

## G.G.S NOTES ON MANDATORY REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE

(TO BE READ BY STAFF IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE GGS POLICY ON MANDATORY REPORTING)

The Policy gives a basic framework for action.

From that policy, staff may have a number of concerns and/or questions.

### STEP 1

- a. Teachers need to keep notes to serve in the event of court proceedings.
- b. Teachers should not probe or ask leading questions of someone they expect is suffering child abuse. The matter will be thrown out in court if anyone has been seen to lead the child.
- c. Teachers are not the investigators. Decisions about whether to act on a report will be taken by the Child Protection Service.
- d. It should be recognised that Child Sexual Abuse is often committed by somebody outside the family unit, eg. Biological father.
- e. When considering reporting a child who may be at risk, remember that any concerns about etiquette should be overridden by a moral obligation to look after children.

### STEPS 2 & 3

The role of the Head of Campus is to give staff support in addressing fears of reporting. It is not to judge whether a report is warranted or not. Heads of Campus should determine from notifying staff what their actual fears are without making assumptions.

The following points are listed in this context:

- a. It is rare for a family to attack the notifier.  
(Most vent their anger towards the perpetrator)
- b. The matter may not be treated as urgently, or automatically, as staff might expect. The reality is that Health and Community Services is dramatically understaffed, and cases are prioritised by Case Workers. A reporting teacher may feel angry and let down after making a report. H & CS is legally based. Therefore only cases with sufficient evidence will be investigated. It is not up to staff to make sure there is enough evidence.
- c. Court appearances are likely to be rare. If they do occur, staff will have advance notice. Assistance in preparing for a court appearance can be arranged.