



CHILD PROTECTION AND REPORTING POLICY

Cayman Prep and High School

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Cayman Prep and High School (the “School”) takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care in accordance with the Cayman Islands Children’s Law (Revised in 2012). The School further recognises and acknowledges that it and its employees have statutory obligations to report evident or suspected abuse or neglect of a child in its care. The School is committed to an effective school child protection policy which provides clear direction to staff and others about expected behaviour when dealing with child protection issues and makes explicit the school’s commitment to good practise and sound procedures, ensuring that child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which foremost support the needs of the child. Children includes all students attending the school.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:*

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children’s health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

There are four main elements to this child protection policy:

1. **Prevention** through the creation of a positive school atmosphere, and the teaching and pastoral support offered to students.
2. **Support** to students, particularly those who may have been abused. This includes a zero-tolerance approach when it comes to the protection of students.
3. **Protection** by ensuring staff are trained and supported to recognise and to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns, following agreed procedures.
4. **Reporting** in a timely manner and as required under the statutory obligations.

(*UK Department for Education - Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges September 2018)

DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE

For the purposes of this policy, child abuse is defined as committing any act that does or can possibly harm a child, or failing to protect a child from harm. This abuse can take place between an adult and a child or two children, when there is a power differential. This includes but is not limited to:



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1. Physical or emotional abuse of a child, or neglect of a child to the extent that the child has suffered or is likely to suffer physical or psychological injury detrimental to their well-being, or where the child's physical or psychological development is in jeopardy.
2. Sexual abuse including the use of a child in any sexually explicit conduct, rape, statutory rape, molestation, incest, or non-contact behaviours involving a child in looking at or watching sexual activities, exhibitionism, or encouraging a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
3. Neglect is a deficit in meeting a child's basic needs, including the failure to provide adequate health care, supervision, clothing, nutrition, housing as well as their physical, emotional, social, educational and safety needs.
4. Sexting is sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit messages, photographs, or images of oneself to others. This is usually done using mobile phones but might also the use of a computer or any digital device.

PREVENTION

The School recognises that, for its students, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with trusted adults help to prevent abuse. The School will therefore:

1. Establish and maintain an environment where students feel safe and secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
2. Ensure that students know that there are adults within the School who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
3. Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse, and which will help students develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
4. Ensure that where appropriate every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents and with colleagues from partner agencies.

SUPPORT

The School recognises the particular vulnerability of children and the impact that suffering or witnessing abuse and/or neglect can have on a child's physical, emotional and behavioural wellbeing. The School endeavours to support all of its students through:

1. The curriculum and the School ethos, by encouraging self-esteem and self-motivation and by promoting a positive, supportive and secure environment ensuring that all are respected and valued.
2. A consistent approach to behaviour, ensuring that a student knows that while some behaviour is unacceptable, the student is valued.



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3. Liaison with other professionals and agencies that support the students and their families, where this is indicated.
4. A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents.
5. The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations. This includes the inclusion of all students regardless of nationality, gender, sex, sexuality, religious preference, etc.

PROTECTION

To facilitate this policy:

1. Senior Leadership of the School shall appoint specific staff members, to include the School Counsellors, as “Child Protection Officers” and shall notify all School staff members as to the names of those Officers. The School Counsellors as Child Protection Officers should always be the primary contact in any incident of suspected abuse or neglect, unless immediately unavailable or directly related to the parties involved.
2. The School Counsellors and the Principals will ensure that appropriate and adequate child protection training is undertaken by all staff and volunteers at induction, and through briefings and awareness training on an ongoing basis.
3. The Child Protection Officers will ensure that all child protection procedures are followed within the School and will make appropriate, timely referrals to such agencies, governmental or otherwise, as may be indicated in accordance with School procedures and/or statutory obligations.

REPORTING

Legal Requirement to Notify – Children Law (2012 Revision), Part IIIA.32A

If a teacher, principal, counsellor or other employee/volunteer in an institution established for the care and education of children has a reasonable suspicion that a child has been or is being abused or neglected, and the suspicion is formed in the course of the person’s work, that person shall notify the Department (Department of Children and Family Services) of the suspicion as soon as practicable after s/he forms the suspicion.

