



**CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY
FOR
INDEPENDENT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
IN
SOUTH AFRICA**



JANUARY 2012

Messages from Bishop Kevin Dowling and Brother Michael de Klerk CFC

'Keeping God's children safe' – what an emotive logo for our child safeguarding policy! It is a clarion call to ensure that deep spiritual and human values are at the heart of all we are about in the education environment and enterprise. It is such a tragedy that so many of our precious “little ones” in this country do not live in an environment which will facilitate meaningful growth towards their full potential as “God's children”. This is a matter of justice, i.e. that our children be given the best that is possible for us to create for them. The bottom line is that at all times they should live in an environment that is completely “safe”. But we need to unpack that word “safe” in all its dimensions, not the least of which is the spiritual. Our Catholic vision always emphasises a holistic approach to every child in their total situation. These children are “God's” children entrusted to us by God for just a few years. We cannot but do everything possible to ensure their safety, to overcome anything which can threaten their dignity, and to implement policies and programmes which will not only safeguard them and their future, but enable them to grow to the fullness of being ‘God's children’.

Bishop Kevin Dowling

SACBC Liaison Bishop for the Catholic Institute of Education

There is no place in Catholic schools for those who would harm the young. Children and young people say they want to feel safe – at home, at school and wherever they go. Those in charge of our Catholic schools have a duty to specifically safeguard and protect children at risk of harm and also to improve the overall well-being of all children entrusted to their care ... thus helping them to feel safer.

We are grateful to the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland whose main objective is to promote and safeguard the rights of children so that they may grow and develop in a healthy and nurturing environment. Their work has given rise to certain guiding principles (from Gospel Values, International Law, Domestic Legislation and the Church's Child Protection Policy) which in turn has led to the development of seven standards which represent best practice in the field of safeguarding children, in the Church and all related Church activities (including our Catholic schools). This policy (based on the seven standards) provides a common approach/framework to safeguarding minors in all Catholic schools (both independent and public schools on private property) in South Africa.

We are aware that some Congregations have developed child protection policies for their schools. This Child Protection Policy may well replace the existing policy that may not be up to date.

We encourage Boards of Governors and Management of schools to study this Child Protection Policy and to be proactive about its implementation in our schools. This is a serious challenge and a responsibility that requires effective communication and clear accountability arrangements for all in the school environment.

May God's children indeed be kept safe.

Brother Michael de Klerk CFC
CaSPA Chairperson

INTRODUCTION

CaSPA is committed to keeping children safe, and aims to protect them in the school environment as much as it can. Therefore we present this Child Safeguarding Policy for use in all our schools. All schools and all staff-members must know the policy of their school about protecting children, and they should work to the standards set out in their policy. CaSPA is committed to making sure that the welfare and rights of children are promoted and protected, and that children are not harmed, exploited or abused.

This policy shows our schools what they must do to keep their children safe. The whole school community should adopt and implement this policy document.

The policy reflects the Gospel values of freedom, justice and respect for all children and young people. It promotes our underlying belief that:

the rights of all children must be promoted and protected,
all children must be treated equally, with love and respect, and
their dignity as a person must never be diminished.

Children are among the most vulnerable people in any society. They can be easy targets, and can quickly become victimized, be exploited and even abused. The safety and protection of children will always be our highest priority. In doing this we align ourselves with international bodies that have made child protection their priority, i.e. the United Nations' Convention of the rights of Children and The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

In 1989, the United Nations (the UN) agreed to *The Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC - United Nations, 1989). This Convention is the foundation of the rights of all children. This convention has been agreed to (ratified) by virtually every country in the world, including South Africa, and so has world-wide recognition and support. We confirm our commitment to upholding these rights for all children.

States Parties [and other organizations responsible for the care, development and wellbeing of children] shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

Article 19 – United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

In a document which is even more closely focused on the South African situation, *The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child* (1999) further underpins the importance of the safety and security of a child.

