

TOOLS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE

**CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY
FOR
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**



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CaSPA
Vision & Quality
IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

This booklet contains some tools to assist the school to implement the Child Safeguarding Policy. The policy is meant to compliment the school’s current policies on keeping children safe and the Codes-of-conduct for Staff and learners and is an extension of Standard 5 of the *Integrity in Ministry in Catholic Schools* document.

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1. CHECKLIST FOR MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH THE STANDARDS IN THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

This checklist is a tool to help schools measure whether the school is meeting the standards required to make children safe, and to help it plan improvement.

The questions below are designed to draw out the minimum requirements (criteria) for protecting children that the school should strive to meet. This checklist is a useful guide to monitor progress on the school's implementation of child protection standards and keeping children safe in the school environment.

This questionnaire should be answered at the beginning of the process so that a record is produced against which progress can be reviewed and measured at a later date.

The checklist requires assessment about whether the seven standards for child safeguarding are being followed.

Standard 1: Written Child Safeguarding Policy is in force at the school.

Standard 2: Procedures showing how to report and respond to any suspected or alleged child abuse are in place.

Standard 3: Policies and procedures to protect children from harm are in place.

Standard 4: Arrangements for the induction, ongoing training and education of staff are in place.

Standard 5: A variety of methods to communicate this Child Safeguarding Policy are in place.

Standard 6: Advice and support are available to those who need it.

Standard 7: Standards are made to work, and are regularly checked to see if they are working.

Read each statement and decide whether each statement is:

A: in place

B: Proposed

C: not in place

D: Date Completed

Tick the A, B, C or D box as appropriate.

GENERAL Children and the school		A In place	B proposed	C Not in place	D Date completed
1.	The school is very clear about its responsibility to protect children and makes this known to all who come into contact with it				
2.	The way the staff and other members of the school community behave towards children suggests that they are committed to protecting children from abuse.				
3.	There is good awareness of the rights of children and these are seen as a basis for child protection				
4.	The principal and senior staff make sure that children are listened to and consulted, and that their rights are met				
5.	The school makes it clear that all children have equal rights to protection				
5.	The school manages children's behaviour in ways which are non-violent and do not degrade or humiliate children.				

There is a written safeguarding policy at the school.		A In place	B proposed	C Not in place	D Date completed
1.	A clear written child protection policy is in place				
2.	The policy and arrangements are approved and endorsed by the SGB/BOG and school leadership team				
3.	All members of the school are obliged to comply with the policy and every staff member has signed that they know and understand the policy				
4.	All aspects and contexts of child protection work is addressed				
5.	There is a clear understanding of definitions of abuse				
5.	The policy is reviewed at least every three years and adapted when necessary				
7.	All current child protection concerns are reported to the civil authority immediately				

Policies and procedures showing how to report and respond to any suspected or alleged cases of child abuse.		A In place	B Proposed	C Not in place	D Date completed
1.	Clear written step-by-step procedures on action to take are in place				
2.	Procedures are in keeping with South African law and staff understand the legal obligation to report any case of child abuse				
3.	There is a designated person with clearly defined roles and responsibilities to handle cases of abuse				
4.	All staff know who the designated person is to whom they must report cases suspected/alleged abuse				
5.	There is a process for recording incidents, allegations or suspicions.				
6.	There is a process for dealing with complaints (made by adults or children) and a timescale for dealing with them				
7.	There is guidance on confidentiality which makes it clear that the protection of the child is paramount				
8.	All members of the school staff know the telephone number for the <i>Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences Unit (FCS)</i> in the area, or for Childline				

Policies and procedures to protect children from harm are in place.		A In place	B Proposed	C Not in place	D Date completed
1.	Policies and procedures are in place for the safe recruitment and assessment of personnel				
2.	The recruitment policy has been approved and endorsed by the School Management Team /SGB/ BoG				
3.	Guidance is provided on expected standards of adult behaviour towards children				
4.	Guidance is provided on expected behavior of children towards other children				
5.	Clear Codes-of-conduct are in place for staff and learners				
6.	There are clear ways to raise allegations or suspicions, confidentially if necessary, about unacceptable behaviour towards children				
7.	Processes are in place for dealing appropriately with children's unacceptable behaviour				
8.	There are guidelines on care for children with disabilities				
9.	Children are adequately supervised at all times including activities and playgrounds				
10.	There are guidelines re the use of IT cell phones, email, digital cameras, website, internet				
Implementation and training		A In place	B Proposed	C Not in place	D Date completed
1.	Staff and other members of the school community have been educated on how children will be kept safe				
2.	There is a written plan showing what steps will be taken to keep children safe				
3.	Training on child protection for all members of staff and volunteers takes place when people join the staff. This includes an introduction to the school's child protection policy and procedures				
4.	All members of staff and volunteers have signed a document acknowledging the child protection policy and standards in the school				
5.	All members of staff are provided with opportunities to learn about how to recognise and respond to concerns about child abuse				
6.	Regular ongoing training on how to keep children safe takes place				
7.	Work has been undertaken with the school community to agree on good practice, and there are expectations based on these standards				

