



## **Goldfields Baptist College**

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### **Child Protection Policy**

#### **Background**

Goldfields Baptist College is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment, where students are kept safe and secure and their wellbeing is paramount. To this end, every person is well supported and protected from harm or abuse of any kind.

#### **Scope**

At GBC, we have zero tolerance for acts of abuse committed against a child and we are committed to providing and maintaining a child-safe culture and through sound policies and guidelines will ensure complete compliance with relevant child protection laws and regulations.

This Policy and guidelines applies to all staff, students, parents and volunteers and any person who enters the College grounds or is involved in any activity of GBC (including camps and excursions).

#### **Purpose**

All teachers are responsible for the duty of care or students during College hours, afterhours College approved activities and at other times when there are staff/student interactions. Teachers are mandatory reporters and are obliged under the Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children Act 2008 and the Children and Community Services Amendment 2009 to report sexual abuse of children (The Act and Amendment). While mandatory reporting applies to sexual abuse only, the reporting of other kinds of child maltreatment, including witnessing family violence, is regarded as part of a staff member's duty of care under common law.

The teacher-student relationship is a fiduciary relationship, which means that the teacher holds a position of trust and confidence towards his/her students and has a duty to act in their best interests. The Criminal Code stipulates that a child under the age of 16 years is not able to give consent to any activity of a sexual nature in any relationship with any adult.

In addition, the law does not allow activity of a sexual nature to occur between a child under 18 years of age and a person who holds a position of authority over the child. Teachers hold a position of authority and trust, and accordingly the law provides for greater penalties for duty of care breaches and sexual offences committed by teachers against students. In addition to the duty of care owed to all students by the College, and the College's obligations under The Act and Amendment, the Department of Education Services also requires all non-government Colleges to have a Child Protection Policy.

#### **Policy**

Goldfields Baptist College is committed to child protection and a safe and supportive environment for all students.

#### **Policy Guidelines**

The following steps are to be taken for all concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children:

1. An individual teacher writes down any notes of concerns – including observations, that they have for the safety of the child, that may have led them to form the belief that a report may be necessary.

OR

A student makes a disclosure of abuse or neglect - including but not limited to:

- a. disclosure of abuse or neglect from someone with a responsibility to care for the student;
- b. alleged sexual contact by a staff member;
- c. showing signs of abuse or neglect;
- d. sexual contact by another student.

Note: It is important for Teachers to think in terms of reporting a behaviour or a series of behaviours and concern/s rather than reporting an individual family.

2. The teacher’s notes/observations or the child’s disclosure may be discussed with a member of the College Executive (Deputy Principal and/or Principal). It is important to remember that it is not the role of the teacher to investigate child abuse or neglect matters. They must simply follow the procedure of reporting their concerns to the College Executive. The Teacher and/or Deputy Principal/Principal may wish to access the College Chaplain for consultation and pastoral care assistance.

Note: It is vital to remember that confidentiality is paramount and that disclosure of this information should only be discussed with those in the College who are required to know.

3. If the individual teacher has formed a belief of suspected sexual abuse, the teacher is the mandatory reporter required to make a report to the Department for Child Protection and Family Support through the Mandatory Reporting Service (Tel 1800 708 704 Web: [mandatoryreporting.dcp.wa.gov.au](http://mandatoryreporting.dcp.wa.gov.au)). In cases of other forms of child abuse and neglect, the Principal may be the appropriate person to then decide the appropriate actions to take and which agency should be contacted.

Note: To avoid interfering with any investigative process initiated by CPFS or the Police, and until the Principal or teacher has sought advice from CPFS or Police, they should not make contact with the parents concerning abuse or neglect.

4. If following a report, a family or related individual approaches the College, a minimum of two College staff members will be present (e.g. The Principal and one other) at the interview, to provide support.

Note: The focus of such a meeting is the wellbeing of the child.

In cases of child sexual abuse, the legislation provides protection for the person reporting. Disclosure of the reporter’s identity or identifying information to parents or any other party can incur a fine of \$24,000 and two years’ imprisonment.

5. The Principal will provide ongoing support for the teacher, the student and anyone else affected. The need for ongoing support may be necessary as the teacher continues in their role with the student and the CPFS role may continue for extended period of time.

For additional advice see Appendix 3.

