

PROTECTIVE SERVICES/CHILD ABUSE

Background

Prairie South School Division requires all employees to concern themselves with the physical, social, and emotional well-being of each student. Abuse or neglect of children and youth must not be left unchecked by persons charged with the care of students.

The role and responsibility of persons in schools including principals, teachers, administrative assistants, educational assistants, caretakers, central office staff and others working in a school system is the duty to report reasonable suspicion that a child's physical, mental health or welfare has been, or may be, impacted by abuse or neglect.

Procedures

1. Reporting Children in Need of Protective Services

- 1.1 Principals are to familiarize themselves and their staffs with procedures and information regarding the reporting of children in the need of protective services as provided in the [Provincial Child Abuse Protocol 2017](#).
- 1.2 The duty to report reasonable suspicion that a child's physical, mental health or welfare has been, or may be, impacted by abuse is immediate and legal and must be reported to the Ministry of Social Services Child Protection Office, First Nations Child and Family Services Agency or police.
- 1.3 The duty to report is a personal duty and cannot be delegated to another individual.
- 1.4 After reporting to one of the above listed agencies, inform the principal that a report has been made to a child protection worker or police officer.
- 1.5 Do not investigate or ask leading questions of the child, the circumstances must be conveyed in the child's own words.
- 1.6 Cooperate with police and child protection workers by providing access to information and an opportunity to speak to the child as needed
- 1.7 Participate in case planning and observe the child's progress, including behavior, academic progress, emotional functioning and physical well being.
- 1.8 Maintain a written record of observations and/or discussions with, or relating to the child
- 1.9 Provide academic, social and emotional support to the child
- 1.10 Provide evidence and documentation in court proceedings.

2. Interviews of children at school by police/child protection services

- 2.1 It may be necessary for the child to be interviewed by a child protection worker or police in the school setting without parental/caregiver consent
- 2.2 Arrangements to interview a child at school will be directed to the school principal who will make the necessary arrangements for the confidential interview to occur
- 2.3 The child protection worker and/or police will determine who will be at the interview and will consider the child's support needs and comfort level. By being present at the interview, there is a possibility that the staff member may be subpoenaed to give testimony at a child protection hearing or any criminal proceedings.
- 2.4 A written confirmation may be provided to the school by the child protection worker and/or the police highlighting the meeting arrangements, acknowledging the assistance of the principal and indicating the general outcome of the investigation with respect to the child in the school setting. If written information is provided, it shall be retained in school files.

3. Cooperation with Youth Workers and Police

- 3.1 Interview and Interrogation
 - 3.1.1 Principals and teachers are to cooperate with the police when police officers find it necessary to interrogate students. All parties are to govern themselves in accordance with the *Youth Criminal Justice Act, 2002*.
 - 3.1.1.1 All requests by police for interviews or interrogation with students are to be directed to the principal. The principal may suggest the interview be held off school premises.
 - 3.1.1.2 Except by specific request to the contrary by police, the principal is to notify, if necessary, the parent or guardian in advance of the interview or interrogation.
 - 3.1.1.3 The principal is to arrange for any interviews or interrogation to be held in private. The principal or designate may be present for the interview if the student requests.
 - 3.1.1.4 If the police request to take a student from the school, the principal is to suggest that the officer contact the parent or guardian using the principal's telephone to inform them of the intended police action.
 - 3.1.1.5 However, the police will act as their duty directs. This may require the arrest and removal of the student from the school without giving prior notice to parents or guardians.
 - 3.1.1.6 In either event, the principal is to advise the parents or guardians of the police action as soon as is possible.

Reference: Section 175 of Education Act,
Section 12.1 of The Child and Family Services Act
Section 4.1 of The Emergency Protection for Victims of Child Sex Abuse and Exploitation Act Section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada
Saskatchewan Child Abuse Protocol 2017

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