



**ST MARY'S SCHOOL AND RESIDENCE
FOR DEAF GIRLS**

And

**ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL AND RESIDENCE
FOR DEAF BOYS
CABRA**

**CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES
AND PROCEDURES**

JUNE 2008

~ Child Protection Policies and Procedures ~

PREFACE

In September 2006 the Trustees of the Catholic Institute for Deaf People commissioned a review of Child Protection Policies in St Mary's School and Residence for Deaf Girls, Cabra and St Joseph's School for Deaf Boys, Cabra. This review had resulted in the development of this set of Policies and Procedures which are designed to ensure the safety and well-being of children attending the schools and living in the residences while attending school. The policies and procedures will also ensure that concerns of pupils and parents are addressed promptly and properly. Recognising the needs of our deaf pupils, parents and staff a signed version of this document is available on the DVD attached to this document.

It is recognised that child protection needs to be viewed within the context of the total pastoral care of all the pupils and staff within the schools and residences and in order to ensure the harmonisation of approach a Joint Pastoral Care Committee is established between the Schools and the Residences which are separately managed.

Mrs. Regina O'Connell

Principal

St Mary's School for Deaf Girls

Mrs. Sylvia Nolan

Director of Care

St Mary's Residence for Deaf Girls

Mr. Val Quinn

Principal

St Joseph's School for Deaf Boys

Mr. Tim Wilson

Director of Care

St Joseph's Residence for Deaf Boys

MISSION STATEMENTS

ST MARY'S

Creating an environment to enable each student achieve
her full potential

SCHOOL

St Mary's School for Deaf Girls is under the trusteeship of the Catholic Institute for Deaf People. Inspired by the philosophy and traditions of the Dominican Sisters we endeavour to care for all our students, cherishing the uniqueness of each person in an atmosphere permeated by the Christian values of Truth, Justice and Peace.

St Mary's aims, in cooperation with parents, to enable each student to achieve her full potential physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually.

RESIDENCE

St Mary's Residence enables Deaf girls to receive a Christian education. The primary objective is to provide a home like environment that encourages and supports the physical, spiritual, social, emotional and moral development of each girl so that she may take her place in society as a mature and committed person. While girls of all religious denominations are admitted, the ethos of the residence is based on Catholic ideals.

MISSION STATEMENTS

ST JOSEPH'S

SCHOOL

The mission of St Joseph's School for Deaf Boys is to create a Christian, positive and supportive educational environment for all our students. Our aim is to enable students to develop their full potential and become independent, responsible and creative members of society.

RESIDENCE

Our overall aims are to create a Christian and homelike atmosphere in each house. To develop a rapport with each boy. To meet individual needs. To assist with educational needs. To develop social, interpersonal, self help, domestic, leisure and communication skills.

Various social skills: such as leadership, consideration and respect for others, the ability to share, tolerance and patience towards each other, are fostered through living in a group situation in society as a confident and well integrated member of the community.

~ Child Protection Policies and Procedures ~

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse is complicated and can take different forms, but usually consists of one or more of the following:

Neglect: Where a child's needs for food warmth, shelter, nurturance and safety are not provided, to the extent that the child suffers significant harm

Emotional abuse: Where a child's need for affection or approval and security are not being met and has not been met for some time by their parent or carer

Physical abuse: Where a child is assaulted or injured in some way that is deliberate

Sexual abuse: Where a child is used for the sexual gratification of an adult

**** More detailed definitions of abuse can be found in the publication
"Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children"
Department of Health and Children 1999 available on www.dohc.ie*

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RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT AND MANAGERS

The Board of Trustees and the Board of Management will:

- Ensure that there are clear procedures which teachers, care workers and other staff must follow where they suspect, or are alerted to, possible child abuse, including where a child discloses abuse;
- Designate a senior member of staff in both the school and the residence to have specific responsibility for child protection;
- Monitor the progress of children considered to be at risk;
- Promote in-service training for teachers care staff and other staff as well as members of Boards to ensure that they have a good working knowledge of child protection issues and procedures;
- Ensure there are clear written procedures in place concerning action to be taken where allegations are made against school or residence employees.

School and Residence Managers will:

- Plan, develop and implement an effective child protection programme;
- Have a written statement of these measures prepared and a copy available to parents;
- Monitor the effectiveness of the programme;
- Implement agreed reporting procedures;
- Plan and implement appropriate staff development and training programmes.