### **Complaints and Grievances**

The GBC complaints and grievance process reflects fairness and the principles of natural justice and identifies the difference between complaints handling and disciplinary procedures.

### **Communicating the Child Protection Policy**

The GBC Child Protection Policy will be available publically on the College Website and made available in printed form on request. Child Protection information will be presented regularly to parents at College information evenings and mentioned in the College Newsletter.

### **Culture, Pastoral Care and Wellbeing**

Goldfields Baptist College provides an environment of Pastoral Care and a culture of support. Through good Pastoral Care practices, the College will nurture mutually respectful relationships to ensure that students feel safe to have the confidence needed to report abuse and neglect. All dealings with students who disclose, or where abuse is suspected, will be done with respect, dignity, safety and sensitivity.

Where it is known that a child has been the victim of abuse or neglect, the College Executive will ensure that there are steps in place to support the child. There will also be information and support for any affected College staff – with the Chaplain being involved during the process.

### **Cyber Predators**

Teachers have an awareness of and obligation to teach students about Cyber Predators. Students are regularly warned against Cyber Predators and advised to report any dealings with or exposure to Cyber Predators to their parents and/or teachers without delay.

### **Documentation and Record Keeping**

The College and College staff will keep confidential and secure notes/reports about individual students regarding any suspected or disclosed incidents of abuses or neglect. This is not only limited to reports that have been made to an outside organisation (e.g. CPFS). All such notes/reports will remain on the College Administration system (Archives) until the end of the year that the student turns 25.

### **Education and training**

College staff will be expected to know and understand the College's values and attitudes on the issue of child protection, creating a safe environment and the best practice expectations that apply to their position in the College. Policies and Guidelines are used to inform staff of appropriate and inappropriate behaviours, language and reporting pathways. GBC staff will be informed of their obligations and will be provided with information and training relating to the identification and management of child sexual abuse and other forms of abuse and neglect, as well as in protective behaviours curriculum to maximise child safe education of staff and students.

There are a number of staff who are accredited Youth Mental Health First aiders and we will be expanding the YMHFA program to include the students from Years 7-10 as it becomes available.

### **GBC Protective Behaviours Program**

Students will be empowered by participation in our Protective Behaviours Program that is being implemented in the College. The Protective Behaviours program 'Keeping Safe' is integrated into all Curriculum areas in the College and is used during Personal Development sessions. It is embedded throughout Health/PE and reinforced by all teaching staff. The 'Keeping Safe' Child protection Program aims to equip students with the tools for problem solving and empower their communication skills. It also encourages individuals to identify situations that are unsafe, or potentially unsafe, and to develop strategies to counter these situations and preserve their physical and emotional

safety. Differentiated curriculum and/or additional support will be provided for students with disabilities, where such a disability may limit their capacity to understand the issues involved or communicate a disclosure.

Staff will keep up to date with Keeping Safe – Child protection by accessing the training modules as a new module becomes available.

As well as the 'Keeping Safe' program – Protective Behaviours curriculum is included with the 'You Can Do it' program. The College is also investigating the use of 'Kids Matter' and 'Mind Matters' materials – to ensure that all students are keep safe in every aspect of their lives – Spiritually, Physically, Mentally, Emotionally and Academically.

**Legal protection and confidentiality**

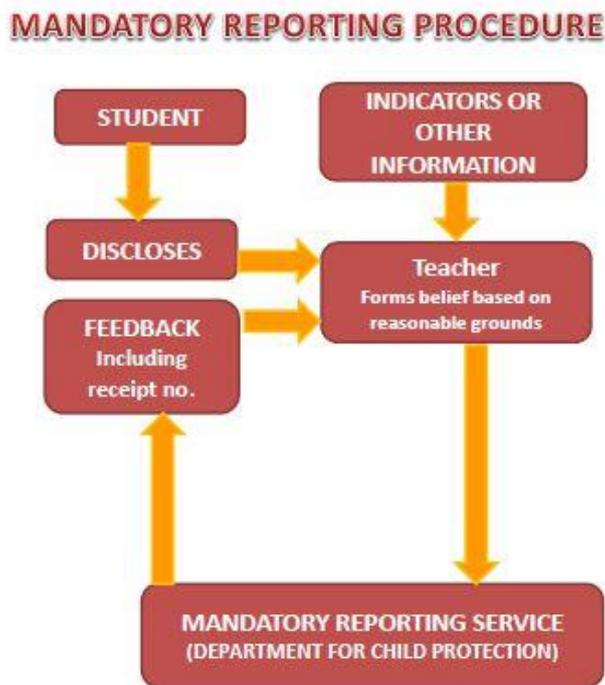
Goldfields Baptist College staff who disclose and/or have access to confidential information regarding suspected or disclosed child protection issues, are obliged to keep information confidential and insure that such information is kept secure.

