



**“Care of the Child, Our Treasure,
Our Future, Our Responsibility”**

**There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children.
(8 May 1995)**



Our children are our greatest treasure. They are our future. Those who abuse them tear at the fabric of our society and weaken our nation.

— Nelson Mandela —



Origin of the policy?



- Every child is as gift from God
- Right to dignity of body and life needs to be respected, nurtured and protected by all
- Responsibility of all members of staff in Catholic Schools to ensure that children in their care are kept safe and free from any form of abuse
- In response to the Catholic church's responsibility, CIE and CaSPA developed a policy which drives this presentation.

Distinctive Catholic character of the school

Promoting a Catholic perspective of human life - tolerance of diversity and cultures, challenging oppression:

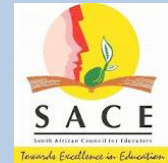
- Having an holistic approach to human life
- Nurturing religious and moral formation
- Promoting moral values
- Encouraging a high standard of teaching

There are underlying principles that guide the Catholic Schools Child Safe-guarding Policy

1. The Duty of Care - ALL children are equal.
2. Education of all staff to ensure they know what the policy and reporting procedures are and understand clearly what constitutes abuse. Staff sign that they have attended this workshop.
3. Inform the wider school community of these policy and reporting procedures and make information available on school website.

This policy must be understood in conjunction with :

- **Integrity in Ministry in Catholic Schools** - ethical standards for all who work in Catholic schools
- **Safe and Sound** : Minimum Standards for boarding schools
- SACE Code of Conduct for Educators
- **School-based policies** that cover safety and security, information technology etc.
- **AND THE LAW!**



In South Africa children's rights are enshrined by

South African law

South African law refers to the "best interests of the child". This originates from the ***Convention on the Rights of the Child***



Legislation compels teachers to report all cases of abuse even if there is only suspicion of abuse:

- Criminal Law (Sexual Offences Act 32 of 2007)
- Children's Amendment Act (41 Of 2007)
- Children's Act (38 of 2005)



All South African schools are required by law



- To ensure the safety of educators and learners at school i.e. **the school has a legal duty of care.**
- **The Occupational Health and Safety Act (OSH)** places statutory duties on employers to provide a **work environment that is safe** and without risk to the employees and to ensure that other persons are not exposed to hazards to their health and safety.

Your legal obligation:

Compulsory Reporting

When it is known that a child has been sexually abused, South African law requires the following:

A person who has knowledge that a sexual offence has been committed against a child must report such knowledge immediately to a police official. Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters Amendment Act 2007 Section 54 (1) (a)

When there are suspicions, concerns or allegations that a child has been sexually or physically abused, or deliberately neglected, South African law requires the following:

Any teacherwho on reasonable grounds concludes that a child has been abused in a manner causing physical injury, sexually abused or deliberately neglected, must report that conclusion in the prescribed form to a designated child protection organisation, the Provincial Department of Social Development or a police official. Children's Act No 38 of 2005 as amended 2010 Section 110 (1) and (2)

A person who fails to report child abuse as outlined above is guilty of an offence and may be charged.

If the alleged offender is a teacher, the South African Council of Educators (SACE) must be informed.
Catholic schools must also report to the Owner.

Health and Safety



Guidelines for safe activities



- Checking up
- Supervision
- Health and Safety rules implemented
- Use of IT equipment monitored
- Parental/Guardian consent for any activity off school premises



**CHILD
ABUSE**

What are the different forms of child abuse?

- Psychological, Emotional
- Physical
- Neglect
- Cyber and Technological
- Sexual



Emotional, Psychological

public defamation

THE

INVISIBLE

racial insults

derogatory
statements

stereotyping



Emotional Abuse



Physical Abuse



Educational Neglect

Neglect



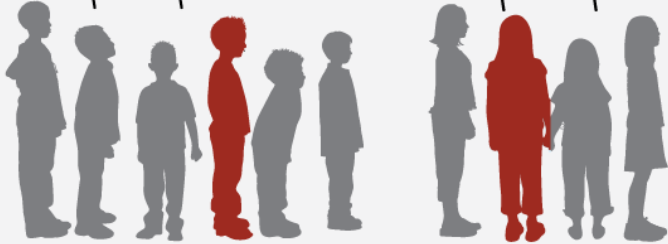
Sexual Abuse



Before they turn 18...

