



| CBC ST JOHN'S, PARKLANDS | |
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CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR INDEPENDENT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA

1. PREAMBLE

The Board of Governors (BOG) of CBC St John's Parklands has adopted this Child Safeguarding Policy and requires that it be implemented. This policy is in keeping with South African Law, as well as the document *Integrity in Ministry in Catholic Schools, Ethical Standards of Behaviour for all who work in Catholic schools*.

2 PURPOSE

- 2.1 To make sure that all learners are safe and well.
- 2.2 To make sure that everyone involved in the running of the school – BOG members, teachers, support staff, volunteers, and learners – takes every possible measure to prevent abuse.
- 2.3 To make sure that no person at the school does anything that could allow abuse to occur, or that could be misinterpreted by children, their families, or other adults as being or leading to abuse.



2. COMMITMENT

2.1 The Board commits to seven standards. These standards are recommended by best practice, and they show the expected level of performance that all who govern work, study, or volunteer at [Name of School] should reach:

- Standard 1: Written Child Safeguarding Policy is in force at the school.
- Standard 2: Procedures showing how to report and respond to any suspected or alleged child abuse are in place.
- Standard 3: Policies and procedures to protect children from harm are in place.
- Standard 4: Arrangements for the induction, ongoing training and education of staff are in place.
- Standard 5: A variety of methods to communicate this Child Safeguarding Policy are in place.
- Standard 6: Advice and support are available to those who need it.
- Standard 7: Standards are made to work and are regularly checked to see if they are working.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The following Code of Conduct will be adopted in addition to any existing Codes of Conduct in operation in the School:

- 2.2 All employees and volunteers will:
 - 2.2.1 Treat all children with respect.
 - 2.2.2 Be examples of good behaviour.
 - 2.2.3 Work within the Catholic Church's principles and guidance, particularly within the ethical standards outlined in the document Integrity in Ministry in Catholic Schools.
 - 2.2.4 Be visible to others when working with children, whenever possible.
 - 2.2.5 Challenge and report behaviour that you think might be abusive.
 - 2.2.6 Develop a way of doing things where children can talk openly about their contacts with staff and others.
 - 2.2.7 Respect each child's boundaries, and help them to develop their own sense of their rights, as well as helping them to know what they can do if they feel there is a problem.
 - 2.2.8 In general, it is inappropriate to:
 - 2.2.8.1 Interview children alone in a closed room.
 - 2.2.8.2 Interact with children outside of the school context, without the consent of parents or guardians.
 - 2.2.8.3 Spend too much time alone with children away from others.
 - 2.2.8.4 Take children to your own home, especially if they will be alone with you.
 - 2.2.9 Employees or volunteers will never:
 - 2.2.9.1 Hit (or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse) a child, or use any other ways of punishment that are not allowed. This includes the verbal abuse of a child.
 - 2.2.9.2 Allow children in their care to abuse one another in any way.
 - 2.2.9.3 Develop sexual relations with children.
 - 2.2.9.4 Develop relationships with children which could be exploitative or abusive.
 - 2.2.9.5 Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse.
 - 2.2.9.6 All employees and volunteers will avoid actions or behaviour that could be construed as poor practice or potentially abusive.



- 2.2.9.7 Use language, make suggestions, or offer advice, which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.
- 2.2.9.8 Behave in a way that is inappropriate or sexually provocative.
- 2.2.9.9 Have a child or children (with whom they are working) stay at home with them overnight unsupervised.
- 2.2.9.10 Sleep in the same room or bed as a child with whom they are working.
- 2.2.9.11 Do things for children (of a personal nature) that they can do for themselves.
- 2.2.9.12 Allow, or take part in, behaviour with children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- 2.2.9.13 Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade.
- 2.2.9.14 Discriminate against, show different treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.

3. REPORTING OBLIGATIONS:

3.1 According to South African Law (Section 110 of the Children's Act of 2005):

- 3.1.1 Any person who knows that a sexual offense has been committed against a child must report such knowledge to a police official or registered social worker.
- 3.1.2 Any person who on reasonable grounds concludes that a child has been abused in a manner causing physical injury, sexually abused, or deliberately neglected, must report that conclusion in the prescribed form to a designated child protection organisation, the provincial department of social development , or a police official.⁴
- 3.1.3 If the alleged offender is a teacher, the Provincial Department of Education and the South African Council of Educators (SACE) must be informed.
- 3.1.4 In addition to South African legal obligations Catholic schools must also report to The Owner's Representative.

