

Child Abuse Procedure

PROCEDURES

Procedures to be followed in cases of suspected child abuse will differ in cases where there is:

- a. An urgent safety need to such an extent that the child cannot return home that day; or
 - b. The need for a thorough, planned investigation when the child is not at immediate risk of further abuse.
1. Staff are to bring all cases of suspected abuse of students to the attention of the Deputy Principal, or if not applicable, to the Board of Trustees. This includes cases of suspected physical (including neglect), emotional or sexual abuse. The Principal will be informed.
 2. Teachers who have a disclosure made to them in class will accept the disclosure with little or no comment, but will follow the matter up with the Deputy Principal without delay. The Deputy Principal, after careful discussion with the reporting teacher, will gather all information the school has about the child.
 3. If urgent, as in (a) above, the Principal will make an immediate referral to the appropriate agency. The child's caregivers will be advised of any action taken by the statutory agencies involved, as required under the Children and Young Persons and their Families Act. This will be as soon as it is appropriate, depending on the child's safety, the need to follow up, or referral to another agency.
 4. If (b), then the Principal will refer to appropriate agencies. The caregivers will be advised by the school of any action planned.
 5. In the case of a report from a third party to the school, the school will direct the third party to a helping agency without becoming involved. The school may be involved at a later date.
 6. Curriculum to increase children's assertiveness skills in dealing with uncomfortable situations and to help raise consciousness of the issues.
 7. If a staff member is implicated as being responsible for the abuse, contact with the Board of Trustees Chairperson shall be made immediately via the Principal. The Board shall ensure that the interests of the staff member and the child are met.
 8. All actions taken by the school are documented and retained in confidential files. If a staff member is implicated and the allegations are proved to be unsubstantiated, the teacher may choose to have the documentation removed from their file.