A person who contravenes this section commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of five thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term of one year or both.

The School recognises that, while it and its employees have statutory reporting obligations, it is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

- Accordingly, staff members and volunteers who suspect child abuse or neglect shall report their suspicions immediately to a Child Protection Officer in accordance with School policy.
- It is not required that the staff member has proof that abuse or neglect has occurred.
- The staff member or volunteer will report what has been said by the student or what has been observed leading to the suspicion of child abuse/neglect, including the context of that information.



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There shall be no attempt by the staff member/volunteer to question the child, as the role of investigation lies with Multi Agency Safety Hub (MASH).

- Documentation of what is said (or of any injuries) is important. The student's own words shall be used as much as possible.
- The employee or volunteer referring the suspected case of child abuse/neglect must **not** contact the parents.
- Given the sensitive nature of child abuse/neglect referrals, the employee or volunteer should not expect feedback following the referral to the School Child Protection Officer.
- Children Law, (2012 Revision) Part IIIA.32C provides protection to the notifier and requires that the receiver of notification of suspected child abuse (DCFS/FSU) shall not disclose the identity of the notifier to any other person other than in the instance of communicating to another person acting in the course of official duty. Only in cases when "the court is satisfied that the evidence is of critical importance in the proceedings and that failure to admit it would prejudice the proper administration of justice" will a notifier be called to provide evidence. In these instances, CPHS will support the employee by assigning another professional to accompany them at such hearing.
- The Child Protection Officer will ensure timely reporting and referral as appropriate and/or required. This includes working in conjunction with the MASH unit to safeguard all children. Once information for a report has been obtained, the Child Protection Officer will submit a written referral to the MASH unit as soon as possible, utilising the appropriate *Suspected Child Abuse Report Form*. (Appendix 2)
- Where deemed necessary (in time sensitive situations, for example, where there are concerns about the child going home), a telephone call to the MASH will be made by the Child Protection Officer. If after hours, the report will be made directly with the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service (RCIPS). The telephone referral will be followed by a written referral by the CPO.
- The Principal of the school will be notified by the CPO that a report has been made to an external agency.
- When making the referral to MASH, how the parents become informed will be discussed and the best course of action agreed upon with that agency.
- A record of follow-up contact made to external agencies regarding a referral shall be kept.

In addition to providing support to any student(s) impacted by such reporting, the School will assist, and support involved staff members as needed, including but not limited to providing legal assistance where indicated.



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ADDRESSING CONCERNS RAISED ABOUT A MEMBER OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS

Concerns regarding a member of staff will be addressed as follows:

GUIDANCE FLOWCHART

If it is reported that a member of staff/volunteer may have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to a child.



REPORT immediately to the Child Protection Officer (CPO)

- Any concern or allegation against staff / volunteer will be reported to the Principal / Director.
- Any concern or allegation against the Principal will be reported to the Director.
- Any concern or allegation against the Director will be reported to the Chair of Governors.

Unless there is clear evidence to prove that the allegation is incorrect, the CPO must:



REPORT the allegations within one working day to Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

- Phone Contact: 345-949-0290
- Email Address: mash@dcfs.gov.ky



If the allegation threshold is NOT met, MASH will agree with you an appropriate response (e.g. for the agency to undertake further enquiries or undertake an internal investigation)

