



NUMBER: 2.10

EFFECTIVE DATE: 4/10/14

PAGES: 3

SECTION: Operations

SUBJECT: Reporting Abuse or Neglect

REPLACES: N/A

REVISION NUMBER/DATE: N/A

Any school employee who knows or suspects that a child's health or welfare has been or appears to have been harmed, as a result of child abuse or neglect, has a legal responsibility and duty to report the case in accordance with these procedures.

I. Reporting

A. If an employee knows or suspects that a child's health or welfare has been or appears to have been harmed as a result of abuse or neglect, they shall make an oral report at once to the principal or designee. The following procedures should be followed.

1. The employee should not seek permission from an immediate supervisor, but go directly to the principal or designee.
2. When a principal or designee receives a report of suspected child abuse or neglect, the report must be transmitted immediately to Durham County Social Services (DCSS) at 919-560-8424. The requirement is mandatory. The principal or designee should place the call and then allow the intake worker to speak with the person who initiated the report. The caller should be prepared to give the student's name, address, telephone number, age, date of birth, and parent's name. The principal should not divert reports through investigation, but may contact DCSS for consultation to determine if a report should be filed and indicate when the employee making the report will be available. The principal or designee is responsible for arranging this telephone report conversation.
3. In the absence of the principal or designee, or where that authority refuses to comply with the North Carolina Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Law, a school employee shall make at once an oral report to Durham County Social Services (DCSS) at 919-560-8424.
4. If the child needs medical attention, the reporting employee should inform the child protective services intake worker when making the report. If the medical need is urgent, school personnel should utilize usual school procedures.
5. If the situation is so urgent that the child should not return home, the caller should stress the urgency to the intake worker and ask for instructions in the event a child protective services worker does not arrive before the end of the school day.

6. After the telephone report is made to DCSS, the principal or designee should record the incident information, including the names of persons spoken to at DHS and the disposition of any call. The principal or designee should report this information to the Board chair within 24 hours.

7. Once the suspected abuse or neglect is reported, school employees should refrain from further investigation. The child should not be questioned further by any school employee. Continued investigation is only appropriate when the suspected abuser is a school employee.

B. If DCSS does not accept the report for investigation because it is determined not to be child abuse/neglect but another criminal violation, DCSS will refer the report to the appropriate agency. School personnel should record the name of the agency to whom DCSS refers the call. School personnel should not make any further calls. School personnel should be aware that the guarantee of confidentiality does not apply with any referral to a law enforcement agency. On the advice of the DCSS intake worker, school personnel should contact parents about the nature of referral.

C. If DCSS indicates to the caller that the situation reported is neither child abuse/neglect nor another criminal violation, the caller should make a record of this information. The intake worker at DCSS may offer other suggestions as to how to deal with the incident. School personnel may use their own judgment in following these suggestions.

III. SUSPECTED ABUSE BY EMPLOYEE OF RAM Academy

A. If the suspected abuser is an employee of RAM Academy, other than a building principal, the principal will pursue a prompt investigation and notify the following parties:

1. The parents of the child.
2. Durham County Social Services, which will refer the matter to the proper law enforcement agency for investigation.
3. The chair of the Board of Directors.

B. If the suspected abuser is a building principal, then the school employee who knows of/or suspects the abuse should call DCSS and the chair of the Board of Directors.

IV. CONFIDENTIALITY

A. Information regarding suspected child abuse or neglect should be shared only among appropriate school staff who are asked to assist in the investigation by DCSS. An individual may be prosecuted for sharing this information with anyone who does not have a need to know due to their specific duties.

B. All usual school policies ensuring confidentiality should be followed, except as noted in the procedures of this document.

C. Parents should not be informed about the reports to DCSS for child abuse or neglect unless:

1. The suspected abuser is an individual outside the home.
2. The school employee who made the report chooses to divulge to the parent that the employee had information regarding possible child abuse that the employee was required to report to DCSS.

V. FOLLOW-UP

A. If a school staff member is not satisfied with the action taken or to be taken by DCSS for any reason, the staff member should contact the school principal to receive suggestions for further contact to register any concerns.

B. RAM Academy personnel shall fully cooperate with DCSS in planning consistent services for the treatment and prevention of child abuse and neglect.

C. School employees will not discuss the reasons for the DCSS referral with the suspected abuser, even after the investigation by DCSS is concluded.