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## School Policy on Child Protection

The focus of this school's duty of care is the protection of children from abuse. The procedures followed must also be in accordance with all relevant legislation, and will take into account other appropriate practices and guidelines aimed at the protection of children. The school's policy and detailed procedures will be amended from time to time to take into account amendments to legislation and regulations.

This document sets out the school's policy in broad and general terms. Further information and advice can be gained from Rabbi Spielman and further detail can be found in the 'AIS Child Protection Policy Guidelines' as amended from time to time and from the various Acts and Regulations. References shown in brackets in this policy statement are to clauses in the 'AIS Child Protection Guidelines'.

1. As a member of staff of this school, you are required to report (Part 2 2.5 on page 16) to the Principal or to the Principal's nominee any situation where:
  - a) You are aware that there has been an allegation of child abuse; or
  - b) You have formed a belief on reasonable grounds (Part 1, cl.2.7 at page 8) that a child is in danger of being abused (Part 1, cl.2.2.2b at page 6) or
  - c) If a child is in need of care (Part 1, cl.2.2.3 at page 6).

It is important to realise that failure to report allegations of child sexual abuse or a suspicion of child sexual abuse of a child who is under 16 years of age, based on reasonable grounds, is an offence under Section 316 of the NSW Crimes Act.

2. You are not to investigate allegations or suspicions of abuse. Investigations must only be carried out by investigators specifically appointed for the purpose.
3. You are required to report any allegations or evidence of abuse only to the nominated person and discussion with others should be avoided or limited to persons in your privileged communication path (normal reporting line). Failure to limit your communication in this way will not only be a breach of this policy, but will result in your not being protected under the law from potential civil proceedings for defamation.
4. The Principal or the Principal's nominee will report any matter that has been notified, as required by the relevant legislation. You will be advised of the action taken. If it is decided that there are not 'reasonable grounds to suspect' abuse and consequently the matter is not going to be reported by the Principal, you, as the original notifier, will have an obligation under the legislation to report if you believe that reasonable grounds exist (Part 1, cl.2.4 & 2.5 at page 7 and 8).
5. If a student discloses abuse to you, you are obliged to report the disclosure as stated above but you must not investigate the matter. Guidelines for assisting a child who has disclosed abuse can be found in Part 2, clause 1.2 at page 13.

6. Investigation of allegations or evidence of abuse must only be carried out by appointed investigators (from DCS or elsewhere) whose duties will include informing parents or caregivers that a notification has been made. You should not make any contact with the parents or caregivers regarding the notification unless specifically authorised to do so.
7. You are required to confer with the Principal before responding to a request by DCS or any other officers to attend an interview with a child (victim). You cannot be required by DCS to attend such an interview (Part 2, cl.6.2 at page 21) and the pros and cons of attendance need to be carefully assessed before a decision is made.
8. You may be required to report in a detailed manner on any matter regarding child abuse about which you have notified or been notified. The confidentiality of such a report will be maintained unless otherwise required by a court order (Part 1, cl.2.8.3 at page 9). Information relating to any matter of child abuse is to be entered on the appropriate form (Part 5 of the AIS Guidelines).
9. Recent legislation requires that, to continue to be employed, you must give the school an assurance that you have not been found guilty of a sexual offence against the person of a student or a child [Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998].

The school places a very high priority on its efforts:

- To protect children in its care from abuse; and
- To protect staff from mischievous and false allegations.

Your compliance with the requirements of this policy will assist in the school's efforts to achieve these important objectives.