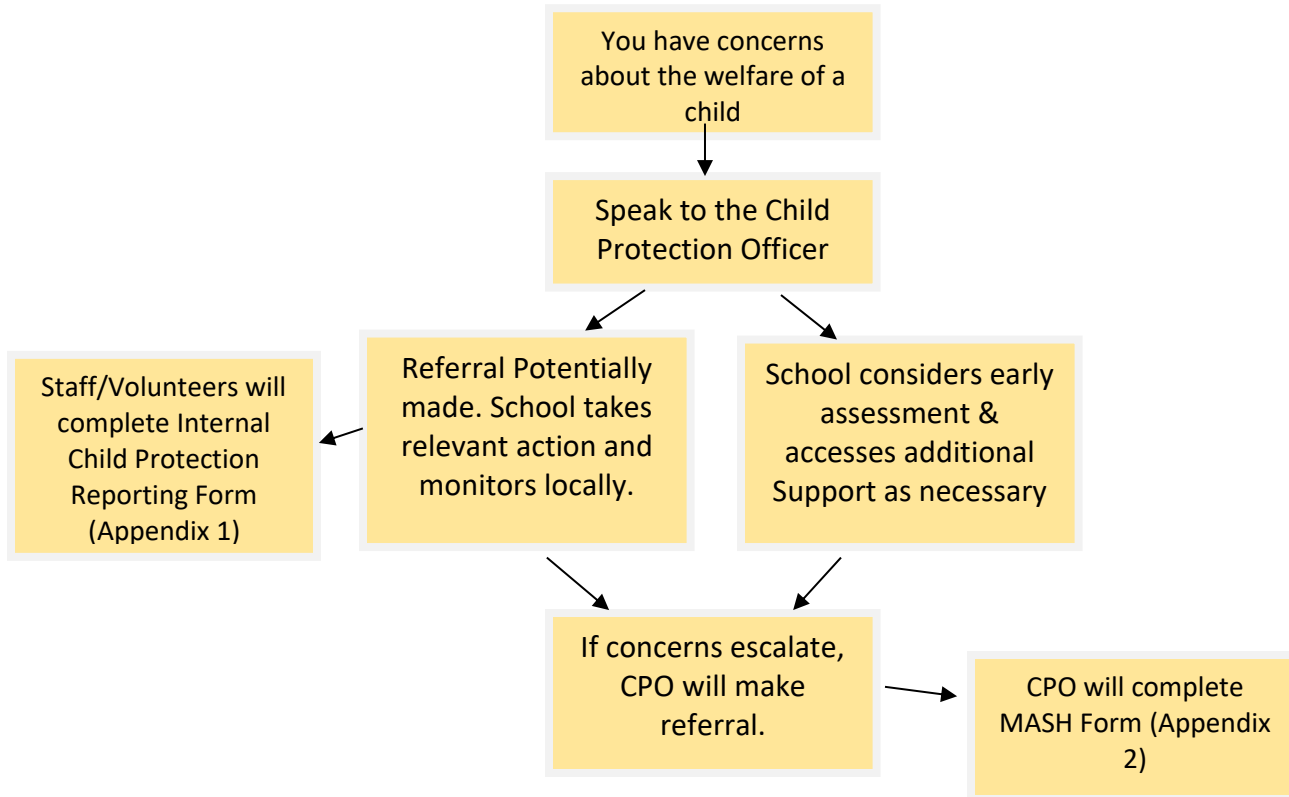
- If the allegation threshold is met, a strategy meeting will be held by the appropriate persons.
- Relevant information is shared, risks to child / children are considered and appropriate action agreed – e.g. child protection and other enquires, disciplinary measures or criminal proceedings,
- A record of the meeting will be made, and regular reviews will take place until a conclusion / verdict is made.



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Figure 1: Procedure if you have concerns about a child's welfare but who is not in imminent danger.



See Appendix 1 (Internal Child Protection Reporting Form: Mandatory for Staff to complete)



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Figure 2: Procedure for Reporting Suspicions/Disclosure of Child Abuse/Neglect

