

Good Shepherd Preschools Singapore

Child Safeguarding Policy

1. Context

Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to protect children from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with the staff, the programs and activities of Good Shepherd Preschools.

What is safeguarding?

The Good Shepherd Preschools subscribes to the Keeping Children Safe's definition of safeguarding:

Child safeguarding is the responsibility that organizations have to make sure their staff, operations, and programs do no harm to children, that is, that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organization has about children's safety within the communities in which they work, are reported to the appropriate authorities¹.

"Do no harm" is a principle that has been used in the humanitarian sector but can equally be applied to the development field. It refers to an organization's responsibility to not harm children if they may be doing so inadvertently as a result of their organizational activities.

Child Safeguarding: the duty of care and responsibility of private and public organizations to adopt preventative and responsive systems, policies and practices to safeguard from harm and abuse all the children they come into direct and indirect contact within their day-to-day operations and work.

Scope of this Policy

This Policy applies to all staff members of Good Shepherd Preschools.

2. Prevention

2.1. Responsibilities of the School

The school will:

- a) Ensure that all staff members understand and commit to their responsibilities within this policy;
- b) Apply stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff members
- c) Respond to reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and in line with due process.

In addition, the schools will put in place a set of behavior protocols (Code of Conduct - Annex 1) to ensure that all staff members always behave appropriately with children.

2.2 Responsibilities of Staff Members

The following responsibilities apply at all times while you are engaged with work

As a staff member, you will:

- a. Support and uphold the school's Safeguarding Policy and all efforts the organization makes to protect children from harm;
- b. Meet all safeguarding responsibilities assigned to you.
- c. Treat all children with respect regardless of race, color, sex, language, religion, birth or other status.
- d. Not use language or behavior towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.
- e. Not use any computers, mobile phones, or video and digital cameras to exploit or harass children or to access child pornography through any medium
- f. Not administer any physical punishment or discipline of children
- g. Not subject any children to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect;
- h. Immediately report concerns or allegations of child abuse in accordance with appropriate procedures.

3. Reporting

How to report a safeguarding concern

Staff members who have a concern related to safeguarding should report it immediately to the Principal.

4. Response

The school will follow up any Child Safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations.

All staff members should be alert to signs of child abuse (Definition of Child Abuse, Appendix 2) that suggest a child is in danger and refer to the SOP for suspected child abuse (Appendix 3)

5. Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be maintained at all stages of the process of dealing with Child Safeguarding concerns. All information will be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis and will be kept secure at all times.

6. Breach of the Safeguarding Policy

All staff members have a responsibility to act consistently with this Child Safeguarding Policy and the expectations set out in this document.

Failure to comply with this policy and expectations may lead to serious disciplinary action or the termination of the employment.

Annexes

Annex 1

Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct

I, _____, being engaged by the Good Shepherd Preschools agree that I will:

1. Treat all children with respect regardless of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, disability, birth or other status.
2. Not use language or behavior towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.
3. Not use any computers, mobile phones, or video and digital cameras to exploit or harass children or to access child pornography through any medium.
4. Refrain from physical punishment or discipline of children (including my own children if any).
5. Immediately report concerns or allegations of child abuse in accordance with appropriate procedures.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I confirm that I have read and understood the school's Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct and confirm that I agree to adhere to the expectations and behavior outlined.

Name:

Position:

Signature:

Date:

Annex 2

Definitions of Abuse

Physical abuse

Includes, but is not limited to, hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, unlawful or inappropriate restraint and inappropriate physical sanctions.

Sexual abuse

Involves unwanted sexual activity or behavior that happens without consent or understanding. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. Sexual abuse also includes non-contact activities, such as involving the individual in looking at, including online and with mobile phones, or in the production of, pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Neglect

Is the persistent failure to meet basic needs such as food, warmth and medical care, or when there is a failure to prevent exposure to any kind of danger.