1. States Parties to the present Charter shall take specific legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment and especially physical or mental injury or abuse, neglect or maltreatment including sexual abuse.
2. Protective measures under this Article shall include effective procedures for the establishment of special monitoring units to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting referral investigation, treatment, and follow-up of instances of child abuse and neglect.

Article 16 - The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

Both these documents apply to all schools, whatever their foundation or religious character. All Catholic schools must follow them, as well as the principles which are at the heart of the Catholic ethos.

Underlying Principles

There are five Underlying Principles that guide this Catholic school policy on keeping children safe. They follow the Gospel, the mission of the Catholic Church, and the professional commitment of all staff-members at schools.

a. **Create Safe Environments**

Catholic Schools must first create safe environments for children and young people, and through doing this they can best protect them from any form of harm or abuse.

b. **The Duty of Care**

Every person has a duty to support the care and protection of children.

c. **Written Policy**

Each Catholic school must have a written policy on the safeguarding of children.

d. **Education of Staff**

Keeping children safe, and stopping them being abused, depends on all the school staff being educated about these issues.

e. **All Children are Equal**

All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation. No matter what cultural differences there are, no matter any other reason, Catholic schools must intervene on behalf of any child whom they think might be being abused.

Setting standards

Standards are used in many different areas of life. Standards mark the lowest level for something to be working so that it does its job. In this case, standards define what needs to be in place in Catholic schools to keep children safe. Standards also list criteria – indicators that will help people in charge of the school to decide whether the school has reached this standard. The criteria show what steps the school must take to meet the standard in each area.

The following 'Child Safeguarding Policy' can be used as the school's own policy on this issue.

Child Safeguarding Policy of [Name of School]

1 Preamble

The Board of Governors (BOG) of [Name of School] 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*¹.'

2 Purpose of the Child Safeguarding Policy

- To make sure that all learners are safe and well
- 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 abuse²
- 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.

3 Commitment

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.

3.1 Standard 1: Written Child Safeguarding Policy is in force at the school.

The child's right to dignity of life and bodily integrity shall be respected, nurtured and protected by all.

Every person involved in the school must make sure that the basic rights of children are respected. These basic rights are enshrined in South African Law.

This policy comes from the guiding principles above, but also from recognizing that 'in all matters concerning the care, protection and well being of a child the standard that the child's best interest is of paramount importance, must be applied.'³

The policy has been written to make sure that every member of the school community does everything that he or she can to prevent abuse. This policy aims to make sure that none of the staff at the school - personnel or volunteers - 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.

¹ See Appendix 8: Standard 5

² See Appendix 5 for definitions of various forms of abuse

³ South African Children's Act 2005, Section 9, Section 110

Reporting obligations:

According to South African Law

- Any person who has knowledge that a sexual offence has been committed against a child must report such knowledge to a police official or registered social worker.
- Any person who, on reasonable grounds, suspects that a child has been physically abused or deliberately neglected must report that suspicion to the police or a registered social worker who has had the appropriate training.⁴
- If the alleged offender is a teacher, the Provincial Department of Education and the South African Council of Educators (SACE) must be informed.

In addition to South African legal obligations Catholic schools must also report to

- The Owner's Representative.

3.2 Standard 2: Procedures are in place showing how to report and respond to any suspected or alleged of child abuse are in place.

[Name of School] holds that the safety and wellbeing 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.

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.⁶

3.3 Standard 3: Policies and procedures to protect children from harm are in place.

[Name of School] is committed to encouraging a culture of safety and preventing or reducing the risk of harm to children.

[Name of School] will do this through:

- Safe Recruitment
- Code of Behaviour
- Safe Activities.

3.3.1 **Safe Recruitment** – [Name of School] will make sure that it recruits people (whether for voluntary or for paid work) who are suitable for whichever role or job needs to be filled.

In order to stop unsuitable people from working with children in the school, good recruitment and selection procedures will be put in place. Police clearance (and other legally required clearance in accordance with National Registers) for all employees and volunteers will be sought.⁷ All job-applicants will be asked if they have any convictions relating to the abuse of children. Regardless of the response the National Registers will be checked. With regard to teachers, the South African Council of Educators (SACE) must be contacted to make sure that the person is legally registered as an educator, and that there are no complaints against them.

