

OUR CHARISM
As Marists, we think, judge, feel and act in the way of Mary

Marist Catholic School Herne Bay Board of Trustees	CHILD PROTECTION POLICY 28 th June 2016	
Attachments:	Management File Ref:	NAG Reference: 5

Rationale

The Vulnerable Children Act 2014 requires all schools to have a child protection policy in place.

Ensuring the wellbeing and safety of children, including prevention of child abuse or maltreatment, is of paramount importance to Marist Catholic School Herne Bay (MCSHB).

This policy outlines MCSHB commitment to child protection and recognises the important role and responsibility of staff in the protection of children. The policy outlines expectations, set by the Board, and provides guidance to staff on how to identify and respond to concerns about the wellbeing of a child including possible abuse or neglect, how to manage when child abuse is reported or suspected and how to manage risk (or perceptions of risk) in the way the School carries out its day to day activities.

All staff members, including contractors and volunteers, are to be familiar with this policy, its associated procedures and protocols *and must abide by them*.

MCSHB will report suspected cases of child abuse and maltreatment to Child Youth and Family and/or the New Zealand Police. MCSHB will support these agencies in their investigation of abuse allegations.

The Board will be responsible for the maintenance and tri-annual review of this policy. The Board delegates responsibility to the Principal to carry out the policy.

MCSHB commits to ensure staff have access to the training they need in order for them to be able to carry out this policy effectively, and safely. Training will be undertaken annually.

Purpose

1. To provide procedures for intervention where actual or suspected child abuse and neglect is, or may be taking place.
2. To include all children that staff may encounter, including siblings and any other children encountered by staff in the course of their work at MCSHB.
3. To guide staff on how to make referrals of actual or suspected child abuse and neglect to the statutory agencies (Child, Youth and Family and the New Zealand Police).
4. To equip staff with the knowledge and procedures to respond to the actual or perceived needs of children whose wellbeing is of concern.
5. To establish safeguards for staff (including contractors and volunteers) working with a child on their own.
6. To define key terms associated with child abuse and child protection for the understanding of all staff (see appendix A)

Guidelines

1. New staff will be made aware of the policy of child protection as part of their induction and offered training.
2. Current staff will undertake refresher training on this Policy annually at the beginning of each year (and in the first instance at the next staff meeting following this policy's ratification).
3. The Board will also undertake training as part of its governance of the policy.
4. Child Abuse is defined in the Children Young Persons and their Families Act 1989 as "*the harming (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation of any child or young person.*"
5. Child Youth and Family advise that it is not so important to be able to categorise the type of abuse, but rather look for a pattern forming including the signs and concerns listed below (para 7).
6. The following are signs of various forms of abuse:

- a) Physical signs (e.g. unexplained injuries, burns, fractures, unusual or excessive itching, genital injuries, sexually transmitted diseases, underweight, evidence of being uncared for)
 - b) Behavioural issues (e.g. age inappropriate sexual interest or play, fear of a certain person or place, eating disorders, substance abuse, disengagement/neediness, aggression)
 - c) Developmental delays (e.g. small for their age, cognitive delays, falling behind in school, poor speech and social skills)
 - d) Emotional issues (e.g., sleep problems, low self-esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness/loneliness and evidence of self harm)
 - e) Neglect (evidence of being uncared for, medical issues going unmet, dirty, underweight out and about unsupervised, left alone, no safe home to return to etc.)
7. Exposure to intimate partner violence (defined as physical, emotional or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner) is a form of child abuse.
 8. A child talking about issues that indicate abuse (sometimes called an allegation or disclosure) should be taken very seriously.
 9. If a staff member is concerned about a child they should in the first instance notify the Principal as the designated lead of this Policy. The Principal and the staff member will consider all available information about the child and their environment as part of their decision-making process as per guidance by Child, Youth and Family.
 10. MCSHB will always act on the recommendations of statutory agencies including Child, Youth and Family and the New Zealand Police. Notification to families/ whanau will be done in line with any advice from these agencies.
 11. Concerns over suspected child abuse will be recorded and kept securely in the Principal's office. These notes will be kept separate from other records and access will be strictly controlled with access only by the Principal, senior leadership team and approved agencies.
 12. Staff involved in cases of suspected child abuse are entitled to have support via services such as supervision and/or expert support.