**Mandatory Reporting:**

All staff at the College are expected to be trained in relation to the detection and reporting of abuse of any kind including specific training for the detection and reporting of sexual abuse - Mandatory reporting.

All parents are informed on a regular basis of the mandatory requirements for teachers to report. This is done through articles in the College's newsletter.

This flow chart outlines the procedure for the mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse for Goldfields Baptist College.



Note: This procedure applies to all staff employed by the College.

Once a teacher has formed a belief based on reasonable grounds, they are required to make the report to CPFS.

The flowchart above only shows what the teacher must do once they have formed a belief. It does not include any consultation process with other College staff. A consultation process with the College Executive may occur prior to the teacher forming a belief but it is not necessary to do so.

The Department for Child Protection has established a website:

[www.mandatoryreporting.CPFS.wa.gov.au](http://www.mandatoryreporting.CPFS.wa.gov.au).

Information on this website includes frequently asked questions and a copy of the report to download.

The Mandatory Reporting Service can also be contacted through the following ways:

Telephone: 1800 708 704

Email: [mrs@CPFS.wa.gov.au](mailto:mrs@CPFS.wa.gov.au)

Fax: 1800 610 614

Post: PO Box 8146, Perth BC, WA 6849

### **Recruitment and Selection of Staff, Volunteers and Contractors**

Procedures for the recruitment of staff, volunteers and contractors will identify the criteria that maximise the protection of children.

It is expected that all College employees, volunteers and contractors fully comply with the GBC Code of Conduct.

All employment interviews will include question related to the safety and protection of children – as another safeguarding layer at the College.

The College will ensure that all College employees, volunteers and contractors are adequately screened prior to commencing work with students at the College.

Teachers are required, through the Teachers Registration Board (TRB), to have a police clearance. The Working with Children (WWC) legislation requires them to have a WWC Check.

Non-teaching staff members are also required to have a WWC check if their usual duties involve contact with children. College policy also requires these staff to have a police clearance check every three years.

Volunteers who are not parents, and who have contact with children, are also required to have a WWC Check.

Other College staff members are also required to have a WWC Check if their usual duties involve, or are likely to involve contact with a child.

Any person who has been convicted of sexual offences against a child will not be employed at Goldfields Baptist College.

### **Risk Management**

All College activities, planning and practice, are required to focus on the identification, evaluation and planning strategies that minimise the risk of any child coming to harm, being abused or neglected by a GBC staff member, volunteer or another young person. Risk management planning must be prepared for all approved activities – on and off the campus.

## **Roles**

### ***Department for Child Protection and WA Police***

Teachers are required by law to make reports when they have a reasonable belief that sexual abuse is occurring or has occurred. For other forms of child abuse, mandatory reporting is not a requirement; however, the College has a duty of care and a moral obligation to follow the recommended procedures in cases of suspected child abuse.

The Department for Child Protection (CPFS) is the government department with the statutory authority to investigate concerns in Western Australia. It is not the College's role to investigate child maltreatment issues, including concerns of sexual abuse. That is the CPFS's responsibility. All disclosures or strong concerns of abuse or neglect should be reported to CPFS by the Principal or teacher. CPFS will then decide on how to proceed.

The Western Australian Police also have a role in responding to allegations of child abuse and neglect. The WA Police Service Child Abuse Investigation Unit (CAIT) intervene in instances where it is believed that a criminal offence has occurred which may lead to criminal charges being laid. In the case of a report of child sexual abuse, CPFS will forward all reports to the WA Police.

Where abuse and neglect has occurred within a family and there is the possibility of criminal charges being laid, the police and the CPFS may undertake a joint investigation to reduce the trauma of the interviewing process to the child or young person.

Under section 129 of the Children's and Community Services Act 2004, people who give information, in good faith, to the Department for Child Protection are protected from incurring any civil or criminal liability, from having breached any confidentiality imposed by law, or from having breached any professional ethics or standards.