~ Child Protection Policies and Procedures ~

CHILD PROTECTION

Our Policy

St Mary's School and Residence for Deaf Girls and St Joseph's School and Residence for Deaf Boys fully recognise and accept their responsibilities for child protection.

Our policy applies to all staff, students on placements members of the Board of Trustees and the Board of Management, volunteers and contractors working in the school and residence. There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children;
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe;
- Developing, and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse;
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan;
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school and care staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school and residence will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried;
- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse;

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We will follow the procedures set out by the Department for Education and Science and the guidance issued by the Department of Health and Children to:

- Ensure we have a designated senior person in both the school and the residence for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role;
- Ensure we have a nominated member of the Board of Trustees and the Board of Management responsible for child protection;
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and the members of the Boards know the name of the designated senior persons responsible for child protection and are familiar with their role;
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection;
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and residence and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus;
- Notify the Health Services Executive if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan;
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences;
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately;
- Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations;
- Develop, and then follow, procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer;
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

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We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum;
- The school and residence ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued;
- The school and residence behaviour policies which are aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school and residence will ensure that each pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse to which they have been subjected to;
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, counselling services, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil subject to a child protection plan leaves, their child's social worker is informed.

~ Child Protection Policies and Procedures ~

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Our Policy

The school's and residence's employment procedures include a thorough checking of applicants' work histories, making personal contact with referees and past employers. Garda checks, where available, will be carried out.

Prior to appointment the school will

- Obtain satisfactory references from two people to include information on work history
- Verify the candidate's identity
- Obtain Garda, DES and HSE checks
- Verify the candidates qualifications and professional status

All checks will be

- Confirmed in writing
- Documented and retained on the personnel file; and
- Followed up where they are unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies in the information provided

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STAFF TRAINING

Our policy

The schools and residences are committed to maintaining and increasing staff awareness of how to prevent, recognise and respond to child abuse and neglect. The schools and residences will ensure that all staff attend at least one whole day workshop or training session annually relating to child abuse and neglect.

After appointment the school will provide an induction programme which will

- Provide training and information about the school's policies and procedures;
- Support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role for which they have engaged;
- Confirm the conduct expected of staff within the school;
- Provide opportunities for new staff to discuss any issues or concerns about their role and responsibilities; and
- Enable the person's manager or mentor to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.

As far as safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is concerned the induction programme will include information and written statements of:

- Policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting welfare e.g. child protection, anti bullying, anti racism, physical intervention/restraint, intimate care, internet safety and any local child protection/safeguarding procedures.
- Safe practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected of staff and pupils in the establishment;
- How and by whom any concerns about these issues should be raised; and
- Other relevant personnel procedures e.g disciplinary

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We are conscious of the need for continued awareness of safeguarding issues. We will do this by ensuring that all staff in the schools have appropriate training and induction so that they understand their roles and responsibilities and are confident in carrying them out. We will also ensure that staff, pupils and parents feel confident that they can raise issues/concerns about the safety or welfare of children, and that they will be listened to and taken seriously. The ethos of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and protecting staff will be supported by:

- A clear statement of the standards of behaviour and the boundaries of appropriate behaviour expected of staff and pupils that is understood and endorsed by all;
- Appropriate induction and training;
- Regular discussion and briefing of relevant issues; and including relevant material from the SPHE and RSE programmes in the curriculum.

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SUPERVISION

Our Policy

The schools and residences are committed to children's and young people's safety. To that end we will ensure that staff and visitors to the schools and residences are well supervised and visible in the activities they perform with children. This includes an open door policy, especially for private spaces where intimate caretaking of children is required.

Opportunities for staff and visitors to be alone with children are kept to a minimum. Except in an emergency, children are not taken from the school or residence without written parental approval. The schools and residences have established rules about the touching of children which are discussed with staff and other adults who have contact with children at the schools and in the residences.

All parents and visitors will be required to report to the reception offices on arrival and await approval to proceed to classrooms or living spaces. They will be accompanied as appropriate.

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EDUCATION FOR CHILD PROTECTION

Our Policy

The schools and residences believe that personal safety education for children and parents is important for the prevention of child abuse. We encourage parents to make use of education programmes in the community. We use the SPHE and RSE programmes with children. This carries the endorsement of the Department of Education and Science and of the Archbishop of Dublin, the Patron of the Schools. Regular training ensures that staff are comfortable about responding to questions and disclosures from children. The staff in the residences encourage discussion of the issues covered in these programmes after school hours.

