CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR CASUAL TEACHERS, VOLUNTEERS & CONTRACTORS

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU COMMENCE ANY SCHOOL ACTIVITY

Following the commencement of the Ombudsman Amendment (Child Protection and Community Services) Act 1998 employers in Catholic Schools (and other Government and non-Government designated agencies) are required to investigate and notify to the NSW Ombudsman allegations of reportable conduct involving their employees, volunteers, contractors and persons deemed to be engaged by the school.

This means that when the Principal or Catholic Education Office receives information about alleged reportable conduct involving an employee or a person deemed to be engaged by the school, they must manage the allegation according to an established protocol and forward a report on the investigation to the Ombudsman’s Office.

It is very important that all employees, volunteers, contractors and persons deemed to be engaged by the school are aware of what conduct/behaviour constitutes reportable conduct under the NSW Child Protection Legislation.

RATIONALE

The mission of Catholic schools unequivocally commits each school community to foster the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of every person. The provision of a safe and supportive environment is an essential element to ensure that each student entrusted to the care of our schools is to be affirmed in his or her dignity and worth as a person. It is expected that all employees (permanent /part-time / casual, volunteers and contractors of all Catholic schools endorse the principles of child protection as a fundamental responsibility. This document will assist employees in understanding and fulfilling their legal and professional responsibilities at St Mary’s School.

This policy will assist to clarify the parameters of appropriate and inappropriate conduct for employees/contractors/volunteers who work in child related employment. It will also assist in achieving a safe and supportive school environment for students, employees and the school’s broader community.

POLICY

Employees, volunteers and contractors will exercise with diligence, the duty of care that they owe to the student. In addition to this, employees, volunteers and contractors are expected to take all reasonable steps to protect students from risk of harm. This may require making formal notifications/reports to government agencies as well as referring matters of concern to relevant personnel within the Catholic School Authority.

Employees, volunteers and contractors are also expected to cooperate with the school to maintain a workplace environment that is positive, open and healthy for members of the school community. Employees, volunteers and contractors must comply with the arrangements for student supervision put in place by the school for all activities where the student is under the duty of care or presence of an employee, volunteer or contractor.

TYPES OF REPORTABLE CONDUCT

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<th>TYPE</th>
<th>EXAMPLES OF CONDUCT/BEHAVIOUR WHICH MAY CONSTITUTE REPORTABLE CONDUCT</th>
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| SEXUAL OFFENCES | • Acts of indecency (contrary to community standards)  
• Indecent assault (assault with sexual connotations)  
• Sexual intercourse and sexual assault  
• Exposing oneself  
• Possession of child pornography |
| SEXUAL MISCONDUCT | • Inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature  
• Unwarranted and inappropriate touching  
• Sexual exhibitionism  
• Personal correspondence of a sexual nature  
• Grooming behaviour – special relationships; testing boundaries – usually a pattern of behaviour – with or without a child's consent |
PHYSICAL ASSAULT
- An application of force or an act that causes a child to think that immediate force will be used.
- The act is either hostile or reckless
- No physical harm/injury is required
- Intention of employee is not relevant

NEGLECT
- Neglect is usually a failure to take action to provide basic physical and emotional necessities of life to a child e.g. failure to provide medical attention

ILL-TREATMENT
- Ill-Treatment is where the employee exceeds what is reasonable or appropriate for the situation. Focus is on the alleged conduct not whether harm is caused to the child e.g. locking a child in a cupboard

PSYCHOLOGICAL HARM
- Any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child, whether or not in any case with the consent of the child. Psychological harm allegations must contain three elements:
  - alleged inappropriate conduct of an employee
  - alleged harm caused to a targeted child or group of children
  - a causal link between the conduct and the harm e.g. degrading, isolating, intimidating

MISCONDUCT THAT MAY INVOLVE REPORTABLE CONDUCT
- Where behaviour suggests that there:
  - May be a pattern of behaviour, or
  - May indicate misconduct which poses a risk to children e.g. breach of boundaries such as taking children home in employee’s car or giving gifts to children.

You are advised that it is never appropriate to engage in any of the above behaviours/conduct when dealing with students.

For further information, please contact Neil Graham in the Catholic Education Office Lismore on (0266220422)

CONSULTATION PROCESS
CONSULTATION HAS OCCURRED WITH THE FOLLOWING PERSONNEL:
- All Staff
- Canteen
- Homework Centre
- Parish Priest
- Cleaner
- CDEP

Year Adopted: 2007  Year to be revised: As required  Area: O H & S – Child Protection