1 in 6 boys experience
some form of sexual abuse

1 in 4 girls experience
some form of sexual abuse



- Unwelcome sexual advances or touching
- Sexual jokes, comments
- Requests for sexual favours
- Display of offensive materials



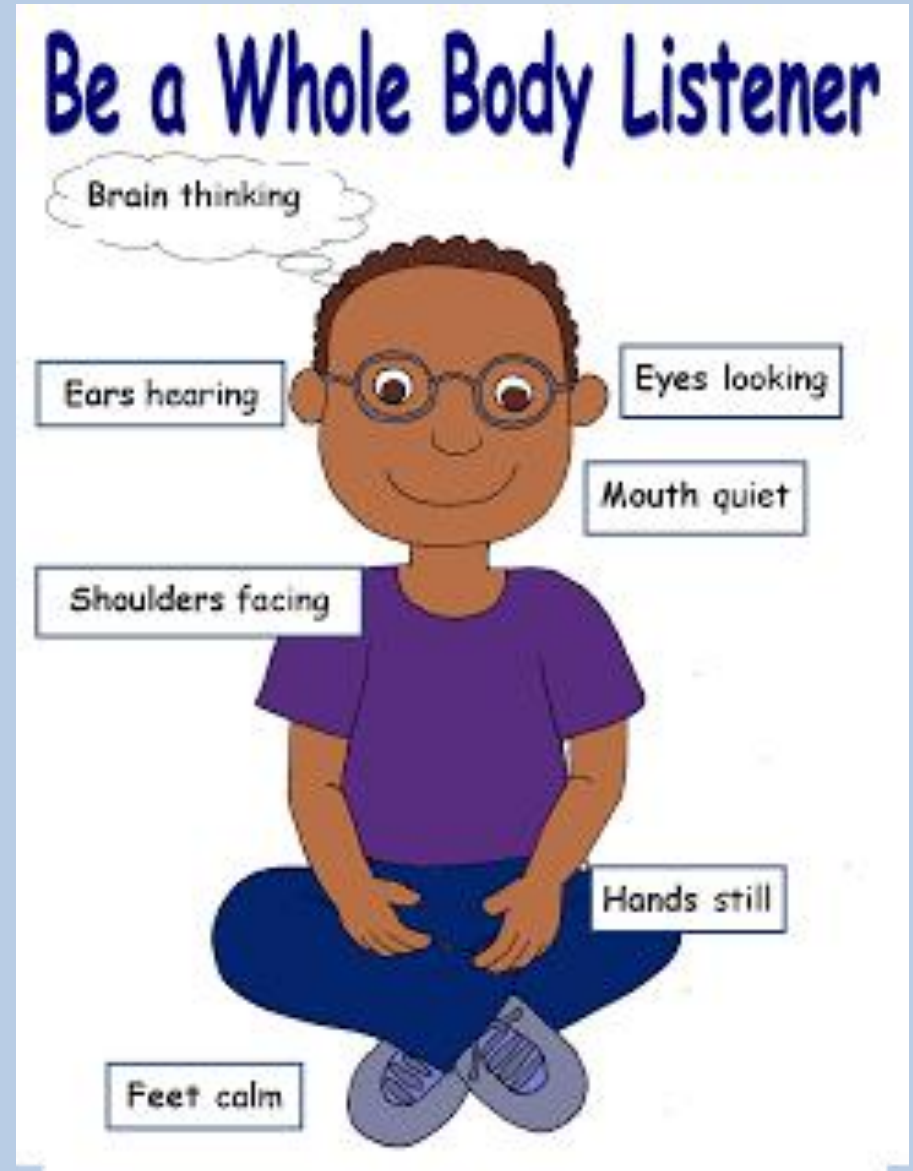
“I was like,
‘No, please stop.’
He was like,
‘No, you’ll like it.’”



SEXUAL ASSAULT **AWARE RESPECT** **SAFE EDUCATION**
EMPOWER **COUNSEL COMMUNICATE** **WHAT IT IS** **PRIVACY**
REPORT **WHAT TO DO**
WHERE TO GO **SUPPORT**

Guidelines for receiving a concern

- Listen
- Be sensitive
- Be mindful
- Do not question
- Do not guarantee confidentiality
- Call in someone who legally can help
- Do not confront the alleged perpetrator



Internet/ Technology abuse

- Allowing inappropriate access to unsuitable sites
- Neglect of firewalls- [monitored and maintained]
- Inappropriate contact with learners on chatrooms etc.
- Sharing pornography, violent and hate content
- Allowing on-line games at schools
- Cyber bullying





- Neglect of supervision of cell phone use and lack of implementation of school rules
- Teachers using cell phones during teacher/learner contact time
- Misuse of cell phone by taking of unauthorized photos and clips of children - both learners and teachers
- Teachers posting pictures of children on social media – school must have written consent to do this

Our eSafety Top Tips!

1

People you don't know are strangers.