⁴ South African Children's Act 2005, Section 9, Section 110

⁵ See Appendix 1 A

⁶ See Appendix 3

⁷ See Appendix 5

3.3.2 Code of Conduct – [Name of School] has a clear and concise guide of what is (and is not) acceptable behaviour and practice when working with children. This will be signed by all employees and volunteers who work with children.

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

All employees and volunteers will:

- Treat all children with respect
- Be examples of good behaviour
- Work within the Catholic Church's principles and guidance, and particularly within the ethical standards outlined in the document *Integrity in Ministry in Catholic Schools*
- Be visible to others when working with children, whenever possible
- Challenge and report behaviour that you think might be abusive
- Develop a way of doing things where children can talk openly about their contacts with staff and others
- 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.

In general, it is inappropriate to:

- Interview children alone in a closed room
- Interact with children outside of the school context, without the consent of parents or guardians
- Spend too much time alone with children away from others
- Take children to your own home, especially if they will be alone with you.

Employees or volunteers will never:

- 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
- Allow children in their care to abuse one another in any way
- Develop sexual relations with children
- Develop relationships with children which could be considered to be exploitative or abusive
- Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse.

All employees and volunteers will avoid actions or behaviour that could be construed as poor practice or potentially abusive.

Employees and volunteers will never:

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

3.3.3 Safe Activities – [Name of School] has clear guidelines on what to do to keep children safe - before, during and after activities. A risk assessment will figure out how best to run activities. Strategies will be worked out to deal with any risks identified.⁸

⁸ See Appendix 1 B

3.4 Standard 4: Arrangements for the induction, on-going training and education of staff are in place.

[Name of School] recognises that appropriate child safeguarding training for all those who work with children or have a designated child safeguarding / welfare role is an integral and vital element in ensuring best practice.

Every person who works with children, or who comes into contact with them, has a role to play in protecting them. In order to carry out this role effectively and confidently, each person needs to be aware of child safeguarding issues, and should have the necessary knowledge and skills.

All personnel (both paid and unpaid) who need to access child safeguarding training will be given it.

A budget for this training will be provided.

Suitable people to train those personnel who need training will be sought and chosen. Personnel will be freed to get this training.

3.5 Standard 5: A variety of methods to communicate this Child Safeguarding Policy are in place.

[Name of School] will ensure that all members of the Board of Governors, all people involved in the school, as well as parents, children and external agencies know about this Child Safeguarding Policy. [Name of School] is aware that policies and procedures are only effective if all the people involved, including children, know how to use them.

In order to make it easier to let these people know, the following processes will be put in place:

- Workshops for the Board of Governors, teachers, support staff, volunteers and learners to explain this Child Safeguarding Policy will be arranged.
- The fact that this Child Safeguarding Policy is in place will be displayed in suitable public places throughout the school.
- Parents, children and other people involved will be informed about the school's Child Safeguarding Policy, as well as about procedures for reporting suspected abuse.

3.6 Standard 6: Advice and support are available to those who need it.

[Name of School] will ensure access to advice and support to anyone who has been abused or who is alleged to have perpetrated abuse. Specialist advice on child safeguarding issues, from appropriate providers, will be made available to anyone who needs it.

[Name of School] is aware of how distressing child abuse is, and how difficult it is to deal with. The school will make sure that children will know where they can go for help and advice if they have a concern. The following are ways to make sure of this:

- Openly display (in areas where children are) lists of services, authorities and organisations (with contact details) that can help children.
- These lists will be available to all staff and volunteers, so that they know what services are available in order to be able to respond to and support children.
- As there is a particular concern for vulnerable children (such as disabled children and those with communication difficulties, such as deafness), [Name of School] will make sure that they are able to report abuse and get information and support if they need it. A suitable interpreter will be provided where one is needed.

[Name of School] will also make sure that the alleged perpetrator of any abuse is able to receive suitable support, and will advise them that they have a right to seek legal advice.