### ***Department of Child Protection (CPFS)***

In cases of child sexual abuse, the teacher will provide a written report to the Mandatory Reporting Service of CPFS. The Mandatory Reporting Service will provide a standardised letter to the reporter outlining which CPFS local office is involved, and what action has been taken. The Mandatory Reporting Service is required to forward all reports on to the WA Police.

For other forms of abuse, the Principal or delegate will report all disclosures or strong concerns to the CPFS of abuse or neglect arising from the actions or inactions of parents/caregivers and maintain a written record of this communication and subsequent actions. The CPFS will then decide how to proceed. The decision to progress the matter further is the responsibility of the CPFS.

The CPFS is required to provide feedback to people making reports on child abuse. The Principal or delegate will seek undertakings from the CPFS that they will be kept informed within the bounds of confidentiality. The Principal's or delegate's initial contact with the CPFS will be through the Duty Officer at the Local District Office closest to where the child lives (all offices are listed in the White Pages). All calls from the College concerning students are taken very seriously and it may be appropriate, if the emergency occurs after hours, to explain to the switchboard operator that it is an emergency so they can speak to the Duty Officer promptly. When reporting to the Duty Officer, note his/her name and position.

Note: The Mandatory Reporting Service and the Duty Officer at the local CPFS office can also be used initially in a consultative role if either the Principal or the teacher is unsure of what action to take.

The College is aware that the powers of the CPFS under the Children and Community Services Act 2004 include:

- Apprehension of children in need of care and protection (without warrant).
- Interviewing the child: CPFS has the authority to interview the child at the College before contact is made with the parent/caregiver. Before doing so, the principal or 'person in charge' at the College must be notified. The child should have the option of having support at the interview from a staff member of their choosing.
- Removal of children from the College: CPFS officers may remove a child from the College if they have the permission of the parent/caregiver or if they have apprehended the child. The Principal or person in charge will satisfy him/herself that all conditions have been met before this occurs and document all conversations.
- Medical examination: CPFS may require that a medical examination occur as soon as possible so that bruising, marking and other symptoms can be recorded for future reference. This would normally take place at either PMH or the Community Child Health Services Centres. This examination can only take place if permission has been obtained from the parent/caregiver or the child has been apprehended (when parent/carer permission is not obtained).

#### After hours

Child Abuse Services WA  
9223 1111/1800 199 008

#### Crisis Care

9223 1111/1800 199 008 (a 24 hour telephone service for people in crisis and needing urgent help)

#### ***Parents/Caregivers***

To avoid interfering with any investigative process initiated by CPFS or the Police, the Principal and teacher must seek advice from CPFS or Police prior to informing the parent/carer of a concern of abuse or neglect.

#### ***WA Police Service Child Abuse Investigation Unit***

If the matter is urgent and the safety of a child is at risk, call 000. If you are a victim of child abuse or paedophilia, or if you have information about someone else being abused, you should contact the police on 131 444. You can also report child abuse to the Child Protection Squad on 9492 5444 or email them on [Child.Abuse.Investigation@police.wa.gov.au](mailto:Child.Abuse.Investigation@police.wa.gov.au), or you can ring Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or go to your local police station.

WA Police Cyber Predator Team can be contacted on 9492 5444 or complaints can be lodged on the WA Police Website [www.police.wa.gov.au](http://www.police.wa.gov.au).

The websites below contain information on cyber predators that parents, teachers and students may find informative:

[www.acma.gov.au](http://www.acma.gov.au)

[www.constablecare.org.au](http://www.constablecare.org.au)

[www.cybersmartkids.com.au](http://www.cybersmartkids.com.au)

[www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com](http://www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com)

[www.netalert.net.au](http://www.netalert.net.au)

### **Students Left at the College or College Events**

In circumstances where a child is left at the College after normal hours or after College events, the College will exhaust all avenues in attempting to contact the child's family and emergency contacts.

If this fails, in some cases the student may need to be driven home. In such circumstances the staff member/s involved must gain permission from the Principal to do so and keep in constant contact until the student is safely delivered to their home. Two members of staff must be in the car at all times (preferably male and female), unless it is an emergency – where the Principal will advise the staff member. Times where a child gets into a car alone with a staff member will be rare, only with permission of the Principal, and the child is required to travel in the back seat.

