



Timaru Christian School Procedures

HS16 - Abuse Reporting Procedure

The Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989 states that any person who believes that any child or young person has been, or is likely to be, harmed (physically, emotionally, or sexually), ill-treated, abused, neglected, or deprived, must report the matter to a public health nurse or a member of the police.

Unless the information was disclosed or supplied in bad faith, the person making the disclosure cannot be prosecuted.

If you believe a student is being abused, act immediately to ensure their safety.

- Listen to the student and reassure them, but do not make any promises or commitments.
- Ensure that any information or disclosures made by the student are written down.
- Ensure that there is a responsible adult at the school who is available to the student throughout the investigation, and afterwards.
- Do not formally interview the student. Only obtain necessary and relevant facts. If clarification is needed, write down exactly what the student says.
- You must inform the principal (or acting principal) and agree on an appropriate course of action.
- After making the referral get support for yourself from appropriate persons, if needed.

Note: Any person can make a direct referral to the Police, or Child, Youth and Family, if they believe a child is being abused.

See also The Vulnerable Children Act 2014.



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Definitions and Indicators of Child Abuse/Neglect

	Definition	Possible Indicators (look for clusters of symptoms)
Neglect	Failure to provide a child's basic needs. The child is not given adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical attention or supervision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ unsuitable clothing for weather ▶ being dirty or unbathed ▶ extreme hunger ▶ apparent lack of supervision
Physical Abuse	Any non-accidental physical injury to a child.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ unexplained burns, cuts, bruises, or welts in the shape of an object ▶ anti-social behavior ▶ problems in school ▶ fear of adults ▶ drug or alcohol abuse ▶ self-destructive or suicidal behavior ▶ depression or poor self-image
Emotional Neglect/Abuse	<p>(This is very hard to define and detect).</p> <p>Neglect is a lack of emotional support and love, such as not attending to a child's need for affection, or providing necessary psychological care.</p> <p>Abuse may involve ignoring or rejecting the child, failing to praise or positively reinforce the child, yelling and screaming, belittling, using derogatory names, criticising, and threatening or frightening the child.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ apathy ▶ depression ▶ hostility ▶ lack of concentration ▶ eating disorders
Sexual Abuse	Any sexual act between an adult and a child. This can range from touching, through to penetration or even the death of the victim. Enticing children to pornography, and violating their privacy are also considered abuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ inappropriate interest in or knowledge of sexual acts ▶ avoidance of things related to sexuality, or rejection of own genitals or bodies ▶ physical injury or illness ▶ nightmares and bed wetting ▶ drastic changes in appetite ▶ overcompliance or excessive aggression ▶ fear of a particular person or family member ▶ withdrawal ▶ sudden fear of the dark ▶ extreme fear of being left alone ▶ secretiveness ▶ loss of memory ▶ depression ▶ suicidal behavior ▶ eating disorders ▶ self-injury