3.7 Standard 7: Standards are made to work, and are regularly checked to see if they are working.

[Name of School] will work out a plan for putting the Child Safeguarding Policy in place and making it work, and also for making sure that people know about it. A plan to check on the steps taken to protect children, especially looking at how well they are working, will be in place.

In order to put this policy in place, make it work, and ensure that people know about it, both formal and informal procedures will be used. The procedures that will be used include:

- Briefings and Meetings
- Newsletters
- Memos
- All-Staff Emails
- Conferences
- Policy Documents
- Networking
- Listening & Talking
- Sharing
- Discussion
- Training

Questionnaires, interviews, focus groups and formal feedback to check on the steps taken to protect children, especially looking at how well they are working, will be used.

Appendix 1: Guidelines

1A Guideline for any person receiving a concern regarding abuse

Anyone who receives a concern, suspicion, disclosure or allegation of abuse should act immediately as follows:

- **Listen**
Be welcoming and supportive.
- **Be sensitive**
Hear the person's story, and then explain the procedures involved in reporting what they have been told to the South African Police Service and/or Department of Social Development (Registered Social Worker), as well as the Owner's Representative.
- **Be mindful**
The rights of all involved, both the person making the allegation and the alleged perpetrator, must be respected at all times.
- **Put them in contact**
The alleged victim must immediately be put into contact with the police officer and registered social worker in the area or connected with the school, as soon as possible.
- **Do not guarantee confidentiality**
It must be made clear to anyone who wishes to speak about a situation of abuse, that the child be protected and any case of abuse be reported.
- **Do not speak to the alleged perpetrator**
It is very important that the proper authorities deal with the alleged perpetrator. No attempt to intervene and contact the person directly should be made.

1B Guidelines for safe activities should include the following:

- **Checking up**
All individual staff who are involved in events and activities with children (whether these activities are ongoing or 'one off') must be investigated and checked to see if they are suitable.
- **Supervision**
Appropriate levels of supervision, depending on the age of children and the activities involved, will be put in place.
- **Health and Safety**
Proper checks will be carried out to ensure that venues are safe, that there are enough changing areas and toilets, and that there are first aid supplies, safe transport, suitable sleeping arrangements and adequate insurance.
- **Parental/Guardian consent**
This will include signed consent forms from parents or guardians before a child takes part in an activity (which include a contact number in case of emergency), permission for the child to receive medical treatment if needed, and identification of specific dietary, medical or special needs of the child.
- **Use of IT equipment**
Care will be taken to reduce risk to children from online activity and use of images when they are involved in an activity, a group or an event.

[Refer to CIE Policy Brief: Safety and Security at Catholic Schools Vol 7 Issue 4 (2007)]

Appendix 2: The School's Distinctive Catholic Character

Distinctive Religious Character

The Catholic Schools' Proprietors Association (CasPA) has defined the distinctive religious character of Catholic schools, in the policy document *Signs of God's Presence*.

In *Signs of God's Presence* (pg 12) it states that:

The Catholic school aims to promote the holistic growth of all learners, as well as to give witness to social concern and care for others.

The document also states that:

The Catholic school achieves this through:

- *promoting a Catholic perspective of human life*
- *encouraging a holistic approach to human life*
- *nurturing religious and moral formation*
- *and through the dedication of the principal and staff to practising and promoting moral values and to a high standard of teaching and learning.*

The Catholic school strives towards excellence in education, with outcomes embracing the total formation of each individual.... and by being a model of Christian freedom, justice and love in its administration, teaching and relationships between educators, learners, parents and community.

Following this vision, a learner in a Catholic school will be cherished and affirmed as a gift from God with an inherent right to dignity of life and bodily integrity. This right will be respected, nurtured and protected by all. Everyone involved in a Catholic School has an obligation to make sure that the basic rights of children are respected.

In addition to these obligations and understandings, which everyone follows, the Owner has a right and a responsibility to see that the distinctive religious character of the school is maintained.

The Child Safeguarding Policy, and the fact that the school has this policy, forms an important part of the moral and religious ethos of the school.