A variety of methods ways to communicate the child safeguarding policy are in place		A In place	B Proposed	C Not in place	D Date received
1.	The Child Protection Policy is openly displayed and available to everyone				
2.	There are notices in public places displaying the fact that the school has a Child Safeguarding Policy				
3.	Children are made aware of their right to be safe from abuse and where to go for help and advice in relation to abuse, harassment and bullying				
4.	Everyone in the school knows which named staff member(s) have special responsibilities for keeping children safe and how to contact them				
5.	Contact details are readily available for local child protection resources and emergency medical help				
6.	Contacts are established at a national and/or local level with the relevant child protection/welfare agencies as appropriate				
Advice and support are available those who need it		A In place	B proposed	C Not in place	D Date received
1.	Those with special responsibility have access to specialist advice, support and information on child protection				
2.	Contact with sources of support and information at local/national levels is available				
3.	There is guidance on how to respond to a child suspected of having been abused				
4.	Information for those who have been abused on how to seek support is made known				
5.	There is support for those who are alleged to have abused in a way that does not compromise children's safety				
Standards are made to work, and are regularly checked to see if they are working.		A In place	B Proposed	C Not in place	D Date received
1.	Arrangements are in place to monitor compliance with child protection measures put in place by the school				
2.	All incidents, allegations of abuse and complaints are recorded and monitored				
3.	Policies and practices are reviewed at regular intervals, ideally at least every three years				
4.	Staff, children and parents/carers are consulted as part of a review of safeguarding policies and practices				
5.	There is an action plan for keeping children safe				
7.	There are human and financial resources for implementing the plan				

2. Procedures for recording allegations and suspicions of abuse

1	Using the dedicated form, create a child protection case file for every referral that includes a log of actions, and information received. Entries should be made as soon as possible after the event but before the end of the day. They must be timed, dated, and signed by the author.
2	Take possession of any written records made by any person in connection with the case, and place them in the Child Protection Case file.
3	Explain the procedures for addressing the allegations of abuse to the person who has raised the issue. Note that consent may not be required to make referrals to the authorities.
4	Ensure support structures are put in place to protect the victim. A support person may be appointed to accompany the victim and professional counselling may be offered. Keep the victim informed of what is happening as the investigation continues.
5	Inform the accused person of the details of the allegation, and record the content of his/her response. This record should be agreed with the person accused, and then signed and dated. If the person accused does not agree, then write your own notes for filing.
6	When the Designated Officer seeks advice from the Health Service or the Police whether to make a referral or not, he should keep a written record of the outcome of the consultation with the authorities.
7	Maintain a dialogue with the Investigating Officer or Social Worker to monitor the progress of the case. Details of contacts made should be recorded chronologically on the Child Protection Case file.
8	Ask in writing for an update from the health and police authorities about the outcome of their investigations.
9	Detailed records should be kept of the progress of the investigation and this should be supplied to the person accused to avoid leaving him/her 'in limbo'.
10	A secure location should be acquired in which all paper-based records created or received by the organisation are retained. This should only be accessible to assigned staff.

3. QUESTIONNAIRE RE TRAINING NEEDS

Who needs to be trained?	What training do they need?	How will we do those?	Priority High – 4 Low - 1	Resources/costs

4. RECORD KEEPING

It is very important to keep clear, written records of any incidence of abuse whether by an adult or another learner. Below is a suggested outline of a recording form. A copy of this form must be filed securely, preferably glued into a book with numbered pages. A copy should be given to the civil authority (i.e. police or registered social worker).

Child Safeguarding Recording Form

1. About the disclosure/concern

Date of disclosure/concern _____

Time of disclosure/concern _____

How was information received? (attached any written information to this form)

Telephone Letter Email In person

2. Details of person making disclosure/raising concern

Name _____

Address _____

Tel _____ Cell _____

Email _____

Relationship to child or alleged victim _____

3. Details of child or alleged victim

Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Address _____

Tel _____ Cell _____

Language (is interpreter/ signer needed) _____

Disability _____

Special needs _____

4. Parent/Guardian/Carer details (where appropriate)

Name _____

Address (if different from above) _____

Tel _____ Cell _____

Are they aware of the allegation, suspicion or complaint? Yes No

5. Details of alleged perpetrator

Name _____

Address _____

Tel _____ Cell _____

Relationship to child/ victim (*parent/teacher/learner etc*) _____

Position of authority over the child? _____

Address at time of incident(s) _____

Current contact with children if known (*teacher, in same school (learner), is on SGB/ BOG of school, runs youth activities etc*) _____

Any additional information _____

6. Details of concern, allegation or complaint (*Include dates / times and location the incident(s) occurred, witnesses, if known. Does the child /victim know this referral is being made?*)

