



AP 3 – 16 Child Abuse and Neglect

Related Policies:	Initial Approval:
Related Procedures:	Last Amended:
Exhibits:	Last Reviewed: 2019 November 26

PURPOSE

To ensure that all employees are aware of their role in the prevention, identification and referral of child abuse and neglect. Employees who entertain a suspicion that a child is being neglected or abused shall in compliance with the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* report such cases.

SCOPE

This procedure applies to all staff.

DEFINITIONS

Child Abuse – a mistreatment of a child by parent(s), guardian(s) or other persons resulting in injury or harm. This can be by omission or commission. This abuse may be neglectful, physical, sexual or emotional.

Child Neglect - occurs when a person responsible for a child fails to provide that child with necessary care (food, clothing, shelter, required medical care) or supervision.

PROCEDURES

1. All Board employees who suspect that a child is in need of protection shall immediately inform the nearest Child & Youth Service (or Peace Officer) and the school's Principal or Superintendent.
2. Board employees shall facilitate the reporting of a suspicion of child abuse or neglect.
3. At the point at which the Board employee suspects or is informed of child abuse or neglect, the Board employee's involvement shall cease and Guideline "1" above shall be adhered to.

1. Reporting

It is the responsibility of the Division to ensure that procedures are set forth and followed whereby any suspected case of child abuse or neglect is reported to Child and Youth Services or to a Peace Officer, and to the Principal, or, if the Principal is the suspect, to the Superintendent.

2. Interviews

- 2.1 Social workers employed by Child and Youth Services may choose to follow up a suspected case of child abuse or neglect by requesting of the Principal an opportunity to interview the child at school. In the case of suspected child abuse, the social worker may wish to interview the child alone. The teacher's and the school Principal's responsibility is to facilitate this process.
- 2.2 A child who is suspected of being a victim of child abuse or neglect may be in need of protection. Should a social worker from Child and Youth Services or a Peace Officer choose to interview the child in school without the prior knowledge of the parents or guardians, Board employees are encouraged to cooperate and to facilitate the process.

3. Investigation

- 3.1 The responsibility for notifying parents about an investigation is that of the investigator. While it is important for parents to learn promptly that an investigation is underway, a greater concern is that the child be protected from further abuse. In cases where intra-familial abuse may be suspected, parent notification by the investigator normally follows an initial contact with the child (i.e. before there is an opportunity for the child to be spirited away, punished for “telling”, or pressured into changing a story).
 - 3.2 The Principal shall clarify with the investigator when contact with the parents will be made, particularly when an investigation commences near the end of a school day, as the child may have been apprehended or his/her return home delayed because the investigation is still incomplete. If the investigator has not yet contacted the parents and they call the Principal indicating that the child has not yet returned home, the Principal will provide the investigator’s name and telephone number.
 - 3.3 In the event that threats are made against school personnel or the child, the Principal is advised to call the police.
4. Student Safety en Route to School
If on receiving a report involving sexual assault on a child traveling to or from school or on the school grounds, the Principal believes that other children are endangered by the perpetrator of the assault, the local RCMP should be notified immediately.

REFERENCE AND LINKS

Education Act

Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act

Reviewed

2017 Sept 25 Reviewed

2019 Nov 26 Reviewed