



REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

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**Context:**

*The Child, Family and Community Service Act* (Section 14) delineates every person's responsibility to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Ministry of Children and Family Development. The Board is responsible for the safety of all students and supports the proper reporting of any harm to a student.

**Policy Statement:**

The Board is responsible for the safety of all students and supports the proper reporting of any harm to a student while in the care of School District 69.

**Guidelines:**

1. The Board requires that all staff be supported in identifying and responding appropriately to any signs and/or symptoms of child abuse or neglect.
2. The Board will provide, annual review, support and materials to staff in order to facilitate reporting.
3. The Board expects all staff to understand and use the information provided in the British Columbia Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect – For Service Providers, and/or Responding to Child Welfare Concerns as well as the Administrative Procedures for this policy to guide and assist in reporting.

**References:**

- Administrative Procedures to Board Policy 706: Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect
- Child, Family and Community Service Act (Starting at section 14)  
[https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/consol30/consol30/96046\\_01#section14](https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/consol30/consol30/96046_01#section14)
- B.C. Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect – For Service Providers
- [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/public-safety/protecting-children/childabusepreventionhandbook\\_serviceprovider.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/public-safety/protecting-children/childabusepreventionhandbook_serviceprovider.pdf)
- Responding to Child Welfare Concerns [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/public-safety/protecting-children/child\\_abuse\\_prevention\\_handbook-general\\_public\\_booklet.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/public-safety/protecting-children/child_abuse_prevention_handbook-general_public_booklet.pdf)
- District 69 Tri-lateral Protocol

**Dates of Adoption/Amendments:**

Adopted: 1980.01.23:

Amended: 1985.07.03: 1987.11.25: 1989.01.25: 1991.02.12: 1996.06.18: 2001.02.27:  
Interim Revision September 2010: 2017.01.24: **2022.04.26**



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES TO BOARD POLICY 706

REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

**Purpose**

*The Child, Family and Community Service Act* requires anyone who has reason to believe that a child has been or is likely to be at risk has a legal duty to make a report to a child welfare worker or directly to the police if a child is in immediate danger.

The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) has the lead responsibility for responding to suspected child abuse and neglect. It also delegates authority for child protection and family support to Aboriginal Child and Family Services Agencies, which provide services to their communities. Police also play a role in responding to suspected child abuse and neglect if it is believed that a child is in immediate danger, or if a criminal offence against a child is suspected.

The Board recognizes the need to protect the personal and physical well-being of students. The role of Qualicum School District Staff is to be aware of, and alert to, signs and symptoms of possible child abuse or neglect – and to respond appropriately if there are concerns about a child's safety or well-being. It is important to ensure that we provide a collaborative response to incidents of suspected child abuse and neglect.

**Training and Review**

New employees will be informed of the administrative procedures regarding reporting suspected child abuse and neglect as part of their orientation to the district. In addition, principals will review this document with all staff (e.g. teachers, education assistants, custodians) at the beginning of each school year with the assistance of the school counselors if requested.

Volunteers and other itinerant staff (e.g. teachers on call) in the schools will be provided with a copy of this administrative procedure for their reference.

**DUTY TO REPORT**

Under *the Child, Family, and Community Services Act*, the legal duty to report is the responsibility of every individual. Any person who has reason to believe that a child needs protection, has a duty to report directly to a Child Protection Social Worker at the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

In this context, **reason to believe** means that, based on what you have seen, or information you have, you believe a child could be at risk. If you are unsure about whether a report should be made or have questions around reporting a case, contact a Child Protection Social Worker to seek further advice.

Informing any other agency or person (e.g. principal or counsellor), does not discharge your legal duty to report directly to a Child Protection Social Worker. The legal duty to report overrides any duty of confidentiality, except a solicitor-client relationship or where provisions of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* apply.



### **When Protection Is Needed**

Any child under the age of 19 is in need of protection when child abuse and/or neglect are suspected. Child abuse and neglect means physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation, negligent treatment or maltreatment as a result of an act or omission by a person who is responsible for the child's care (e.g. parent/caregiver, supervisor, or legal guardian).