3.2 Standard 2:

- 3.2.1 Procedures showing how to report and respond to any suspected or alleged child abuse are in place.
- 3.2.2 The College holds that the safety and well-being of children will be the most important consideration and at no time will children be put at further risk of harm by delay or inaction.
- 3.2.3 When it is known or suspected that a child has been abused, it is required that all legal and Church procedures are followed.⁵ In addition, the owner should be informed through the person whose job it is to do so.

4. SACE: CODE OF CONDUCT: CONDUCT: THE EDUCATOR AND THE LEARNER

An educator:

- 4.1 Respects the dignity, beliefs, and constitutional rights of learners and in particular, children, which includes the right to privacy and confidentiality;
- 4.2 Acknowledges the uniqueness, individuality, and specific needs of each learner, guiding and encouraging each child to realise his or her potential.
- 4.3 Strives to enable learners to develop a set of values consistent with the fundamental rights contained in the Constitution of South Africa.
- 4.4 Exercises authority with compassion.



- 4.5 Avoids any form of humiliation, and refrains from any form of abuse, physical or psychological.
- 4.6 Refrains from improper physical contact with learners.
- 4.7 Promotes gender equality.
- 4.8 Refrains from any form of sexual harassment (physical or otherwise) of learners.
- 4.9 Refrains from any form of sexual relationship with learners at any school.
- 4.10 Uses proper language and behaviour in his or her interaction with learners, and acts in such a way as to elicit respect from the learners.
- 4.11 Takes reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the learner.
- 4.12 Does not abuse the position he or she holds for financial, political, or personal gain.
- 4.13 Is not negligent or indolent in the performance of his or her professional duties; and
- 4.14 Recognises, where appropriate, learners as partners in education.

5. DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

- 5.2 Abuse of a child may occur when somebody inflicts harm on the child or fails to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or an institutional or community setting by those known to them or more rarely, by a stranger.
- 5.3 In the context of this document a Child is a person under 18 years and Child Abuse refers to a form of maltreatment of a child which generally involves one or more of the following:
- 5.4 Physical abuse includes hitting, shaking, kicking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
- 5.5 Psychological or Emotional abuse includes sarcasm, degrading punishments, threats, and not giving love and affection, which can have adverse effects on the behaviour and emotional development of a child or young person.
- 5.6 It may involve conveying to a child that he/she is worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued as far as he/she meets the needs of another person. It could feature having unrealistic expectations of a child. Eliciting fear or exploiting or corrupting a child can also be featured.
- 5.7 Neglect occurs when basic needs such as food, warmth, shelter, and medical care are not met which results in serious impairment of the development of the child or young person. It may also involve failure to protect the child from harm or danger. It may also include unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.
- 5.8 Sexual abuse involves forcing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether the child is aware of what is happening. It may include penetrative or non-penetrative acts. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of or viewing of pornographic material or encouraging children to act in sexually inappropriate ways.
- 5.9 Cyber abuse is the failure to reduce the risk to children from online activity, failure to install suitable locking devices which will not allow access by children to certain online sites, involving children in the production of or viewing of pornographic material; failure to ensure that children can never be identified from images used; failure to limit the use of cell phones within the school and failure to ensure insofar as is possible, that cell phones are not used for harassment, bullying, insulting, threatening, obscene or racist behaviour.



6. USE OF IT EQUIPMENT

6.1 Care will be taken to reduce risk to children from online activity:

- 6.1.1 by installing suitable locking devices which will not allow access by children to certain online sites
- 6.1.2 by ensuring that all communication using IT equipment is respectful. Harassing, insulting language, bullying, threatening, attacking others, and the use of obscene or racist language will not be accepted.
- 6.1.3 by ensuring that children can never be identified from images used
- 6.1.4 by using group photographs rather than full-face photograph images of individual children
- 6.1.5 by observing copyright law

6.2 Care will be taken to respect and protect the privacy of others:

- 6.2.1 by each user using only their own accounts
- 6.2.2 by not viewing, using, or copying passwords, data, or networks to which the user is not authorised
- 6.2.3 by not distributing private information about others

6.3 Care will be taken to respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources:

- 6.3.1 by observing all network security practices:
- 6.3.2 using a firewall to monitor traffic leaving school computers or programmes attempting to use the school internet connection
- 6.3.3 installing and maintaining anti-virus software
- 6.3.4 securing the school Wi-Fi or wireless network link. All users shall need a password to access the internet which will prevent other users from outside accessing the school account.