7. Action taken

7.1 Has the matter been referred to civil authorities? Yes No

If yes, Date _____

Time _____

If no, explain why _____

Who was it referred to:

Name _____

Designation _____

Address _____

Tel _____ Email _____

Case Number _____

7.2 Has the matter been referred to the local education office (for Public Schools only)?

Yes No

If yes, Date _____ Time _____

If no, explain why _____

Who was it referred to:

Name _____

Designation _____

Address _____

Tel _____

Email _____

7.3 Has the matter been referred to a member of the SGB/BOG? Yes No

If yes, Date _____ Time _____

If no, explain why _____

Who was it referred to:

Name _____

Designation _____

Address _____

Tel _____

Email _____

7.4 Has the matter been referred to the school owner? Yes No

If yes, Date _____ Time _____

If no, explain why _____

Who was it referred to:

Name _____

Designation _____

Address _____

Tel _____

Email _____

8. Next Steps

What actions were agreed and by whom when the matter was referred onto civil / Church authority?

Are there any immediate child safety concerns? If so please record what they are and state what actions have been taken by whom to address them:

9. Designated person details:

Date form sent _____

10. Details of person completing the form

Name: _____

Tel _____ Cell _____ Email _____

Position in School _____

Form completed: Date _____ Time _____

Signed _____

5. DECLARATION FORM TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYEES OR VOLUNTEERS IN [NAME OF SCHOOL]

Confidential

The welfare of children and young people must be the paramount consideration.

(name of school) therefore requires that everyone working with or in the environment of the school or in positions or in places where any children may be harmed in any way or where children may be compromised in their safety in whatever manner or where any child may be subjected to any harm whether it be of a sexual, harassment or violent nature or in contravention of the school's code of good practice expected of all persons working within the school or working or rendering services where children may be involved, whether such children may be pupils of the school or not,

is hereby required to sign this form and which by their signature hereunder confirms that :

- The signatory hereof is fully acquainted with the legal requirements imposed on the school and its staff, pupils and all those affiliated to the school, to report any act or omission of a criminal nature relating to the above to the applicable authorities;
- The signatory hereof by their signature to this document waives all of his or her rights of privacy and confidentiality regarding any information that may be so required to be divulge by any person to the school governing body, to legal authorities or to any third party entitled to receive such information, arising out of any breach of what is stated hereinbefore on the part of the signatory or arising out of a complaint having been received of alleged contravention of what is stated above on the part of the signatory hereof;
- the signatory hereof hereby authorizes and permits the school to request and obtain any information with regard to the signatory hereof from any authority, whether it be from a former employer, school, church governing body, or from the South African Police to establish whether or not the signatory hereof has any adverse reporting or has been previously found guilty of misdemeanours relating to the aspects stated above or has been convicted of any criminal offences relating to the above, whether such person was convicted in South Africa or in a foreign country relating to the issues raised above;
- the signatory hereof by his/her signatory hereto undertakes to notify the school immediately he/she is convicted of any offence relating to the above whether such convictions occurred prior to signature hereof or hereafter and to provide full details of the offence/s the person has or is so convicted of immediately after signature hereto or immediately after the signatory hereto is so convicted;
- the signatory hereof hereby undertakes to advise the school's designated employee of any caution or binding over order or interdict relating to family violence or violence relating to any breaches of what is stated above or of breaches of the Domestic Violence Act or any amendments thereto that may give rise to interdicts being so issued against the signatory or may be applied for against the signatory.

Do you have any prosecutions pending or have you ever been convicted of any criminal offence/s committed against minors or disabled person/s or been subject of any Interdict having been granted against your or having been issued with a Binding over Order or been issued with a interdict in terms of the Domestic Violence Act or any amendment to such act (please tick).

Yes

No

If yes, please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s)

Date of offence: _____

Nature of offence:

Have you ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures or been asked to leave employment or voluntary activity due to inappropriate behaviour towards a child? (Please tick)

Yes

No

If yes, please give details including date(s) below:

Full name (print): _____

Any surname previously known by: _____

Address: _____

Date of birth: _____

Place of birth: _____

Declaration:

I understand that, if it is found that I have withheld information or included any false or misleading information above, I may be removed from my post whether paid or voluntary, without notice. I understand that the information will be kept securely by the School organisation.

I hereby declare the information I have provided is accurate.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

6. INQUIRY BY PERSON TO ESTABLISH IF HIS / HER NAME IS INCLUDED IN PART B OF NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION REGISTER (REGULATION 50(1)(b)) [SECTION 126(3) OF THE CHILDREN'S ACT, (No 38 OF 2005)]

TO: The Director-General
Department of Social Development
Private Bag X901
Pretoria
0001

Dear Sir / Madam

In terms of section 126(3) of the Children's Act, (No. 38 of 2005), I _____

_____ (full names and surname) wish

to enquire whether my name is included in Part B of the National Child Protection Register. A certified copy of one of the following documents is attached as verification of my identity.