### **Child abuse includes the following:**

**Physical Abuse** – a deliberate act of physical force or action that results in or is likely to result in physical harm to a child that exceeds what could be considered reasonable discipline.

**Sexual Abuse and Exploitation** – when a child is used or likely to be used for the sexual gratification of another person. It may include any behaviour of a sexual nature towards a child.

**Emotional Abuse** – may occur separately from or along with other forms of abuse and neglect and involves acts or omissions that are likely to have serious, negative emotional impacts.

**Neglect** – the failure to provide for the child's basic needs (e.g. physical, emotional, medical) that results in or is likely to result in harm to the child.

## **PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

### **Completing a Report**

Staff must make a report when there is any reason to believe that a child has been or is likely to be abused or neglected, and that the parent/caregiver is unwilling or unable to protect the child. If a child is in immediate danger, call 911 for local police assistance.

If the suspected abuser is a parent/caregiver, student, school district employee, or adult in the community report the incident to MCFD at 1- 800-663-9122 (any time of the day or night, 24 hours a day 7 days a week).

Inform the Principal that a report has been filed. The Principal will inform the Superintendent that a report has been made to the MCFD.

Obtain and complete a copy of the confidential **Report of Suspected Abuse** form from the Principal. Return a copy to the Principal for safekeeping. A second copy is to be placed in an envelope marked Confidential and delivered to the Board Office, to the Superintendent's attention. Do not place the child's name on the outside of the envelope.

If the suspected abuser is a District employee, inform the Principal of the suspected abuse after the report has been made. The Principal will inform the Superintendent. The Superintendent will work with the appropriate authorities under the terms of the **District 69 Tri-Lateral Protocol** signed with the RCMP and MCFD.



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES TO BOARD POLICY 706

REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

**REMINDERS**

No communication is to be made with a suspected abuser. This is the responsibility of the MCFD child welfare worker and/or police.

Schools shall provide a private space where an MCFD child welfare worker can interview children.

It is the responsibility of the Ministry of Children and Family Development and the police to investigate and to inform the parents/caregivers and victims of their concerns. Schools are to direct any inquiries back to these agencies. Schools are not to discuss or release information to any other individuals.

In reporting incidents of suspected child abuse or neglect, staff will be guided by the provisions of the *Child, Family and Community Services Act* procedures described in the *British Columbia Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect - For Service Providers*.

**References:**

- Board Policy 706: Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect
- The B.C. Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect –For Service Providers (June 2017) [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/public-safety/protecting-children/childabusepreventionhandbook\\_serviceprovider.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/public-safety/protecting-children/childabusepreventionhandbook_serviceprovider.pdf)
- Responding to Child Welfare Concerns – Your Role in Knowing When and What to Report (March 2017) [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/public-safety/protecting-children/childabusepreventionhandbook\\_generalpublicbooklet.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/public-safety/protecting-children/childabusepreventionhandbook_generalpublicbooklet.pdf)
- Child, Family and Community Services Act
- District 69 Tri-Lateral Protocol

**Dates of Adoption/Amendments:**

Adopted: 1980.01.23:

Amended: 1985.07.03: 1987.11.25: 1989.01.25: 1991.02.12: 1996.06.18: 2001.02.27: Interim  
Revision September 2010: 2017.01.24: **2022.04.26**

**QUALICUM SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT FORM**

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**CONFIDENTIAL**

**School Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE PRINT AND PROVIDE DETAILS**

**1. PERSON MAKING THE VERBAL REPORT TO THE MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT (MCFD)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. RECORD OF THE VERBAL REPORT TO MCFD**

Date and time of verbal report: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person to whom you reported: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. STUDENT INFORMATION – COLLECT DATA FROM VERIFICATION SHEET**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth (d/m/y): \_\_\_\_\_