If a child needs to travel in a staff member's private vehicle for any reason, permission will be sought and gained by the child's parent/caregiver before travel commences – unless the Principal has given permission by proxy.

If parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached and all avenues have been exhausted, the Principal or their delegate should contact the local office of CPFS and report the matter.

### **Further Information can be obtained from:**

State Child Development Centre  
9481 2203

Disability Services Commission  
9426 9200/1800 998 214

Kids Helpline is a free and confidential telephone counselling service for 5 to 25 year olds in Australia available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.  
1800 551 800

Sexual Assault Resource Centre Counselling Line offers a free, 24 hour emergency service for people aged 13 or over who have been sexually assaulted or sexually abused recently (within the last two weeks).  
9340 1828/1800 199 888

Lifeline Australia offers a service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can provide information about other support services, if required. 13 11 14

The following sites can provide a wide range of background information on child abuse:

- <http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/afsapubs.html>

This site lists recent publications relating to information on child abuse that have been updated on the web site of the National Child Protection Clearinghouse.

- <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications>

This is the Australian Institute of Criminology site and has links to the criminal aspect of child abuse.

### **Relevant Legislation**

Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004

Children and Community Services Act 2004

Children and Community Services Amendment (Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children) Act 2008

Criminal Code Act (1913)

Criminal Code Amendment (Cyber Predators) Bill 2005

### **Related College Policies**

GBC Code of Conduct  
GBC Duty of Care Policy  
GBC Bullying Policy  
GBC Emergency and Critical Incident Policy  
GBC Emergency Management Plan  
GBC Social Media Policy  
GBC Sun Protection Policy  
GBC Risk Management Policy  
GBC Complaints and Grievance Policy  
GBC Staff Handbook  
GBC College Safeguard and Clearance requirement Policy

### **Other Guiding Documents**

Acknowledgement: <https://www.ais.wa.edu.au/>  
Child Safe Organisations WA: Guidelines  
National Safe Schools Framework

#### **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy may be reviewed periodically and republished as applicable. The Principal may issue additional instructions within the policy framework as appropriate. The policy will also be reviewed on a three yearly basis.

Rewritten and updated March 2017 by Mr Craig Dredge.

Implementation date: March 2017 (Original 'Procedure for Child Protection' last reviewed March 2014).

Approved by: GBC Board.

Next review:  
March 2020

## **Appendix 1**

### **Definitions:**

#### **Child Abuse and Neglect**

Child Abuse and Neglect is maltreatment of a person under the age of 18 years. It is the result of action or inaction on the part of a person who has responsibility to care for a child resulting in harm or injury to the child. The harm may include delayed physical and/or intellectual development. The maltreatment experienced is normally described in five categories. Each category of maltreatment is described by a range of indicators:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Psychological
- Neglect

Descriptions of these indicators have been taken from the Department for Child Protection document “Identifying and responding to child abuse and neglect – A Guide for Professionals”.

#### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse occurs when a child has experienced severe and/or persistent ill-treatment. It can include, but is not limited by injuries such as cuts, bruises, burns and fractures caused by a range of acts including beating, shaking, illicit administration of alcohol and other drugs, attempted suffocation, excessive discipline or physical punishment.

#### **Sexual Abuse and Grooming**

Sexual abuse covers a wide range of behaviour or activities that expose or subject a child to sexual activity that is exploitative and/or inappropriate to his/her age and developmental level. These behaviours include observation or involvement with inappropriate fondling of a child’s body, making a child touch an adult’s genitalia, showing pornographic material or sexual acts to a child, and sexual penetration of the child. Harm from sexual abuse may include significant emotional trauma, physical injury, infections and impaired emotional and psychological development.

Grooming, in a child protection context, refers to deliberate actions undertaken to engage in sexual activity with a child. It differs from sexual abuse in that it is primarily a preparatory activity occurring before abuse occurs, but is continued during and after the abuse to ensure the safety of the groomer.

#### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is a sustained, repetitive, inappropriate, ill treatment of a child or young person through behaviours including threatening, belittling, teasing, humiliating, bullying, confusing, ignoring and inappropriate encouragement. Children who have been emotionally abused are likely to have a reduced capacity to experience a range of emotions, to express emotion appropriately and to modulate their emotional experience. Children who have been emotionally abused are likely to be fearful, withdrawn and/or resentful, distressed and despairing.