In making sure that the Child Safeguarding Policy of the school works and works well, the Owner and the Board of Governors have certain things that they need to do.

The Owner's responsibility

The Owner is committed:

- To make sure that every school which operates on the Owner's premises has a Child Safeguarding Policy.
- To make sure that this Policy is in keeping with accepted best practice and follows South African Law.

To achieve this, the Owner will:

- draw up a Child Safeguarding Policy that is in keeping with accepted best practice and which follows South African Law.
- present this Policy to all members of the Board of Governors
- support the Board of Governors by helping to carry out the Policy.
- provide advice and support to those who need it, where necessary.

The Board of Governors' responsibility

The Board of Governors, working in partnership with the Owner, is responsible for the preservation of the school's ethos (as described in *Signs of God's Presence* pg 12).

Putting the Child Safeguarding Policy in place at the school, and making it work, is very important. The Board must make sure that the Policy is put in place and made to work.

The Board must make sure that all the legal procedures that need to happen actually happen, and that the School Management Team follows the Law of South Africa.

Appendix 3:

Useful phone numbers:

LOCAL POLICE STATION 1011	landline	
	fax	
	cell	
	email	
CLOSEST SAPS Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences Unit (FCS)	landline	
	fax	
	cell	
	email	
LOCAL OFFICE OF THE DEPT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OR OTHER ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR STATUTORY SERVICES IN THE AREA	0800 601 011	
DISTRICT OFFICIAL IN THE PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILD PROTECTION (IF SUCH A PERSON EXISTS)	landline	
OWNER'S REPRESENTATIVE	fax	
	cell	
	email	
	email	
CHILDLINE	080 0055555	
SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL OF EDUCATORS (SACE) All complaints must be in writing	<p>Chief Executive Officer South African Council for Educators (SACE), Private Bag X 127 Centurion 0046 .</p> <p>The letter may also be hand delivered to: Chief Executive Officer South African Council for Educators (SACE) 261 West Street Centurion 0046</p> <p>or it may be emailed to ethics@sace.org.za</p>	

Appendix 4: Referral Procedure to follow when there is suspected abuse, or when a child discloses abuse

Catholic Public Schools on Private Property

REFERRAL PROCEDURE

In terms of Section 110 of the Children’s Act 38 of 2005, **the duty of reporting** suspected child abuse or when a child discloses abuse **rests with the person who suspects or to whom the child discloses**. This person must report the suspicion or the disclosure to the **SA Police or to a designated social worker**. **This reporting should be done as soon as possible**.

If the child is a pupil in a school and the person to whom he/she discloses is a teacher, the teacher shall follow the above procedure and the Principal shall be informed immediately, who shall inform the parents and the Circuit Manager.

If a teacher in a school is the alleged perpetrator, the above referral procedure shall be followed and the Principal shall be informed immediately, who shall inform the parents, the Circuit Manager, the Chair of the Board of Governors and the Owner’s representative.

If the Principal in a school is the alleged perpetrator, the above referral procedure shall be followed and the relevant School Management Team member shall be informed immediately, who shall inform the parents, the Circuit Manager, the Chair of the Board of Governors and the Owner’s representative.

The above referral procedure supersedes the referral procedure laid down in ‘Abuse No More’ because the Children’s Act 2005 supersedes the ‘Abuse No More’ Policy of 2001. All other Management Procedures relating to suspected child abuse as in ‘Abuse No More’ remain in place.

(Amended to comply with The Children’s Act 2005)

Appendix 5: This applies to staff employed by the BOARD OF GOVERNORS.

National Registers

In order for schools to be able to employ the most suitable staff to work with children, there are various National Registers of people who have been found unsuitable to work or be near children. An employer can ask a potential employee for a clearance certificate or apply for one themselves. If the potential employee provides one the employer must check its validity in case it is forged.

1. South African Council of Educators (SACE)

Phone SACE to check on every single person employed to work at the school.
Report serious issues (such as cases of abuse) to SACE.

2. National Register for Sex Offenders (Department of Justice)

(Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act No 32 of 2007) Section 42.