Home address where student currently lives: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Classroom or homeroom teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and address of person(s) who has legal custody of the child at the time of report: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Needs, if any, including any barriers to communication: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Sibling names, ages and schools, if known: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**QUALICUM SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT FORM**

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4. INFORMATION FROM THE STUDENT'S DISCLOSURE OR YOUR REASONS TO BELIEVE THE STUDENT HAS BEEN OR IS LIKELY TO BE IN NEED OF PROTECTION (CONVERSATION, EVENTS, OBSERVATIONS OR CIRCUMSTANCES): ATTACH ANOTHER SHEET IF NECESSARY. (*FOCUS ON FACTUAL INFORMATION*)

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Attach the child's writing, drawing, or artwork that supports this report.  
Sign and date these.

5. DOCUMENT ANY INFORMATION THE CHILD PROTECTION WORKER SHARED WITH YOU.

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6. WERE THE POLICE INVOLVED IN THE INVESTIGATIONS? Yes: \_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_

7. YOUR SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

8. **RETURN A COPY OF THIS FORM TO THE PRINCIPAL FOR SAFEKEEPING. SEAL THE ORIGINAL COPY OF ALL INFORMATION IN AN ENVELOPE. DATE, SIGN, MARK IT 'CONFIDENTIAL TO THE ATTENTION OF THE EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT'. PROVIDE TO THE EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT OF THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT AT THE SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE. IT WILL BE FILED CONFIDENTIALLY.**

**DO NOT PLACE IN STUDENT FILE.**

# DISTRICT 69 TRILATERAL PROTOCOL

## Purpose

This protocol is intended to be a companion document to the provincial *"Template for Developing Trilateral Protocols for Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect"* between the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Attorney General Representation from the RCMP (April 1999). The definition of various terms included in this protocol are contained in the above document as well as the Child, Family and Community Services Act (CFCSA – provided below), The B.C. Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect and Dealing with Children's Problems of Sexual Behaviour in Elementary Schools (BC Ministry of Education, 1999). These documents are also more detailed sources of information on this topic.

► The purpose of the protocol is to clarify the roles of the Parties where the abuse or neglect of a student occurs or is alleged to have occurred in the following situations:

- In the home environment
- By school personnel
- By other children in the school; or
- By other adults outside the child's home

The protocol covers the three primary stages of three-way investigations when MCFD, the Superintendent of schools and the RCMP jointly respond to the maltreatment of students:

1. Reporting suspected child abuse and neglect
2. Investigating suspected child abuse and neglect
3. Information sharing

**\*\* Note:** With the effective date of this agreement the previous *"Protocols for Reporting and Investigating Child Abuse in the Parksville-Qualicum District (1987)"* will become obsolete. The MCFD-RCMP Protocol for Investigation of Child Abuse in the Parksville-Qualicum District (October 1998) remains in effect and covers joint investigations which **do not necessarily involve students**.

## Collaborative Decision Making

The goal of this protocol is to enhance *collaborative work practices* of the Parties. A cornerstone of collaboration involves **information sharing and joint planning**. The parties agree that the first step whenever information is received that a student may be maltreated is for representatives of the three Parties to conduct an initial meeting. The representatives will be the Superintendent, the Child Protection Team Leader and the Staff Sergeant (or their designates). The purpose of the initial meeting is to share relevant information about the allegations and make a plan for responding which clarifies the roles of the three parties as well as follow up and closure meetings.

## Debrief

All parties recognize the importance of debriefing after any incident where the Protocol has been invoked. Every time the Protocol is invoked members involved will meet to discuss the use of the Protocol and examine how effective the partnerships were and how improvements can be made. Information gathered from debriefing sessions should be kept by each agency to be discussed during the Protocol review process.

## Continuation of Investigations

The RCMP acknowledges the need for prompt investigations where school personnel and students are involved. The RCMP commits to investigations being continuous in matters of this nature and is prepared to ensure that matters will not wait for a specific RCMP member to be available. This means that files will be passed on to new members at shift change to ensure that matters are investigated as quickly as possible. The RCMP recognizes that it is imperative for the School District that matters involving the school be investigated as quickly as possible to ensure the safety of students and staff.