1. IDENTIFYING DOCUMENTS:
<input type="checkbox"/> birth certificate (only if not in possession of identity document or passport)
<input type="checkbox"/> identity document
<input type="checkbox"/> passport
<input type="checkbox"/> other

In the event that my name has been included in Part B of the Register, kindly furnish reason why this was done. My personal details are:

2. CONTACT DETAILS:	
Postal address:	Physical address:
* Email:	
Telephone No:	* Cellular No:

(* - if applicable)

Please note that section 126 of the Act requires you to respond to this inquiry within 21 working days.

Yours sincerely

(Signature)

(Date)

7. Extract from ‘*Integrity in Ministry in Catholic Schools, Ethical Standards of Behaviour for all who work in Catholic schools*

Standard 5: Respect for the Dignity of all Persons

All people working in Catholic schools should respect the inherent dignity of the person. Respect for others begins with respect for oneself. Clear boundaries between the professional and the personal should be set and maintained.

Those working in Catholic schools:

- recognise that each person is created in the image and likeness of God;
- treat all persons in a caring and respectful fashion;
- are particularly conscious of the need to protect and respect the rights of children, youth and women;
- are mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity and develop their understanding and knowledge of these differences;
- provide opportunities for personal growth and acknowledge that individuals can and do change;
- recognise that they are privileged to be welcomed into the lives of people at important moments, particularly young people.

5.1 In professional ministry, those working in Catholic schools seek to relate to people with respect, sensitivity and reverence.

Commitment to this would be indicated by:

- treating those to whom one provides professional support with patience and courtesy;
- avoiding all forms of discrimination;
- promoting the equality of women and men;
- challenging oppressive norms in every culture.

With regard to this, the following is mandatory for all those working in Catholic schools:

- avoidance of any inappropriate behaviour that could be interpreted as harassment

Harassment encompasses a broad range of physical or verbal behaviour, including but not limited to:

- *physical or emotional abuse;*
- *public defamation of another's good name;*
- *racial insults;*
- *derogatory ethnic slurs;*
- *unwelcome sexual advances or touching;*
- *sexual jokes or sexual comments;*
- *requests for sexual favours;*
- *display of lewd or offensive materials.*

Harassment can occur as a result of a single incident or pattern of behaviour where the purpose or effect is to create a hostile, offensive or intimidating environment.

5.2 Those working in Catholic schools exercise their vocation in an inclusive fashion.

Commitment to this would be indicated by:

- reaching out to people who may be at risk of being alienated from the school community, especially the disabled;
- being sensitive to the diverse forms of spirituality in the school community;
- understanding and being committed to the principles of inculturation;
- using language that is respectful of all;
- avoiding the fostering of dependency or subservience among those one serves.

5.3 In all human relationships in the school context, those working in Catholic schools act with integrity consistent with their ministry to proclaim God's Reign of steadfast love.

Commitment to this would be indicated by:

- avoiding any action or language that is sexually provocative;
- never seeking to initiate sexual behaviour in the professional environment or with those with whom one has a professional relationship;
- rejecting any invitation to participate in sexual behaviour in the professional environment or with those with whom one has a professional relationship;
- never establishing a relationship through an abuse of power;
- establishing only those relationships that one can speak of freely to others.

5.4 People working in Catholic schools respect the physical, emotional and cultural boundaries appropriate to professional relationships with adults and minors.

In the use of touch, those working in Catholic schools should be particularly conscious of the need to maintain clear boundaries. Touch is a powerful way of communicating. However, touch can also result in confused messages being communicated. It can be used as an instrument of control, harassment or abuse. Discretion is needed in determining when to use and when not to use touch in professional relationships. At all times those working in Catholic schools must be mindful of their responsibility to protect the welfare and rights of those they serve.

Commitment to this would be indicated by:

- providing counselling only in rooms appropriately set up for such support;
- exercising discretion in initiating and responding to physical contact, such as giving a comforting hug or an affirming touch;
- exercising prudence in the use of language that expresses affection or regard;
- exercising discretion in the giving and receiving of gifts.

With regard to this standard, the following behaviour is mandatory for all those working in Catholic schools:

- professional ministry is never provided in the sleeping quarters/bedrooms of hostels, or one's own home, or in isolated school situations /facilities.

5.5 Those working in Catholic schools have a profound esteem for the personal dignity of children and youth and therefore for their protection the following are mandatory:

- never staying overnight in the same room as a minor, even if there are two beds;
- never supplying or serving alcohol or any controlled substance to a minor;
- never administering corporal punishment;
- never exposing a minor or youth to pornographic material.

5.6 Those working in Catholic schools, respecting the rights of children and youth, are concerned that these rights are respected by all.

Commitment to this would be indicated by:

- being aware of the causes and signs of child abuse or neglect, the steps to take to protect children, and the procedures to follow if abuse or neglect is suspected or observed;
- being aware of any legal responsibilities under civil law, and of the Church's procedures in relation to the notification of child abuse or neglect;
- availing oneself of training in basic and ongoing formation in the area of child abuse.