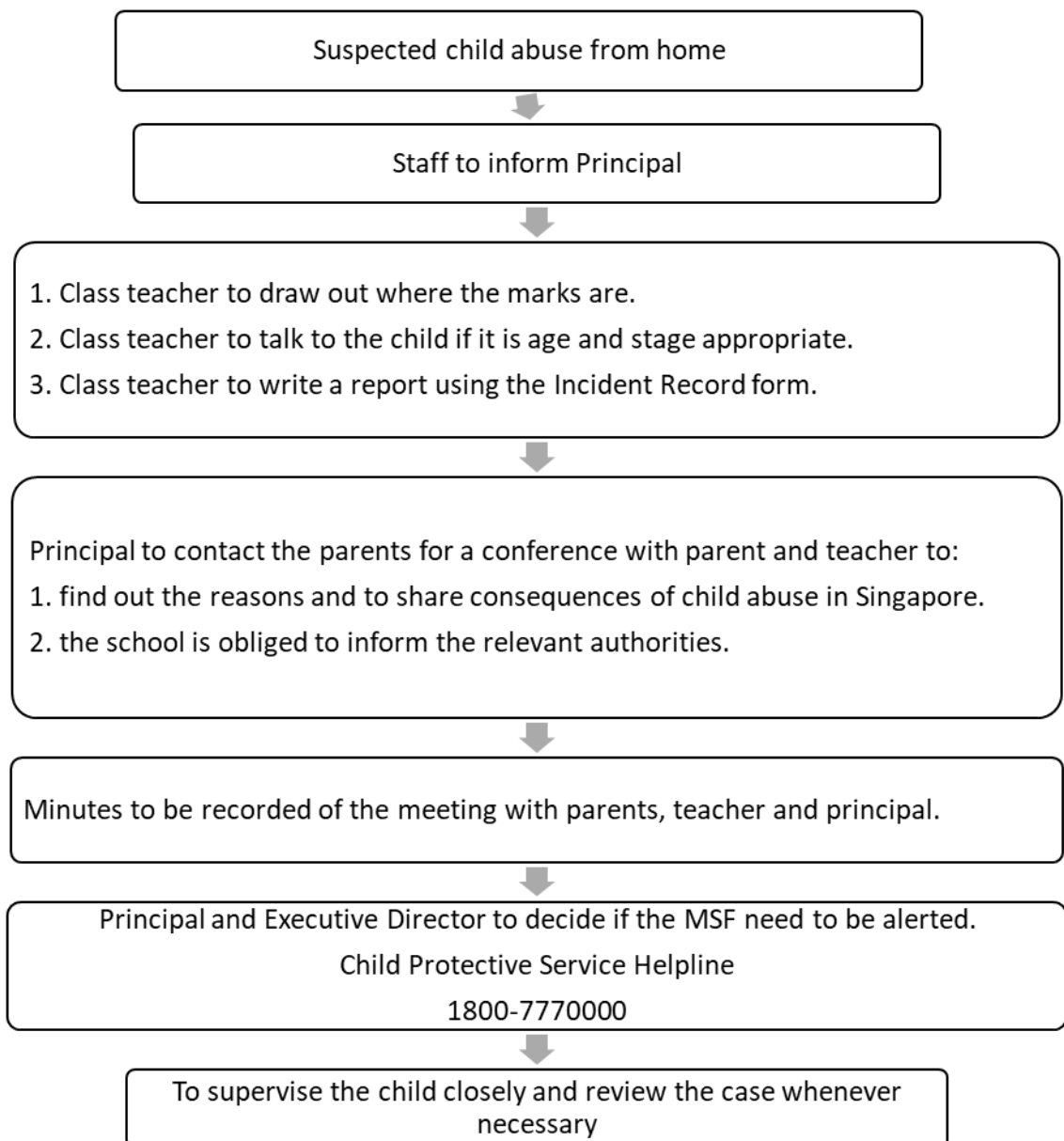
Emotional abuse

Involves harm done by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection, such as degrading punishments, threats, bullying, and not giving care and affection. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment, though it may occur alone.

Discriminatory abuse

Includes abuse based on an individual's race, gender, disability, faith, sexual orientation, or age; and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment or hate crime.

Suspected child abuse from Home

Physical Abuse from home (inclusive of physical abuse and neglect)

Suspected child abuse from school

Physical abuse by staff member