## Child, Family and Community Services Act

*The investigation of child protection concerns is conducted by the Ministry of Children and Family Development and/or the police. When there is uncertainty whether a report should be made, the Ministry of Children and Family Development should be called for advice. School personnel are advised to make a record of the time, contact and nature of child protection calls made to the Ministry.*

\* Section 13 and 14 of the Child, Family and Community Services Act are the legal guidelines to be followed regarding the protection of children \*

## Protection of Children (SECTION 13)

1. Protection of the child is required in the following circumstances if:

- a) the child has been, or is likely to be, physically harmed by the child's parent;
- b) the child has been, or is likely to be, sexually abused or exploited by the child's parent;



- c) the child has been, or is likely to be, physically harmed, sexually abused or sexually exploited by another person and if the child's parent is unwilling or unable to protect the child;
- d) the child has been, or is likely to be, physically harmed because of neglect by the child's parent;
- e) the child is emotionally harmed by the parent's conduct;
- f) the child is deprived of necessary health care;
- g) the child's development is likely to be seriously impaired by a treatable condition and the child's parent refuses to provide consent to treatment;
- h) the child's parent is unable or unwilling to care for the child and has not made adequate provision for the child's care;
- i) the child is or has been absent from home in circumstances that endanger the child's safety or well being;
- j) the child's parent is dead and adequate provision has not been made for the child's care;
- k) the child has been abandoned and adequate provision has not been made for the child's care.

For the purpose of subsection [1] (b) and (c) and section 14 [1] (a) but without limiting the meaning of "sexually abused" or "sexually exploited", a child has been or is likely to be sexually abused or sexually exploited if the child has been, or is likely to be,

- a) encouraged or helped to engage in prostitution, or
- b) coerced or inveigled into engaging in prostitution.

2. A child is considered to be emotionally harmed if the child demonstrates severe: anxiety, withdrawal, or self destructive or aggressive behaviour.

## **Duty to Report Need for Protection (SECTION 14)**

1. A person who has reason to believe that a child:
  - a) has been, or is likely to be, physically harmed, sexually abused or sexually exploited by a parent or other person, or
  - b) needs protection under section 13 [1] (d) to (k) **MUST** promptly report the matter to a director of the Ministry of Children and Family development or a person designated by a director.

A person who does not comply with this statutory obligation or knowingly reports false information commits an offence and is liable for a fine of up to \$10,000 or to imprisonment for up to 6 months or to both. Employees shall also be advised that no action will lie against them for making a report unless it is made maliciously or without reasonable grounds for the belief.

## **Reporting Issues**

1. Statements made to school employees should be recorded in the child's own words. School employees, while offering support should refrain from interviewing the child after receiving the child's first disclosure. Investigations and interviews will be conducted by the Ministry of Children and Family Development and/or the police.
2. Staff has not discharged their responsibility to report until they have reported to a director (e.g. a social worker within the Ministry of Children and Family Development). Consultation with the school administrator is recommended; however, this does not satisfy the requirements to report to MCFD. The details of all reports must be treated confidentially.

## **Where to Report in District 69**

- Ministry of Children and Family Development (250) 954-4737
- After Hours (250) 310-1234


## Trilateral Protocol Agreement

Ministry of Children and Family Development / Royal Canadian Mounted Police /  
School District 69

**Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect**  
Parksville / Qualicum

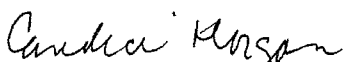
Between:

Ministry of Children and Family Development as represented by the  
Community Services Manager

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Noelle Philp  
Community Services Manager Cowichan / Oceanside


And

Board of Education  
Superintendent of Schools

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Candice Morgan for the  
Board of Education Parksville / Qualicum (School District 69)

And

Royal Canadian Mounted Police  
Staff Sergeant

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Hunter for the  
RCMP Oceanside Detachment