POLICY BRIEF

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South African Catholic schools consist of a wide variety of schools from well resourced to small farms schools.

This means that learners and staff face differing challenges and that the following points apply differently in differing circumstances. We urge all schools to review how they deal with safety and security at their schools and to contact us with any questions they may have.

All South African schools are required by law¹ to ensure the safety of educators and learners at school.

This is called the **legal duty of care**.

Legislation

The Occupational Health and Safety Act places statutory duties on employers:

- To provide and maintain as far as possible a working environment that is safe and without risk to the health of the employees and
- To ensure that other persons are not exposed to hazards to their health or safety.²

So what does it mean to be a safe school?

A safe school is one whose physical features, layout and policies and procedures are designed to minimise the impact of disruptions and intrusions that might prevent the school from fulfilling its educational mission. It is characterised by a climate free of fear. The perceptions, feelings, and behaviours of members of the school community reveal that the school is a place where people are able to go about their business without concern for their safety.³

There has been widespread occurrences at schools where learners, parents or staff members have been harmed: drowning, playground injuries, robberies, hijackings, stabbing and shooting of both learners and staff, abuse and rape. These acts of violence alert Catholic schools to develop or review their safety and security policy in order to be a 'safe' school.

Legal liability of an individual teacher or principal for an injury sustained by a learner will depend on whether or not the injury was caused as a direct result of negligence or failure on their part to fulfil their duty of care.

The following indicators help a school to assess whether it is safe or not.

Indicators of a safe school:

- *The existence and implementation of a plan, policies and procedures that address the 'safety' of the school*
- *Monitoring of:* Number of trespassers
Number of fire-arms and other weapons
Number of break-ins
Incidents of vandalism
Number of bullying incidents
Rates of/reasons for absenteeism
Survey results
School specific indicators⁴

¹ The Occupational, Safety and Health Act(OSH) (Act No 85 of 1993) and Regulations for Safety Measures at Public Schools (Government Notice No 1040-October 2001) and Regulations relating to Safety at Independent Schools (Government Notice No 2663 – August 2004)

² Sections 8(1) and 9(1) of the OSH act.

³ Centre for the prevention of School Violence : www.ncsu.edu/cpsv

⁴ Ibid

Schools have a legal obligation in terms of s61(a) of SASA to keep children safe while the learner is at school. Furthermore Catholic schools have a moral duty to ensure that a safe environment is provided for the children. Teachers and other staff also need to feel safe in their workplace and parents need to know their children are safe. Schools must educate communities on the status of the schools concerning the right to protection against violence. Schools must remain constantly vigilant and sensitive to any threats to the safety at the school.

A school health and safety policy must be developed to address both the physical and emotional safety of learners and staff.

The School Health and Safety Policy should have a:

- Clear aim and purpose
- Summary of health and safety functions in the school
- The roles and responsibilities of the SMT and staff
- The responsibilities of the School Governing Body/Board of Governors

Addendums

- Sexual harassment policy
- Anti-bullying policy

The following are some areas, which must be closely monitored and correct safety procedures be put in place. These should serve to assist schools to review their procedures and to develop and implement a safety and security policy.

1. **Secure and Safe Premises:** Schools should be fenced and the gates monitored to keep intruders/ trespassers out as well as learners inside the school premises for the entire school day. A school is entitled to put up a sign stating that it has the right to search persons on its premises.

1.1 Building Safety: good maintenance is vital for safety (a Policy Brief on school maintenance will be disseminated in September). Broken windows should be repaired immediately to avoid injury and broken glass cleared up.

Electrical connections should be checked for safety. Extension cords should be intact and not frayed or have bare wires exposed. Care should be taken not to have too many double adaptors in a plug point or connected to an extension cord.

1.2 Poor lighting can lead to eye strain and impact negatively on teaching and learning.

Poor ventilation can cause learners to become drowsy and this also inhibits learning.

Classrooms must be empty during break to allow the building to air.

1.3 Evacuations, Fire Drills and Fire extinguishers: There should be clear emergency procedures, which are practised regularly. An evacuation plan must be developed and implemented through regular drills (at least two per term for 4 term schools and three for 3 term schools). Each classroom should have the evacuation route clearly posted and learners need to become familiar with the planned procedures and the assembly points. At the assembly point registers should be taken to make sure that all learners and staff are accounted for. Fire extinguishers should be clearly marked, easily accessible and regularly serviced. Teachers need to be educated on how to use fire extinguishers. It is advisable to have one member of staff nominated as fire safety officer. The duty of this person is to ensure that regular fire drills are held and that fire equipment is checked once a term.

1.4 Learners who walk long distances to school: Some learners walk to school often on lonely or dangerous paths. Schools must educate learners to walk in groups for safety. In addition principals and SGBs must lobby their provincial education departments where transport should be provided.