A register is kept of every person convicted of a sex-crime. Check this before employing anyone to work at the school. An employer will face prosecution if he/she fails to check whether a current employee or possible employee is on the register.

3. National Child Protection Register (Department of Social Development)

A record is kept of every case of child abuse.
This register has 2 sections:

PART A: Details of all reports of abuse or deliberate neglect of a child; all convictions of all persons on charges involving the abuse or deliberate neglect of a child and all findings by a children's court that a child is in need of care and protection because of the abuse and deliberate neglect of the child (See: Section 114 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005).

All children who have been abused and form part of an investigation relating to any form of child abuse which is physical, emotional, sexual or deliberate neglect must be entered onto Part A of the National Child Protection Register.

PART B: Details of people unsuitable to work with children (Section 118 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005)

The school should check this register regularly, and especially before employing anyone at the school.

Applications for checking can be made to the Department of Social Development

Tel No: 0800 6010 011

Appendix 6: Definitions of various forms of Child Abuse

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 in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or more rarely, by a stranger.

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:

Physical abuse includes hitting, shaking, kicking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

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. It may involve conveying to a child that he/she is worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued insofar 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 features.

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.

Sexual abuse involves forcing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not 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 production of or viewing of pornographic material or encouraging children to act in sexually inappropriate ways.

Appendix 7: How to recognise Child Abuse

Recognising child abuse is not easy. It is not an individual's responsibility to decide if it has taken place. Her/his responsibility is to be alert to its signs and to follow procedures as outlined in Appendix 3 if there are concerns. (Remember many children will at times exhibit some of these indicators that can be explained.) Some useful indicators of child abuse are:

Physical abuse	Emotional abuse	Sexual abuse	Neglect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ unexplained bruising, or marks of injuries on any part of the body including hand or finger marks ○ cigarette burn/s ○ bite marks ○ broken bones ○ scalds <p>CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR – fear of parents being approached, temper outburst, flinching when approached or touched, aggression, reluctance to get changed into sports gear etc. depression, withdrawn, running away.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ failure to thrive, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances e.g. when away from home ○ sudden speech disorders ○ developmental delay-physically or emotionally. <p>CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR – sulking, hair twisting, rocking, unable to play, fear of making mistakes, self-harm, fear of parents being approached regarding their behaviour.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pain, itching, bruising or bleeding in the genital area ○ sexually transmitted diseases ○ vaginal discharge or infection ○ discomfort when walking or sitting down ○ stomach pains ○ pregnancy. <p>CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR – unexplained aggression, withdrawn, fear of being left with a specific person/people, nightmares, running away, sexual knowledge, drawings or language beyond age, bedwetting, eating problems, self harm sometimes leading to suicide attempts, secrets they cannot share, substance or drug abuse, unexplained sources of money, not allowed to have friends, sexually explicit actions towards adults.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ constant hunger – sometimes stealing food from other children ○ constantly 'dirty' or smelly ○ constant underweight or loss of weight ○ being left alone or unsupervised ○ inappropriate dress for conditions. <p>CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR – tiredness, not seeking medical assistance and/or failing to keep appointments, having few friends.</p>

Appendix 8: Use of IT Equipment

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

- by installing suitable locking devices which will not allow access by children to certain online sites
- 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.
- by ensuring that children can never be identified from images used
- by using group photographs rather than full-face photograph images of individual children
- by observing copyright law

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

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

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

- by observing all network security practices:
- using a firewall to monitor traffic leaving school computers or programmes attempting to use the school internet connection
- installing and maintaining anti-virus software
- 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
- by reporting security risks or violations to a network or to civil authorities

(Supplement from NBSCCC, Ireland)

Appendix 9: Extract from ‘Integrity in Ministry in Catholic Schools, Ethical Standards of Behaviour for all who work in Catholic schools

5. Respect for the Dignity of all Persons

All people working in Catholic schools should respect the inherent dignity of the person. Respect for others begins with respect for oneself. Clear boundaries between the professional and the personal should be set and maintained.