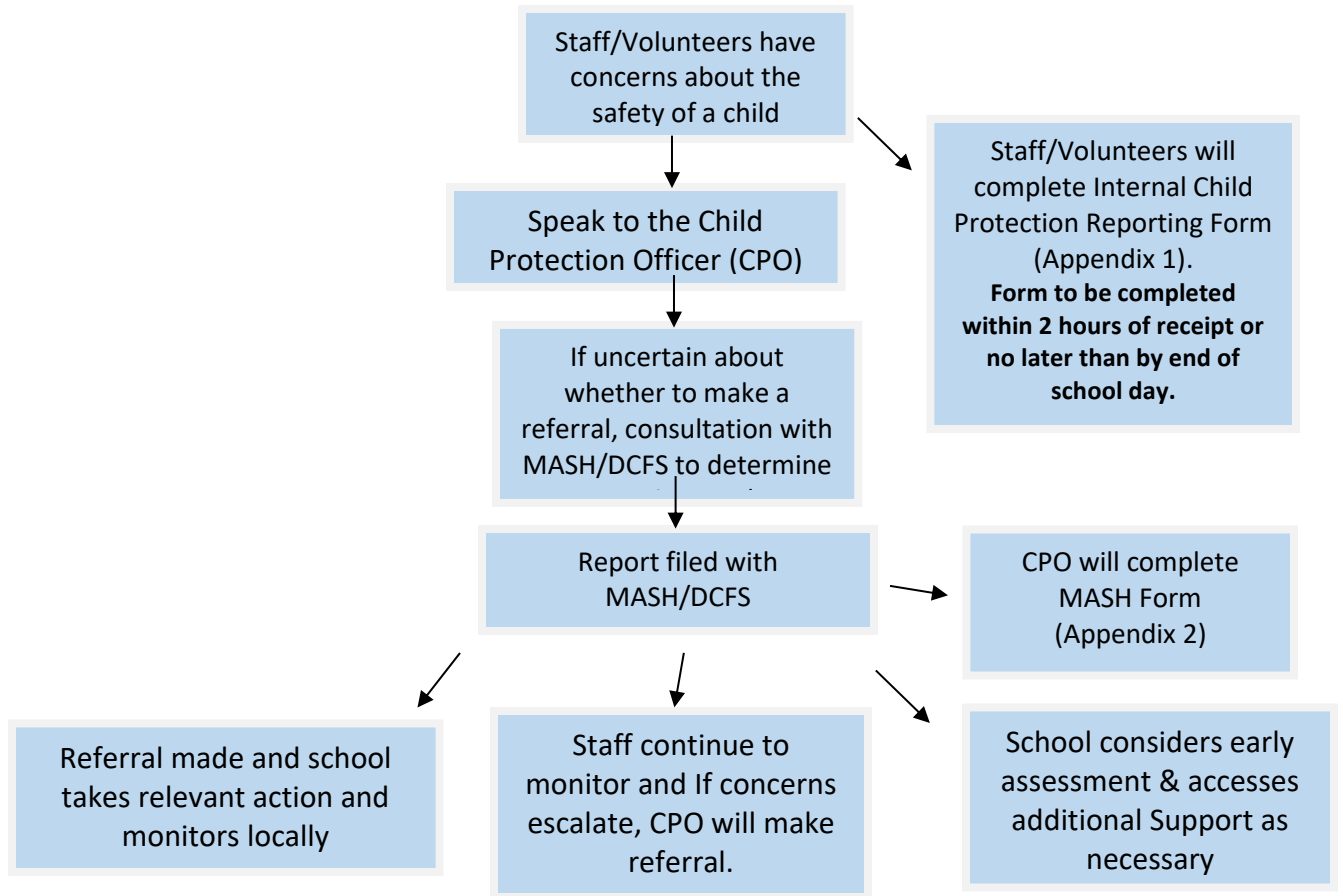
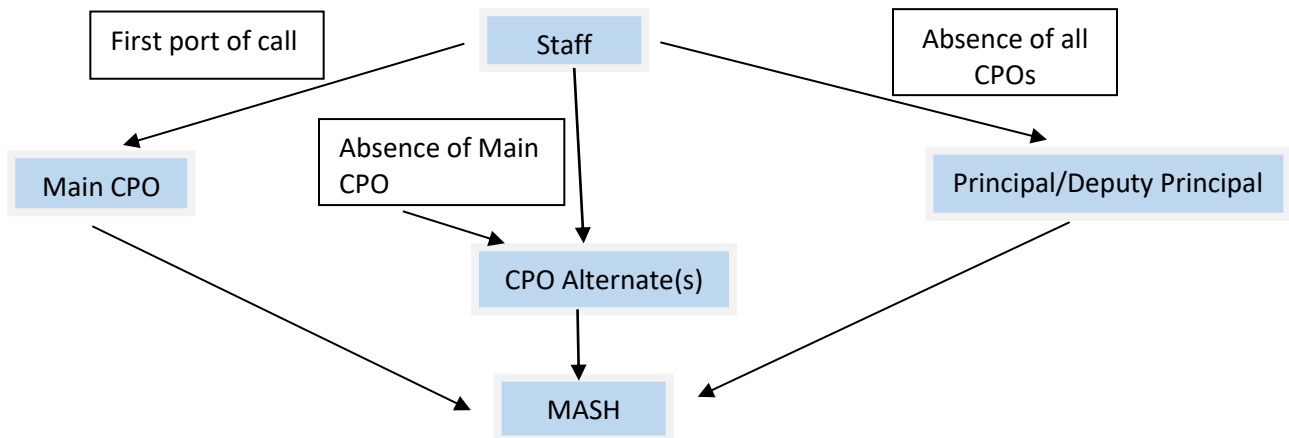