2. **Learner supervision:** Learners should be supervised at all times. This enables teachers to monitor learner behaviour and to be able to prevent any bullying, sexual harassment or risky or dangerous play.

2.1 Classroom supervision: Classrooms are places of learning and purposeful work. If a teacher is not present, this learning is disrupted and risky behaviour may take place. Learners can harm each other and damage school property. A teacher must be present in the classroom at all times.

2.2 Playground supervision: A staff duty roster should be in place and the relevant staff member (or an alternative) must be on duty in accordance with the roster. The playground is often the area where learners are at risk not only from bullying and harassment but also from accidents and dangerous play. These areas should be checked regularly for dangerous items such as broken glass, old equipment and open drains etc.

2.3 After school supervision: Learners who remain at school until parents fetch them need careful supervision and assistance with homework. Some schools have external people running their aftercare. The school remains liable for the safety of the children on school premises. The ratio of care-givers to learners is dependent on the age of the learners. The younger the learners the higher the ratio.

2.3 Sports practice and events: All sports practices should be supervised and the responsible adult should have a basic knowledge of elementary first aid. A first aid kit should be available at all practices and matches and universal precautions⁵ should be practiced.

2.4 School outings: School trips should be carefully planned. Prior to any outing a list of learners and staff, their addresses, parent/guardian contact numbers and special health requirements must be listed and a copy kept at the school and a second copy with the teacher responsible for the trip. A process for legal procedures such as signed parental permission and indemnity forms should be in place.

Kombis or Busses used for trips must be in good order. If a teacher is unhappy about the manner in which the driver acts, the trip should be immediately curtailed and the driver reported to the traffic authorities.

Teachers must be particularly vigilant during outings, and excursions to the sea, dams or swimming pools must be carefully supervised to prevent drowning. Where available, it is recommended that a trained lifeguard accompany a trip to the sea, dam or pool.

The teacher/adult pupil ratio on such trips depends on the age of the learner. Suggested ratios are:
1 teacher for every 10-15 learners under 6 years of age
1 teacher for every 15-20 learners 7 years and older

Where available, it is recommended that a trained lifeguard accompany a trip to the sea or a dam.

3. Money kept on school premises: Schools should make it a practice that minimal amounts of money are kept on school premises. Armed robberies have taken place at many schools with the express intent to rob the school of monies collected for school fees or fundraising events. Schools should provide parents with the bank account number and require that monies are deposited at the bank. Parents could be assisted by supplying them with either the electronic banking details or ready made deposit slips. This procedure should be made public so that others are aware that no money is kept on the school premises.

4. Monitoring Learner and teacher behaviour: Vigilant teachers will become aware of learners behaviour which could harm other learners. The *Learner Code of Conduct* should be clearly understood by the whole school community and implemented. The *Learner Code of Conduct* must include a disciplinary procedure which is understood by all members of the schools community. Minor and serious offences should be listed in this code. Parents and learners must sign such a code as acknowledgement of its contents and acceptance thereof.

Teacher behaviour should also be monitored by the School Management Team. The *Code of Conduct for Teachers* from the South African Council of Educators (SACE) and *The Integrity in Ministry Document*

⁵ Universal Precautions: See no 11

clearly spell out standards of teacher behaviour. Of especial concern in schools is the continued use of corporal punishment. The principal is responsible for monitoring teachers' behaviour and should take immediate action against any teacher who may be threatening the safety of a learner.

5. Corporal Punishment is illegal. Learning cannot take place in a state of fear. The principal is responsible for monitoring teachers' behaviour and should take immediate action against any teacher who may be threatening the safety of a learner. Schools must explore alternative forms of discipline to corporal punishment. (Addendum B)

6. Initiation practices: SASA (section 10A(1)) prohibits initiation practices that:

- endangers the mental or physical health and safety of a person
- undermines the intrinsic worth of human beings treating some as inferior to others
- subjects a person to humiliating or violent acts which undermine their constitutional right to dignity

Such practices have no place in a Catholic school which seeks to promote the dignity of every human person.

7. Active promotion of non-violent conflict resolution: In a society plagued by violence, schools must promote and develop alternatives to violent responses to conflict. Various critical outcomes in the NCS address this issue (Addendum A). However schools must develop further plans and policies. The implementation of an anti-bullying policy, developed together with the school community, can assist the school to monitor and prevent bullying.

Schools must encourage members of the school governing body or board of governors and parents to participate in community policing forums. This should be done to ensure that non-violent forms of conflict resolution are discussed. Staff at schools should stay alert and identify sources of conflict before these become violent. Upon identifying areas of possible conflict, staff need to intervene and create a space for constructive dialogue to ensure the speedy resolution of any problems. Where necessary, schools need to inform parents of any concerns they may have with regards to a learner and seek options to assist the learner while protecting other learners. Creating an environment of mutual respect is necessary to encourage conflict resolution through dialogue.