Those working in Catholic schools:

- recognise that each person is created in the image and likeness of God;
- treat all persons in a caring and respectful fashion;
- are particularly conscious of the need to protect and respect the rights of children, youth and women;
- are mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity and develop their understanding and knowledge of these differences;
- provide opportunities for personal growth and acknowledge that individuals can and do change;
- recognise that they are privileged to be welcomed into the lives of people at important moments, particularly young people.

5.1 In professional ministry, those working in Catholic schools seek to relate to people with respect, sensitivity and reverence.

Commitment to this would be indicated by:

- treating those to whom one provides professional support with patience and courtesy;
- avoiding all forms of discrimination;
- promoting the equality of women and men;
- challenging oppressive norms in every culture.

With regard to this, the following is mandatory for all those working in Catholic schools:

- avoidance of any inappropriate behaviour that could be interpreted as harassment

Harassment encompasses a broad range of physical or verbal behaviour, including but not limited to:

- *physical or emotional abuse;*
- *public defamation of another’s good name;*
- *racial insults;*
- *derogatory ethnic slurs;*
- *unwelcome sexual advances or touching;*
- *sexual jokes or sexual comments;*
- *requests for sexual favours;*
- *display of lewd or offensive materials.*

Harassment can occur as a result of a single incident or pattern of behaviour where the purpose or effect is to create a hostile, offensive or intimidating environment.

5.2 Those working in Catholic schools exercise their vocation in an inclusive fashion.

Commitment to this would be indicated by:

- reaching out to people who may be at risk of being alienated from the school community, especially the disabled;
- being sensitive to the diverse forms of spirituality in the school community;
- understanding and being committed to the principles of enculturation;
- using language that is respectful of all;
- avoiding the fostering of dependency or subservience among those one serves.

5.3 In all human relationships in the school context, those working in Catholic Schools act with integrity consistent with their ministry to proclaim God's Reign of steadfast love.

Commitment to this would be indicated by:

- avoiding any action or language that is sexually provocative;
- never seeking to initiate sexual behaviour in the professional environment or with those with whom one has a professional relationship;
- rejecting any invitation to participate in sexual behaviour in the professional environment or with those with whom one has a professional relationship;
- never establishing a relationship through an abuse of power;
- establishing only those relationships that one can speak of freely to others.

5.4 People working in Catholic schools respect the physical, emotional and cultural boundaries appropriate to professional relationships with adults and minors.

In the use of touch, those working in Catholic schools should be particularly conscious of the need to maintain clear boundaries. Touch is a powerful way of communicating. However, touch can also result in confused messages being communicated. It can be used as an instrument of control, harassment or abuse. Discretion is needed in determining when to use and when not to use touch in professional relationships. At all times those working in Catholic schools must be mindful of their responsibility to protect the welfare and rights of those they serve.

Commitment to this would be indicated by:

- providing counselling only in rooms appropriately set up for such support;
- exercising discretion in initiating and responding to physical contact, such as giving a comforting hug or an affirming touch;
- exercising prudence in the use of language that expresses affection or regard;
- exercising discretion in the giving and receiving of gifts.

With regard to this standard, the following behaviour is mandatory for all those working in Catholic schools:

- Professional ministry is never provided in the sleeping quarters/bedrooms of hostels, or one's own home, or in isolated school situations /facilities.

5.5 Those working in Catholic schools have a profound esteem for the personal dignity of children and youth and therefore for their protection the following are mandatory:

- never staying overnight in the same room as a minor, even if there are two beds;
- never supplying or serving alcohol or any controlled substance to a minor;
- never administering corporal punishment;
- never exposing a minor or youth to pornographic material.

5.6 Those working in Catholic schools, respecting the rights of children and youth, are concerned that these rights are respected by all.

Commitment to this would be indicated by:

- being aware of the causes and signs of child abuse or neglect, the steps to take to protect children, and the procedures to follow if abuse or neglect is suspected or observed;
- being aware of any legal responsibilities under civil law, and of the Church's procedures in relation to the notification of child abuse or neglect;
- availing oneself of training in basic and ongoing formation in the area of child abuse.