Procedures

For identified or perceived issues arising outside of school (eg, the home environment)

- 1 Advice shall be sought from Child, Youth and Family and/or the Police before identifying information about an allegation is shared with anyone, other than the Principal.
- 2 Staff are aware that:
 - a. 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 or the Police and provided the report is made in good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against them.
 - b. This policy will be implemented in line with the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993.
 - c. Staff may disclose information under the Privacy Act 1993/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 under sections 15 and 16 of the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1989.

For identified or perceived issues arising within the normal activities in school

- 3 As part of our ongoing health, safety & wellbeing focus and commitment to child protection, the Principal, as part of this Policy, will consider situations which may give rise to a risk or a perception of risk to a child/children. These include, but aren't strictly limited to, when and how to manage occasions whereby staff may be alone with children, and managing activities such as swimming or gymnastics. For all activities where one-to-one physical contact may be required (e.g. for helping a child get changed after swimming or gymnastics) parents and caregivers will be given prior written notice.
- 4 Staff will not transport a child in a vehicle on their own without parent consent, unless an emergency requires it.

- 5 All visitors to the School during operating hours, including outside instructors will be monitored at all times by staff and/or volunteers.
- 6 For any overnight excursions (e.g. camp) parent helpers will be police vetted prior to the event.
- 7 Where a child or young person requires assistance e.g. if they are intellectually or physically disabled, the parents/caregiver will be asked to assist. An outside agency may also be required. If this assistance is not available, the Principal will ensure that the relevant staff member(s) are aware of the appropriate procedures when giving assistance and parents/caregivers will be advised in writing.

Related Policy

Health and Safety

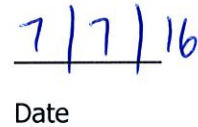
Effectiveness Self-Review

- This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the Board's triennial programme of self-review.

28 June 2016 version adopted.


Chairperson


Principal


Date

Appendix A

Definitions

Child - Any child or young person aged under 17 years and who- is not married or in a civil union

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

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 children protection policy.

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

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

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.

Physical abuse – any acts that may result in physical harm to a child or young person. It can be, but is not limited to; bruising, cutting, hitting, beating, biting, burning, causing abrasions, strangulation, suffocation, drowning, poisoning and fabricated or induced illness.

Sexual Abuse - any acts that involve forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities whether or not they are aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse can be but is not limited to:

Contact abuse: touching breasts, genital/anal area, masturbation, oral sex, penetrative or non-penetrative contact with the anus or genitals, encouraging the child to perform such acts on the perpetrator or another, involvement of the child in activities for the purposes of pornography or prostitution

Non- contact abuse: exhibitionism, voyeurism, exposure to pornographic or sexual imagery, inappropriate photography or depictions of sexual or suggestive behaviours or comments.

Emotional abuse – any act or omission that results in adverse or impaired psychological, social, intellectual and emotional functioning or development. This can include:

Patterns of isolation, degradation, constant criticism or negative comparison to others. Isolating, corrupting, exploiting or terrorising a child can also be emotional abuse.

Exposure to family/whanau or intimate partner violence

Neglect – neglect is the most common form of abuse and although the effects may not be as physical abuse, it is just as serious. Neglect can be:

Physical (not providing the necessities of life like a warm place, food and clothing).

