurtful or by someone not doing something to provide for or protect a child.

There are four types of child abuse:

1. Physical abuse is when a child's body is injured. This can be through punching, hitting, beating, shaking, biting, burning or any actions which results in a child's body being harmed. It can be seen in bruising, swelling, welts and broken bones.
2. Emotional abuse is behaviour towards a child which destroys self-esteem, confidence and child's sense of worth. It includes constant criticism, belittling, blaming, 'put-downs', withdrawal of affection, ignoring and

excessive teasing. A child can be left feeling worthless, unloved and lacking self-confidence.

3. Neglect is the failure to provide a child with the basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, hygiene, education, adequate supervision, and medical and dental care.
4. Sexual abuse involves a child in any type of sexual activity.

Appropriate physical Contact

Appropriate physical contact by a staff member to assist or encourage a child or young person.

At times staff will be required to give practical assistance to a child or young person who is hurt or needs particular assistance or encouragement.

Including:

Administration of first aid

Supporting students who have hurt themselves

Assisting with the toileting and personal care needs of disabled students.

Non-intrusive gestures of comfort to a student who is feeling grief and loss.

Non-intrusive touch (eg. congratulatory handshakes)

Caring touch is essential for a child's health, growth and development. The caring touch between a child and trusted adult should not be confused with touching which is of a sexual nature.

What does the law say?

The law states that certain people must report their concerns if they have reasonable ground to suspect a child has been or is being abused. This covers doctors, nurses, dentists, psychologists, police, probation officers, social workers, teachers, family day carers, and people who work in places where services are provided to children (including volunteers).

A person who makes a report in good faith is protected from civil or criminal liability.

Why report Child Abuse?

Children have limited power to protect themselves from abuse and will only be protected from abuse and neglect if responsible adults take action on their behalf. In addition, schools provide a Child Protection Curriculum to encourage children to protect themselves from abuse.

Child abuse can happen to any child in any family. It hurts and can have lasting, damaging effects. Some children even die because of child abuse.

Reporting child abuse is the first step in stopping the abuse and protecting children from further harm. Reporting suspected abuse also gives **Families SA** the chance to help families in situations where a child or children may be at risk.

What to do if you have suspicion or concerns

Actions to be considered when your concern is NOT about an immediate threat to a child or young person's safety.

Checklist can be found at: Teachers on Server/Staff Information/ Student Wellbeing/Mandatory Notification/mandatory

Actions to be considered when your concern is NOT about an immediate threat to a child or young person's safety.

Procedure

When you are concerned about an immediate threat to a child or young person's safety the following actions must be followed.

- **Discuss your concerns with the Principal.**
- Complete a **Notification checklist** found at: Teachers on Server/Staff Information/ Student Wellbeing/Mandatory Notification/mandatory checklist

Refer to **Documenting Notification** document found at: Teachers on Server/Staff Information/ Student Wellbeing/Mandatory Notification/ Documenting Notifications

- Call the Child Abuse Report Line 131478 and request a consultation with a child protection worker **without delay**. Your call will be kept confidential. There is an interpreting service available if required.
- At St Francis School an option available is, a telephone call will be made to CARL in an office area and when it is answered by an office personnel arrangements will be made for you to speak to the social worker to make the report.

Reports are able to be made using the online service at <https://my.families.sa.gov.au/IDMProv/landin>

All reports concerning a child who is under the Guardianship of the Minister (GOM) need to be made in person via the CARL 131478

Complete Mandatory Notification Record Sheet found at: Teachers on Server/Staff Information/ Student Wellbeing/Mandatory Notification/ Mandatory_Notification_Record Sheet.

The Mandatory Notification Record Sheet should be completed in collaboration with the Principal who has the responsibility to sign and store the record once it is completed.

This record is NOT to be kept electronically.

Obligation of Mandated Notifiers

Everyone has a moral obligation to report child abuse or a child at risk. Mandated notifiers must, by law, notify on a reasonable suspicion of 'abuse and neglect', as defined in the Act Section 6(1) and on reasonable likelihood of at risk in terms of Section 6(2) (b) (i) and (ii).

All reasonable suspicions must be reported without delay. Mandated notifiers need to be aware that a notification to **Families SA** does not automatically result in an investigation.

What happens when the Child Abuse Report Line is contacted?

Suspected cases of abuse or neglect are referred to the **Families SA** district office. Social workers from the District Centre may visit the child and family to investigate the concerns.

If a child is in immediate danger an investigation will occur within 24 hours, and may also involve the assistance of police and hospitals.

When the risk to a child appears to be less serious, families may be invited to a meeting at the District Centre to discuss the concerns about the child's well being. They will be offered assistance so they can provide better care for their children.

Suggested printed information

Reporting Child Abuse & Neglect Mandated Notification Guidelines Available for FSA 8226 6045

Don't Look Away The Child Abuse Report Line Brochure

Available for the Families SA Information Hub 8226 6735

Child Abuse Parent Easy Guide, #62

Available for Parenting SA, 295 South Terrace Adelaide or 8303 1660

If You Have Any Questions

Call the Child Abuse Report Line 13 14 78

Updated:

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Principal

Chair of St Francis School Board