They're not always who they say they are.



2

Be nice to people like you would on the playground.



3

Keep your personal information private.



4

If you ever get that 'uh oh' feeling, tell a grown-up you trust.



How do you pick up if a child is being abused at home or school ?

- Use a checklist of signs and symptoms for abuse/bullying as a guideline;
- Be brave and believe what you see – trust your intuition;
- Don't ignore things - rather err on the side of making a mistake and approach a Member of Management about your suspicions;
- Make sure legal procedures are followed.

A child is a gift from God and made in the image of God

"We need to
see each child
as a gift to be
welcomed,
cherished and
protected..."

-**Pope Francis**, in his homily during the
Concluding Mass of his Apostolic Journey
to the Philippines





PUPIL PREGNANCY

In the event of a pupil falling pregnant there are very strict legal guidelines in terms of how this matter is dealt with. One is not dealing with an issue of ill-discipline or misconduct. The pregnant learner must at all times be treated with respect and dignity. Most importantly the school must acknowledge that for any pupil over the age of 12, while a Catholic school teaches and promotes Pro-life Choices, the pupil has the right to make choices of her own as is outlined in the Constitution.

Each case of learner pregnancy presents the possibility of unique circumstances which require specific interpretation and application. All stakeholders have to be consulted on any decisions made, including the pupil herself. However, the principal and the management team are responsible for making final decisions and implementing the school policies. Such interpretation and decisions should be applied taking into account the school's policies, the good of the pregnant learner and the common good of the school, its learners and its staff.

The Law and Child/Teenage Pregnancy

Schools are to be alert to their responsibility to report the knowledge that a sexual offence has been committed to the authorities.

Where the learner is under the age of twelve years, she is in law unable to consent to sexual activity and sexual penetration will constitute the said crime of Rape.

It is anticipated however that the resulting pregnancy is likely to be as a result of consensual sexual intercourse. Where the learner is twelve years or older but under the age of sixteen years, the offence is likely to be Statutory Rape which is the commission of an act of sexual penetration *despite the learner's consent*.

It is NOT the school's responsibility to investigate or assess whether or not a crime has been committed – the school simply reports the matter of an underage pregnancy. In terms of section 54 (1) (a) of Act 32 of 2007, reports are to be made immediately to a police official (SAPS).



Who is involved in Policy writing and implementation and what is their role?

School Management Team

- Write and Implement the policy
- Set up safety structures
- Put procedures in place
- Set up training
- Ensure all are informed about the policy & all sign it



Teachers and non Teaching Staff

- Responsible to fulfill a duty of care to keep learners safe
- Supervision of learners
- Reporting any suspicions of abuse

Learners/ Student Representative Body and Parents

Each member/group has a particular role to play in keeping children safe

Members of the BoG

- Approve and adopt policies
- Monitor

No matter, what cultural differences there are, no matter any other reason, Catholic schools must intervene on behalf of any child whom they think might be being abused – it is the LAW.

Management and Board Responsibility

- Using Catholic Schools Policy and the SA Law, draw up own School Policy for your school;
- Make sure all staff members sign this Policy which is then filed in the staff members files, which includes Police Clearance;
- Ensure that this Policy is communicated to all in community;
- Monitor that Policy is being implemented;
- Ensure procedures of reporting in Policy are being followed.

How will the policy be implemented ?

- Review current practice
- Work through the areas that were identified as needing attention/clarity on the checklist
- Possibly ask different groups in the school to work on specific standards
- Practical action to ensure that each standard is met
- Decide how the standards will be monitored

BASIC PROTOCOL

RESPOND

- To the concern
- Reassure the person who has given the information, but do not question or interrogate

RECORD

- All information including time of events, names etc.
- Remember to distinguish between fact and opinion

CONSULT

- With the designated person as per school safeguarding policy

REPORT

- Principal/ Board Member
- Social Worker
- Police
- To the family BUT only if advised in writing to do so by the SAP/statutory social worker

Checklist for monitoring compliance with the standards To be completed in phases and sections of the school



This is to guide and monitor progress in implementing the policy

Useful contacts for child safeguarding

- Local Police Station
- SAPS (FCS: Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences Unit)
- Local office of Department of Social Development
- District Official especially for Government Schools
- Owner's Representative
- Childline or JHB Child Welfare; Teddy Bear Clinic
- SACE

May our children be safe, loved
and nurtured



A group of people, including children and adults, are walking away from the camera on a dirt path covered in fallen brown leaves. The path is surrounded by trees with bare branches, suggesting an autumn setting. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the people and the path.

WALKING
for
ward
together

By Nancy Bodsworth



wake

up!