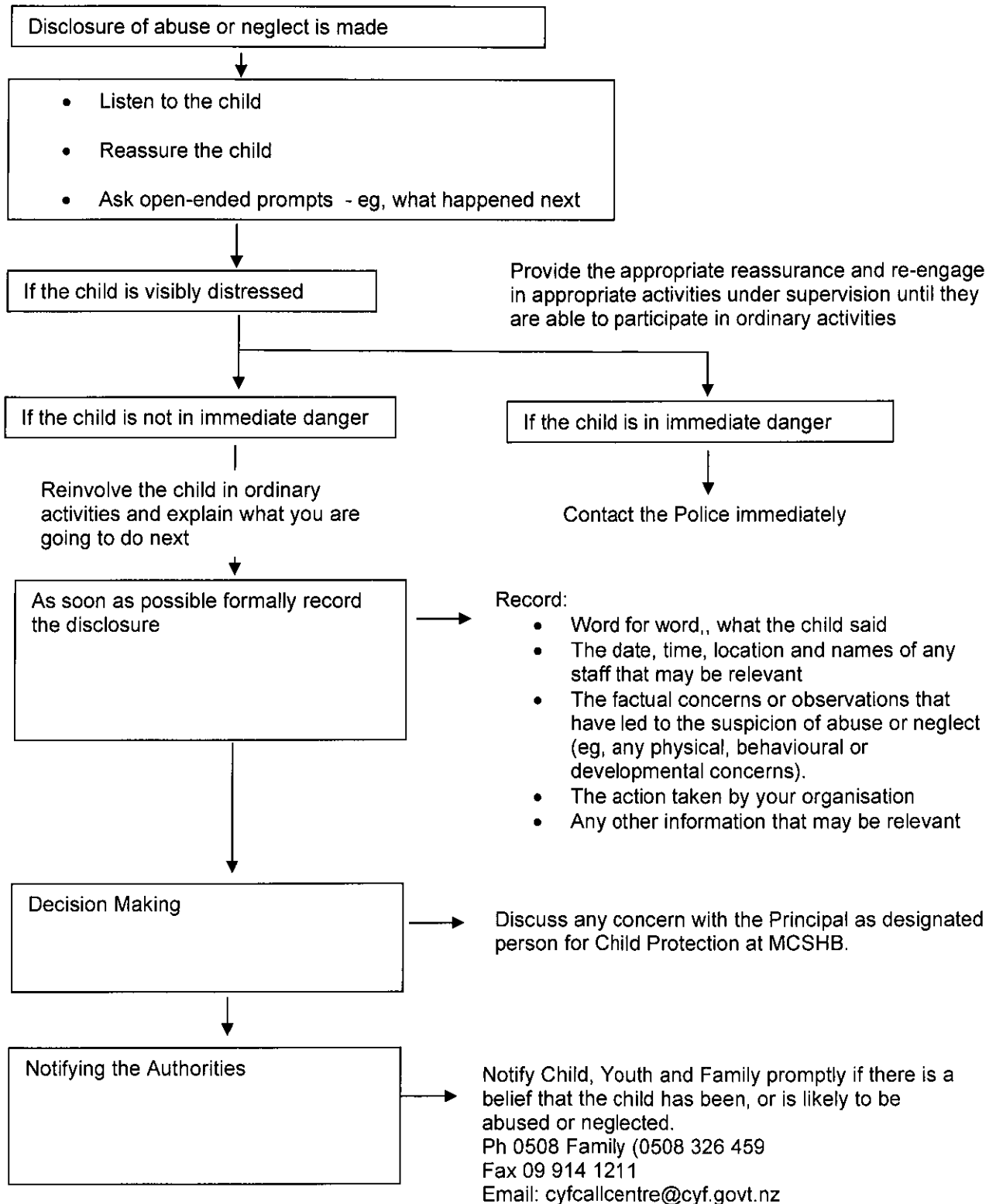
Emotional (not providing comfort, attention and love).

Neglectful supervision (leaving children without someone safe looking after them).

Medical neglect (not taking care of health needs).

Educational neglect (allowing chronic truancy, failure to enrol in education or inattention to education needs).

Procedure for disclosure of abuse or neglect



Procedure for when an allegation is made against a member of staff

All matters involving allegations against staff need to be escalated to the Principal and/or management team.

The Principal may take steps to suspend a staff member against whom an allegation has been made pending a formal investigation, subject to the provisions of the applicable employment agreement, code of conduct and prevailing disciplinary procedures.