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RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS

Our Policy

The staff encourage parents to visit the school and residence by appointment. Our child protection policies are available to all parents and prospective users of the schools. If parents have concerns about the treatment of a child or the behaviour of a member of staff or visitor, they are encouraged to make those concerns known to the Designated Liaison Person, Principal, or Director of Care who will ensure that the matter is investigated and that action is taken.

~ Child Protection Policies and Procedures ~

BULLYING AND YOUNG ABUSERS

Our Policy

Bullying is a highly distressing form of abuse and is not tolerated in our schools or residences. All staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring and will take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the victim and to discipline the bully. Parents of both the victim and the bully will be personally contacted immediately bullying behaviour is identified.

Any complaint by a parent that their child is or may be being bullied in the schools or the residences will be fully investigated by the designated person for child protection, and team action will be taken to protect the victim. This will usually include ensuring that another child or small group of children befriends and supports the child being bullied during the school day and if living in the residence during the evening. A parent making a complaint about bullying will have a personal response from the designated teacher within one week of making the complaint, indicating the investigation which has been carried out and the action being undertaken.

The sanctions taken against a pupil who bullies will depend on the seriousness of the case, but will include the loss of any privileges or position of responsibility held in the school. Their behaviour will be carefully monitored until staff are satisfied that the problem has stopped.

We recognise that it is important to distinguish between bullying and child abuse which is carried out by another child. Where the latter is suspected the appropriate child protection procedures will be followed for both the victim and the alleged abuser. Where any conflict of interest arises between the welfare of the suspected abuser and the that of the victim, the victim's welfare will take paramount importance.

If pupils bullying behaviour persists, the second stage will be to instigate the child protection procedures described in Appendix A

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RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Our Policy

The schools and residences will record observations, communications and impressions which cause concern. When abuse or neglect are suspected, voluntary and employed staff will consult with the Designated Liaison Person or the Principal who is committed to taking action and arranging consultation with the civil authorities i.e. the Health Service Executive and the Gardai. Where the school suspects that abuse has occurred or could occur and the child is unsafe we are fully committed to reporting the matter to the civil authorities.

If we suspect that an employed or voluntary worker or contractor has abused a child we will report the matter promptly to the Board of Trustees or the Board of Management of the school AND the civil authorities. The person against whom the allegation has been made will be immediately removed from any role in which they have any contact with pupils while the matter is under investigation. The detailed procedures to be followed are set out in Appendix A.

~ Child Protection Policies and Procedures ~

APPENDIX A

RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

OUR PROCEDURES

ABUSE OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL OR RESIDENCE

All our staff members have regular contact with children in the course of their work and accept the guiding principles in regard to reporting child abuse as set out in Children First. These are

- (i) The safety and wellbeing of the child or young person must take priority
 - (ii) Reports should be made without delay to the Health Service Executive
 - (iii) While the basis of concern must be established as comprehensively as possible, children and parents should not be interviewed in detail about the suspected abuse.
- If a child tells a teacher care worker or other member of school staff that a parent/carer or any other person is harming him/her, the person who receives the information will listen carefully and supportively. This applies where the child implies that he/she is at risk of being harmed by a parent/carer or any other person. It also applies if a parent/carer or any other person discloses that he/she has harmed or is at risk of harming a child.
 - The child or young person will not be interviewed formally;
 - The teacher or staff member will obtain only the necessary relevant facts.
 - The teacher or staff member will never promise confidentiality to a person making a disclosure and will explain why they are required to report the disclosure in a supportive way.
 - The discussion will be recorded accurately and the record will be kept.
 - The teacher, care worker or other staff member will then tell the Principal, Director or designated person who is responsible for reporting the matter to the local Health Service Executive or An Garda Síochána.
 - The Standard reporting Form contained in Appendix 1 of "Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures" issued by the Department of Education and Science in 2001 will be used for referral to the civil authorities.

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COMPLAINTS AGAINST SCHOOL STAFF

The following procedures will be followed where a complaint is made about possible abuse by a member of staff of the school. This term is used to include volunteers, students on placements and contractors.