#### **Psychological Abuse**

Psychological abuse is the sustained, repetitive, inappropriate, ill treatment of a child or young person through behaviours including threatening, isolating, neglecting, discrediting, misleading, disregarding, ignoring and inappropriate encouragement. This abuse damages a child’s intellectual faculties and processes, including intelligence, memory, recognition, perception, attention, imagination and moral development. Children are likely to feel worthless, flawed, unloved, unwanted, endangered or only

of value in meeting another's needs.

**Neglect**

Neglect is the failure of a parent/caregiver to provide a child with the basic necessities of life. These include adequate supervision, adequate food or shelter, suitable clothing, effective medical, therapeutic or remedial care and emotional security. Neglect can be acute, chronic or episodic, and can result in detrimental effects on the child or young person's social psychological, educational or physical development and/or physical injury. Neglect should be considered in the context of physical, emotional or psychological abuse.

**Notes:**

Child abuse and neglect, through the Department for Child Protection, is defined as maltreatment done by a person who has responsibility to care for a child and this document concentrates specifically on that relationship.

It is also important to note that the child who is 'bullying' may be doing so because they have been subjected to the same inappropriate behaviour and may require assistance through the College's Child Protection policy.

Students aged 18 and over may attend the College but are legally considered adults and as such CPFS does not have a child protection mandate for them. However, they can be considered potentially vulnerable and in need of specialist services and Colleges do owe a duty of care towards them. There are many youth-specific agencies available to assist these students. Goldfields Baptist College will contact the Police if they are aware of any assault or crime against a young adult.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect**

#### **Physical Abuse**

- Broken bones or unexplained bruises, burns, or welts in various stages of healing.
- The child or young person is unable to explain an injury, or explanations given are inconsistent, vague or bizarre.
- Direct admissions from the parents that they are concerned that they might harm their child.
- Family history of violence.
- Marked delay between injury and obtaining medical assistance.
- Parent who shows little concern about the welfare of their child or the treatment and care of the injury.
- Repeated presentations of the child to health services with injuries, ingestions or minor complaints (this could also be an indicator of Factitious Disorder by proxy, a rare expression of physical and emotional abuse).
- The child or young person is unusually frightened of a parent or carer, or is afraid to go home.
- The child or young person reports intentional injury by their parent or carer.
- Arms and legs are kept covered by inappropriate clothing in warm conditions.
- Ingestion of poisonous substances including alcohol or drugs.
- Avoidance of physical contact by the child (particularly with a parent or carer).

#### **Sexual Abuse**

- Sexualised behaviours inappropriate to their age (including sexually touching other children and themselves).
- Knowledge of sexual behaviour inappropriate to their age.
- Disclosure of abuse either directly or indirectly through drawings, play or writing that describes abuse.
- Pain or bleeding in the anal or genital area with redness or swelling.
- Fear of being alone with a particular person.
- Child or young person implies that he/she is required to keep secrets.
- Presence of sexually transmitted disease.
- Sudden unexplained fears.
- Enuresis and/or encopresis (bed-wetting and bed soiling).

#### **Emotional or Psychological Abuse**

- The parent or carer constantly criticises, threatens, belittles, insults, or rejects the child or young person with no evidence of love, support, or guidance.
- The child or young person exhibits extremes in behaviour from overly aggressive to overly passive.
- Delayed physical, emotional, or intellectual development.
- Compulsive lying and stealing.
- High levels of anxiety.
- Lack of trust in people.
- Feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves.
- Eating hungrily or hardly at all.
- Uncharacteristic seeking of attention or affection.

- Reluctance to go home.
- Rocking, sucking thumbs or self-harming behaviour.
- Fearfulness when approached by a person known to them.

### **Neglect**

- Signs of malnutrition, begging, stealing or hoarding food.
- Poor hygiene: matted hair, dirty skin or severe body odour.
- Unattended physical or medical problems.
- The child or young person states that no one is home to provide care (inadequate supervision, failure to ensure safety).
- Child or young person appears constantly tired.
- Frequent lateness to College or absence from College.
- Inappropriate clothing, especially inadequate clothing in winter.
- Alcohol and/or drug abuse present in the household.
- Frequent illness, low grade infections or sores.
- Hunger.