Figure 3: Channels for Reporting Suspicions/Disclosure of Child Abuse/Neglect Internally





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RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL AFTER REFERRING CASES OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- Following any report of suspected child abuse/neglect, the School Counsellor will assume a role of student support and advocacy as required. Governors, school leaders, staff and volunteers must cooperate with MASH throughout any investigation.
- Should MASH need to interview a child at Cayman Prep and High School, it is not the school's responsibility to inform parents of the interview; however, the subject of parent notification will be discussed with MASH and a decision taken in the best interest of the child. Cayman Prep and High School shall assist MASH by providing an appropriate interview space and arranging discreetly for the student to be interviewed. MASH may request that a school employee be present during an interview to offer support to the student. If the worker/officer does not ask for student support, the school representative may make this request on behalf of the student.
- If it is necessary for MASH to remove the child from school during the investigation, the school shall comply with this request.
- Following investigation, an appropriate school representative will participate in MASH case conferences and liaise with MASH staff on behalf of the child as requested.
- All information related to suspected child abuse/neglect cases shall be treated confidentially. Cayman Prep and High School will provide a secure cabinet for the filing and maintaining of confidential information related to child abuse/neglect cases. No documentation related to child abuse/neglect reports or investigations shall appear within the student's cumulative folder.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The School acknowledges that child protection matters must be handled with sensitivity and strict confidentiality. Confidentiality will be maintained in all respects, including record keeping, except where disclosure is required by an investigatory agency, by law or made with the consent of those involved.

Child Protection and Reporting Policy Statement of Receipt and Agreement

I understand that as a person working with and/or providing services to children at Cayman Prep and High School, I am subject to a criminal background check. My signature confirms that I have read and understood the Child Protection and Reporting Policy, and that I agree to comply with the standards contained therein. I understand that any action that violates this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from the school.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____



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Appendix One

CPHS INTERNAL CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING FORM (FOR SCHOOL STAFF & VOLUNTEERS)

STATE THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE CURRENT INJURY, NEGLECT, OR ABUSE TO THE CHILD IN QUESTION AND CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE SUSPICION, WITNESSING OR DISCLOSURE OF THE ABUSE OR NEGLECT:

Click or tap here to enter text.

INFORMATION CONCERNING PREVIOUS INJURY, ABUSE OR NEGLECT EXPERIENCED BY THIS CHILD OR OTHER CHILDREN IN THIS FAMILY SITUATION, INCLUDING PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN, IF ANY:

Click or tap here to enter text.

STATE OTHER KNOWN INFORMATION THAT MAY BE HELPFUL IN ESTABLISHING THE CAUSE OF THE CHILD'S STATUS:

Click or tap here to enter text.

DATE: Click or tap to enter a date. NAME OF STAFF: Click or tap here to enter text. SIGNATURE: _____

- Document to be submitted to CPO within 2 hours of receipt but by no later than end of school day.
- Document to be sent to CPO (preferably School Counsellor) or if not available to one of the other CPO's and if not available to School Principal.
- Staff member reporting to keep a copy of this report for yourself in a confidential location.



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Appendix Two

MASH SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE REPORT FORM