A complaint or allegation may be made, in the context of child protection, about the conduct or activities of a member of staff of the school or the residence towards a child or children. If the complaint has not been made directly to the Principal or Director and she / he is not the subject of the complaint, it will be referred directly to her / him by the person to whom it was made.

To form a clearer view on the complaint, the Principal or Director may need to seek discreet preliminary clarification from the person making the complaint or giving the information or from others who may have relevant information. It is not however the responsibility of the school or residence to carry out investigations into suspected abuse, or make intensive enquiries of members of the child's family or other carers. The school or residence will not take action which would run counter to the investigations which may be conducted by the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána

Having satisfied herself / himself that a complaint has indeed been made, the Principal or Director will immediately:

- Inform the designated teacher or care worker (if he/she is not the subject of the complaint), who will initiate the record of the complaint;
- Consult, as a matter of urgency and in confidence, with the Director of Child Protection of the Archdiocese of Dublin as appropriate, to form an initial assessment as to whether or not there is sufficient substance in the complaint to warrant further action; and
- Advise the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees or the Board of Management of the school.

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Deciding what to do when such a complaint is made is a difficult and sensitive matter. The need to protect children is paramount, but the need to protect members of staff against unfounded, but nonetheless potentially damaging, allegations must be considered. The Director of Child Protection of the Archdiocese is experienced in dealing with such cases, and is available to give advice to any school facing these issues.

In the light of any advice taken, the Principal or Director of Care (where she / he is not the subject of the complaint), in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees or Board of Management, will decide that:

- Further clarification is required
- The allegation is apparently without substance, and no further action is necessary; or
- An immediate referral to the Health Service Executive and/or An Garda Síochána is warranted; or
- The allegation concerns inappropriate behaviour which needs to be considered under the disciplinary procedures.

The following are some general examples (by no means exhaustive) of the types of complaints or allegations, and/or circumstances, in which a decision falling within these categories may be made:

No further action: where the Principal or Director of Care is able to satisfy herself / himself immediately that it would have been impossible for the person complained of to have committed the alleged action or offence, for example where it was established that he/she was absent from the alleged location (perhaps on holiday abroad, hospitalised, on a training course or attending a conference) at the time when it is claimed the alleged offence took place; An immediate referral is warranted: where the Principal or Director of Care believes that it was possible for the alleged offence to have been carried out by the person against whom the allegation is made; and where the allegation is sufficiently detailed, and in particular, if it is substantiated (e.g. by an account from a third party, or by physical evidence), in such manner that the principal or director believes that the allegation may have substance. Clear, detailed allegations which give rise to concerns about possible physical abuse, or inappropriate sexual conduct, either verbal or physical, towards a child, whether or not corroborated, will always merit a referral. In particular, allegations of sexual abuse made by a child need to be investigated by the civil authorities. Children, particularly young children, rarely fabricate claims of sexual abuse, and in such cases the presumption will always be in favour of the protection of the child or children.

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The complaint will be addressed under the disciplinary procedures: where the complaint related to inappropriate teaching content or certain types of bullying behaviour by a teacher or other member of staff.

No further action

Where it is decided that no further action is necessary, the Principal or Director of Care will:

- Advise the member of staff concerned (where this has not already been done) that a complaint has been made and the nature of it; and also the fact that it is being considered to be without substance and no further action is being taken;
- Advise the Director of Child Protection in the Archdiocese as appropriate, of the decision taken; and
- Advise the complainant, in writing, of the action taken on foot of the complaint and its outcome, including information on other means of pursuing their complaint if they remain dissatisfied: for example, to the Chairperson of the Board of Management or the Board of Trustees including how he/she can be contacted through the school.

In these circumstances the Principal or Director of Care will consider whether the child may have been abused by someone else, and if necessary report the matter to the Health Service Executive for follow up; it may also be appropriate to consider counselling for the child and the member of staff concerned.

Record keeping

The Principal will place a brief record of the complaint on the file of the pupil concerned, indicating the nature of the complaint, when, and by whom and to whom it was made, and a short explanation why it was considered that no further action should be taken, together with any correspondence on the complaint. A copy of this information will also be placed on the personnel file of the accused member of staff.