8. Dangerous weapons: Schools should be dangerous object free zones. No persons should be allowed to bring dangerous weapons such as knives, knuckle dusters, guns or knop-kerries into the school.

9. Substance abuse: All schools should be drug and alcohol free zones. No person should be allowed to bring illegal drugs onto the school premises. Alcoholic beverages should also be restricted. Learners who are identified as substance abusers should be properly counselled where necessary. It is important that the school establish a system to identify learners who are vulnerable and refer these learners to help. It is therefore important that schools keep a register of social services to which learners can be referred. The school must also establish a monitoring system to ensure that learners who have been referred are receiving the necessary support. See the National Policy on the Management of Drug Abuse by learners.⁶

10. Serious Crimes: A school has certain remedies for serious crimes, which include expulsion in the extreme cases. The competent authorities must also deal with serious crimes where criminal charges may be laid against the alleged perpetrator especially when involved in crimes as listed below. This requires that two separate disciplinary procedures occur. A serious crime must be reported to the South African Police Services irrespective of the procedure in the school. Once a serious crime has been lodged with the authorities, the school must hold a disciplinary hearing to assess whether the alleged perpetrator is fit to stay in the school. A decision to clear the alleged perpetrator does not exclude criminal prosecution.

⁶ National Policy on the Management of drug Abuse by Learners in Public and Independent Schools and Further Education Training Institutions, GN 3427, GG24172of 13 December 2002

Serious crimes include:

Rape

Theft: One of the most common problems in a school is theft. Schools must secure equipment to limit the loss of property. Theft is a serious and offenders must be disciplined fairly and timeously.

Attempted theft: See above

Common Assault

Assault with intention to do grievous bodily harm

Drug peddling

Murder

Attempted Murder

Defamation of character (Crimen Injuria)

These should be conveyed to members of the school community and all in the school must be educated on the consequences of committing a serious crime. Clear disciplinary procedures guidelines must be made available.

11. Vandalism: Standard 6 of the *Integrity in Ministry Document* outlines the obligation for all members of the school community to be good stewards i.e. to look after the property and finances of the school. The cost of maintenance of a school involves a substantial amount of money. It is the responsibility of all members of a school to ensure that the fabric of the school is in good quality. Vandalism of property is therefore a serious offence. A competent disciplinary authority must evaluate the seriousness of the offence and remedies for the breach in conduct must be stated. In areas where there is damage, a convicted perpetrator can be asked to compensate the school for the cost of the damage caused.

12. HIV/AIDS: All schools should have an HIV/AIDS policy. Practice universal precautions which are the standard guidelines for to prevent infection through contact with blood and body fluid. Responsible education programmes to reduce the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS must be an integral part of the school safety programme. Schools must also be aware of stigma, the needs of people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS and ensure that education programmes address these needs.

13. Identification, referral and monitoring of children in need of care: Through the development of a cohesive pastoral care plan schools must establish a system to identify children in need of care. A referral resource which lists social services that can address the needs of learners should be available. In cases where psychological assistance is needed, the confidentiality of the person must be respected. A system to monitor the effects of referral must be employed to ensure that learners are receiving adequate support.

14. School hostels/boarding houses: While all of the above points are pertinent to school boarding houses by their residential nature require further procedures and an additional code of conduct.

Addendum A: Active promotion of non-violent conflict resolution

In the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), one critical outcome and two developmental outcomes allow schools to actively promote the non-violent conflict resolution. They are:

- Work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organisation and community
- Participate as responsible citizens in the life of local, national, and global communities
- Be culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts

Although this should feature in all Learning Areas, Life Orientation provides a particularly suitable setting in which various skills and techniques that promote co-operation and minimize the potential for conflict can be taught and practised. These include:

- developing listening skills
- use praise to affirm learners
- assist learners or develop their emotional intelligence
- promoting an awareness of human rights in relation to self and others
- promote ways of appreciating difference and diversity.

However, we suggest that this also points to the transformation that our constitutional democracy requires of us – as individuals, in and between the various communities of which we are part, and even the patterns of institutional life. Indeed, an important function of the school is to provide a safe and supportive space in which learners are able to explore aspects of their future roles in civil society and the ‘world of work’. Thus, non-violent conflict resolution is not only something to be taught – it needs to be modelled by school staff with regard to the way that teachers relate to each other and to learners, as well as to parents and the community in which the school finds itself. Creative ways of limiting, managing, and negotiating conflict need to feature in all areas of school life – in the classroom, in the staffroom, on the playground, and in ‘co-curricular’ / ‘extramural’ activities that range from sport, arts and culture, to social outreach programmes.

