

# SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 69 (QUALICUM)

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

### REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Page 1 of 5

#### **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 Child 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 SD69 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 Child 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.

# SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 69 (QUALICUM)

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

### REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Page 2 of 5

#### 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, 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 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, care giver, 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.

# SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 69 (QUALICUM)

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

### REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Page 3 of 5

#### 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 Child and Family Development and the police to investigate and to inform the parents 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 7140: Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect*
- *The B.C. Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect –For Service Providers (January 2016)* [http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/public-safety/protecting-children/childabusepreventionhandbook\\_serviceprovider.pdf](http://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* [https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sco/resourcedocs/child\\_welfare\\_your\\_role.pdf](https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sco/resourcedocs/child_welfare_your_role.pdf)
- *Child, Family and Community Services Act*
- *District 69 Tri-Lateral Protocol*

**SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 69 (QUALICUM)**

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

**CONFIDENTIAL**

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

**PLEASE PRINT AND PROVIDE DETAILS**

**1. PERSON MAKING THE VERBAL REPORT TO THE MINISTRY OF CHILD 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: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 69 (QUALICUM)

REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT FORM

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 SUPERINTENDENT' AT THE SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE. IT WILL BE FILED CONFIDENTIALLY.

DO NOT PLACE IN STUDENT FILE.