A formal referral

Where the Principal or Director of Care decides that a formal referral of the complaint is necessary, she / he will ensure that the following are notified immediately:

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- The Health Service Executive or, especially where physical or sexual abuse is suspected or alleged, An Garda Síochána-na
- The Director of Child Protection in the Archdiocese.
- The Chairperson of the Board of Management or Board of Trustees who will bring the matter to the attention of the Board at the next available opportunity.

Precautionary suspension

An immediate decision will be necessary on whether the member of staff (teaching or non-teaching) who is the subject of the complaint or allegation will be suspended with pay as a precautionary measure. A member of the staff of a school or residence may be suspended by the Principal or Director of Care or by the Chairperson of the Board of Management or Board of Trustees. Precautionary suspension will not be automatic, and, depending on the circumstances of the case, some preliminary investigation by the Health Service Executive and/or An Garda Síochána may be necessary before a decision should properly be taken to suspend, even as a precautionary measure.

In all cases where the Principal or Director of Care has decided that a formal referral is warranted, the member of staff will be immediately removed from direct contact with children and will undertake non-contact duties; depending on the nature and severity of the allegation and the potential risk to children it may be necessary for the member of staff to be suspended immediately.

Where the suspension is implemented by the Principal, the Chairperson or, in his/her absence, the Vice-chairperson, will be informed immediately. All the members of the Board of Management will be informed of the suspension as soon as possible. Similar arrangements will apply to members of staff in the Residence.

In some cases the school or residence may be made aware of an allegation against a member of staff by the Health Service Executive or An Garda Síochána-na, to whom the allegation has been made directly. In any case where the Principal or Director of Care considers that a child or children may be at risk, or the Health Service Executive advise that the member of staff's continued presence in the school or residence would impede their investigation, the member of staff concerned will be suspended as a precautionary measure.

Once a decision has been taken to make a formal referral and that the member of staff will be suspended, he/she will be advised, in writing, of the nature of the allegation and the reasons for the precautionary suspension, and will be advised to seek professional advice before making any form of response. The right of a member of staff to consult with a recognised trade union representative will always be respected. Where the member of staff is informed orally of his /her suspension, written notification will follow as soon as possible.

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The person making the complaint (and the pupil's parent, where different) will be informed immediately, in writing, of the decision to make a formal referral and of the suspension of the member of staff concerned.

The Principal or Director of Care will take steps to ensure that he/she is kept informed of the progress by the investigating agency to which the referral was made. If an allegation is substantiated, the investigation may need to be widened to determine whether other children have been involved. The Health Service Executive and/or An Garda Síochána will advise how to manage information to parents, children and other staff.

Record keeping

Where a formal referral is made, the Principal or Director of Care will ensure that a detailed written record of the complaint, including dates and times is maintained. This will include:

- When, by whom and to whom the complaint was made;
- What supplementary evidence, if any, was offered, from whom, and its nature;
- Details of any physical injury noted;
- From whom advice was sought, and its nature;
- The decision taken and how, when, and by whom and to whom it was conveyed, and the reasons for it;
- By whom, to whom and when the referral was made; and
- A copy of any correspondence on the complaint.

This record will be signed and dated by the Principal or Director of Care, countersigned by the designated liaison person (where neither is the subject of the allegation) and retained in the school, on files of both the child and member of staff concerned; an entry will also be made on the School's/Residences' Record of Child Abuse Complaints (see below)

If, on foot of a subsequent investigation by one of the civil authorities, the member for staff concerned is totally exonerated, the record on the file of the member of staff will be expunged, and the entry in the School's/Residences' Record of Child Abuse Complaints deleted or struck through. The record on the child's file will be noted accordingly, and will stand until the child's twenty-first birthday, in case there should be subsequent complaints. In all other cases, the record on both the child's file and the staff member's file will be maintained indefinitely.

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Internal inquiries by the school

Once a formal referral is made, the civil authorities will conduct their own investigation in accordance with local child protection procedures. Early action by the school to establish the nature of the allegation and consideration of whether it should be investigated will be undertaken in such a way that it does not prejudice any subsequent action. In particular, there will be no interference with evidence. Any investigation by An Garda Síochána or the Health Service Executive will take priority over internal inquiries by the school or residence. Normally any internal inquiries will be held in abeyance pending the outcome of the external investigation.