Addendum B:

Resources:

Alternatives to Corporal Punishment: Growing discipline and respect in our classrooms, published by Heinemann Publishers – www.heinemann.co.za www.endcorporalpunishment.org

www.essortment.com

www.childadvocate.org

www.connectionparenting.com

Stop It

Cool it

Beat Bullying: Published by CIE and obtainable from CIE – 011 4331888

The Code Of Professional Ethics

DEFINITIONS

1. In this Code, unless the context indicates otherwise any word or phrase defined in the South African Council for Educators Act, 2000 has that meaning and:

1. 'Code' means the Code of Professional Ethics of the South African Council for Educators;
2. 'Council' means the South African Council for Educators;
3. 'educator' means any educator registered or provisionally registered with the Council;
4. 'learner' means a pupil or a student at any school, further education and training institution or adult learning centre;
5. 'parent' means:
 1. any natural parent or guardian of a learner;
 2. any person legally entitled to custody of a learner; and
 3. Any person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person referred to in paragraphs (a) or (b) towards the learner's education at school.

GENERAL

2. The educators who are registered or provisionally registered with the South African Council for Educators:

- 2.1 acknowledge the noble calling of their profession to educate and train the learners of our country;
- 2.2 acknowledge that the attitude, dedication, self-discipline, ideals, training and conduct of the teaching profession determine the quality of education in this country;
- 2.3 acknowledge, uphold and promote basic human rights, as embodied in the Constitution of South Africa;
- 2.4 commit themselves therefore to do all within their power, in the exercising of their professional duties, to act in accordance with the ideals of their profession, as expressed in this Code; and
- 2.5 act in a proper and becoming way such that their behaviour does not bring the teaching profession into disrepute.

CONDUCT: THE EDUCATOR AND THE LEARNER

3. An educator:

- 3.1 respects the dignity, beliefs and constitutional rights of learners and in particular children, which includes the right to privacy and confidentiality;
- 3.2 acknowledges the uniqueness, individuality, and specific needs of each learner, guiding and encouraging each to realise his or her potentialities;
- 3.3 strives to enable learners to develop a set of values consistent with the fundamental rights contained in the Constitution of South Africa;
- 3.4 exercises authority with compassion;
- 3.5 avoids any form of humiliation, and refrains from any form of abuse, physical or psychological;
- 3.6 refrains from improper physical contact with learners;
- 3.7 promotes gender equality;
- 3.8 refrains from any form of sexual harassment (physical or otherwise) of learners;
- 3.9 refrains from any form of sexual relationship with learners at a school;
- 3.10 uses appropriate language and behaviour in his or her interaction with learners, and acts in such a

way as to elicit respect from the learners;

3.11 takes reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the learner;

3.12 does not abuse the position he or she holds for financial, political or personal gain;

3.13 is not negligent or indolent in the performance of his or her professional duties;

3.14 recognises, where appropriate, learners as partners in education.

CONDUCT: THE EDUCATOR AND THE PARENT

4. An educator, where appropriate:

4.1 recognises the parents as partners in education, and promotes a harmonious relationship with them;

4.2 does what is practically possible to keep parents adequately and timeously informed about the well-being and progress of the learner.

CONDUCT: THE EDUCATOR AND THE COMMUNITY

5. An educator recognises that an educational institution serves the community, and therefore acknowledges that there will be differing customs, codes and beliefs in the community.

CONDUCT: THE EDUCATOR AND HIS OR HER COLLEAGUES

6. An educator:

6.1 refrains from undermining the status and authority of his or her colleagues;

6.2 respects the various responsibilities assigned to colleagues and the authority that arises therefrom, to ensure the smooth running of the educational institution;

6.3 uses proper procedures to address issues of professional incompetence or misbehaviour;

6.4 promotes gender equality and refrains from sexual harassment (physical or otherwise) of his or her colleagues;

6.5 uses appropriate language and behaviour in his or her interactions with colleagues;

6.6 avoids any form of humiliation, and refrains from any form of abuse (physical or otherwise) towards colleagues.

CONDUCT: THE EDUCATOR AND THE PROFESSION

7. An educator:

7.1 acknowledges that the exercising of his or her professional duties occurs within a context requiring co-operation with and support of colleagues;

7.2 behaves in a way that enhances the dignity and status of the teaching profession and that does not bring the profession into disrepute;

7.3 keeps abreast of educational trends and developments;

7.4 promotes the ongoing development of teaching as a profession;

7.5 accepts that he or she has a professional obligation towards the education and induction into the profession of new members of the teaching profession.

CONDUCT: THE EDUCATOR AND HIS OR HER EMPLOYER

8. An educator:

8.1 recognises the employer as a partner in education;

8.2 acknowledges that certain responsibilities and authorities are vested in the employer through legislation, and serves his or her employer to the best of his or her ability;

8.3 refrains from discussing confidential and official matters with unauthorised persons.

CONDUCT: THE EDUCATOR AND THE COUNCIL

9. An educator:

9.1 complies with the provisions of this Code;

9.2 discloses all relevant information to the Council;

9.3 co-operates with the Council to the best of his or her ability;

9.4 accepts and complies with the procedures and requirements of the Council, including but not limited to the Registration Procedures, the Disciplinary Procedures of the Council and the payment of compulsory fees.