### **Appendix 3**

#### **How to Respond to a Disclosure of Abuse or Neglect**

If a student makes a disclosure of abuse or neglect, staff should be aware of the immediate needs of the student. It is suggested that staff follow the subsequent guidelines when dealing with a student:

- Use ‘protective interrupting’ if students begin to disclose in class or in a public area to protect them from sharing the information with too many other people;
- Acknowledge that you have heard them and stop them from disclosing any further;
- Be supportive and gently indicate that they might tell you about it in a more private situation; and
- Quietly arrange to see them as soon as possible, in a situation away from other students.
- Establish clear limits on confidentiality by telling the child that a report will be made to a person who will be able to provide help and protection and that you will help them throughout the process;
- Put your own feelings aside and listen as if the information is not sensational;
- Provide reassurance that you believe them, that it is right to tell and that you do not think that they are to blame or make judgements about what has happened:
- Listen to students in a private location within the College;
- Be supportive and understanding;
- Be empathetic to student feelings;
- Acknowledge that it is difficult to talk about such things;
- Try to identify students’ fears;
- Let students tell the event in their own words;
- If you are unable to answer all the questions of the child, it is OK to let them know;
- Once you have established that they have been harmed or are at risk of being harmed, do not pursue the conversation any further. This is important to ensure that questions cannot be raised later about possible manipulation of the disclosure;
- Allow students the option of support during any agency interview and reassure them of the availability of continuing support;
- Document the conversation that you have had remembering as accurately as you can, the words and phrases used by the child to describe what has happened to them;
- Document the disclosure and subsequent discussion and actions;
- Explain what will happen next; and
- Try and stay with the student after the disclosure to provide a sense of security until necessary steps have been taken to ensure the safety and support.

#### **Staff Must be Careful they:**

- Don’t push for details or conduct an investigation. Other agencies have this responsibility;
- Don’t express judgement of the student, perpetrator or family;
- Don’t get angry, upset or show shock;
- Don’t ask questions that may make the child feel guilty or inadequate;
- Don’t ask leading questions, for instance ‘Did Daddy hit you?’
- Don’t put words in students’ mouths or interrogate as this could jeopardise the interviewing process of the CPFS and Police;
- Don’t promise not to tell when there are clear limits on confidentiality;
- Never make false promises;
- Don’t give a lecture about right and wrong;
- Don’t say ‘forget it’, ‘you’ll get over it’ or other such minimalising statements;

- Don't give excessive pity;
- Respect the confidentiality of the disclosure and do not share the information with anyone other than the Principal and either the Department for Child Protection and Family Services or the Police. This includes not engaging in general staffroom discussion about the disclosure.

Staff must be aware that a disclosure can arouse in them strong feelings of shock, anger and helplessness. It is important to try to control these feelings and work through them after the disclosure – the Chaplain may be consulted to help with this.

## **Appendix 4**

### **Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum**

The Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum teaches all children from a young age, in an age appropriate way, to:

- Recognise abuse and tell a trusted adult about it;
- Understand what is appropriate and inappropriate touching; and
- Understand ways of keeping themselves safe.

#### ***Themes***

It is predicated on two main themes which are presented through topics and activities of increasing complexity:

- We all have the right to be safe; and
- We can help ourselves to be safe by talking to people we trust.

#### ***Focus Areas***

The two themes are explored through four Focus Areas, which are examined in growing complexity in accordance with the age of the learners:

- The right to be safe;
- Relationships;
- Recognising and reporting abuse; and
- Protective strategies.

#### ***The Right to be Safe***

Children and young people learn about the various feelings they might have in different situations. They are taught about the external and internal warning signs that help them recognise a situation where they may be at risk of harm.

#### ***Relationships***

Children and young people explore a range of relationships and how they can change. They are taught that some relationships are positive and can complement their personal identity and sense of self-worth, while others are negative and destructive to their wellbeing.

#### ***Recognising and Reporting Abuse***

This is carefully covered in accordance to the students' developmental level. Younger children explore different kinds of touching, secrets, privacy and parts of the body, while older students also explore abuse issues, cyber safety, cyberbullying and problem solving.

#### ***Protective Strategies***

Children and young people learn about how adults are responsible for protecting all children and young people. They explore the different things they can do to keep themselves safe.