Complaints to be pursued under disciplinary procedures

A complaint may be made in the context of child protection about the conduct or behaviour of a member of staff towards a pupil or pupils which, in the opinion of the Principal or Director of Care, does not warrant a formal referral as a child protection matter but nevertheless warrants pursuit as a disciplinary matter. In considering such cases the Principal or Director of Care will take into account:

- Whether the behaviour complained of goes beyond the actions and conduct which could reasonably be expected of a teacher in encouraging pupils to learn, or care worker in preparing a child for adult life; and
- Whether the behaviour complained of exceeds what should be properly pursued as a disciplinary matter and does, in fact, constitute abuse, in which the appropriate child protection procedures should be instituted.

Where the Principal or Director of Care takes the view that the behaviour complained of should be pursued as a disciplinary matter, the disciplinary procedures agreed with trade unions will be followed, but in addition the Principal or Director of Care will ensure that details of the complaint and the disciplinary sanction, including dates and details of all spoken communications and copies of all correspondence, are maintained on the file of both the member of staff and of the child or children, concerned for a period of 5 years, and a summary entered in the school's Record of Child Abuse Complaints. (It should be noted that this recording procedure in disciplinary cases applies only to those cases raised in the context of child protection). As soon as possible after the decision is taken, the complainant will be informed that the complaint is being pursued under disciplinary procedures, and he/she will be kept regularly informed of the proceedings and the result, including the sanction taken, as appropriate.

~ Child Protection Policies and Procedures ~

Complaints which do not result in a conviction

For a variety of reasons, a complaint against a member of staff referred to one of the civil authorities may not result in a prosecution, or a prosecution in pursuit of a complaint which is referred to An Garda Síochána-na or the Health Service Executive may not result in a conviction, even when the school believes the evidence against the member of staff is strong and he/she represents a risk to a child or children. We are aware that in such cases it remains open to us to pursue disciplinary proceedings against the member of staff concerned, and that the burden of proof is less stringent in employment law than in criminal law. The school will seek advice from the civil authorities and their legal advisers in such cases. If the member of staff is subsequently dismissed, the Board of Management will convey this in writing to the Department of Education and Science for consideration as to whether his/her future employment as a teacher should be restricted.

Complaint against the Principal/Director of Care

Where a member of staff receives a complaint concerning possible child abuse by the Principal or Director of Care all aspects of the abuse procedures against a member of staff will be followed, save that the role set out above for the Principal will be exercised by the Chairperson of the Board of Management or Board of Trustees, in whom the power to suspend is vested. The legal advisers will be immediately consulted in any such case.

Anonymous Information

The school may receive an anonymous letter or telephone call alleging abuse either by someone outside the school or a member of staff. In such cases the Principal or Director of Care will consider carefully whether the allegation may have substance: as in the case of information from a named source, the impetus for action should be a potential risk to children. If the Principal or Director of Care believes that the allegation may have substance, she / he will ensure that it is referred immediately to the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána. Again if he/she is unsure about the appropriate course of action, or unsubstantiated anonymous information is received which the Principal believes to be malicious or mischievous, the Director of Child Protection in the Archdiocese will be able to offer advice, as will the Health Service Executive or An Garda Síochána-na. If referral is made, the procedures above will be followed on the same basis as a complaint from a named source, including recording arrangements.

~ Child Protection Policies and Procedures ~

APPENDIX B

RELATED POLICIES (ST MARY'S)

1. Guidelines for Staff on Keeping and Auditing Child Protection Records
2. Substance Abuse Policy
3. Guidelines for Student Teachers in St Mary's School for Deaf Girls (Post Primary)
4. Policy Document on the Administration of Prescribed Medicines
5. Guidelines for Educational Outings/Field Trips
6. Supervision
7. Safety Statement
8. Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) Policy Statement
9. Enrolments/Admissions Policy
10. Policy on Release of Student Files
11. Code of Conduct for Pupils
12. Bullying: Policy and Procedures
13. CIDP Employment policies and procedures

NB THESE POLICIES ARE AVAILABLE SEPARATELY

~ Child Protection Policies and Procedures ~

APPENDIX C

RELATED POLICIES (ST JOSEPH'S)

1. Guidelines for Staff on Keeping and Auditing Child Protection Records
2. Substance Abuse Policy
3. Policy Document on the Administration of Prescribed Medicines
4. Guidelines for Educational Outings/Field Trips
5. Safety Statement
6. Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) Policy Statement
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NB THESE POLICIES ARE AVAILABLE SEPARATELY

NOTES