



21 May 2025

POLICY BRIEF 2 of 2025

PRINCIPAL / HEAD OF SCHOOL

RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD SAFEGUARDING

## 1. Introduction

The Child Safeguarding Sub-Committee of the National Catholic Board of Education (NCBE) is concerned about some important issues with reference to Child Safeguarding in Catholic schools.

We have become increasingly concerned that schools, while trying to do the correct thing, continue to struggle with what is required by the Child Safeguarding Policy of the NCBE and the laws of South Africa in keeping every child safe. This policy is compulsory for **ALL** schools and has certain requirements. It is currently undergoing its 3<sup>rd</sup> revision, which should be completed by the 4<sup>th</sup> Term of 2025.

## 2. Principal's Responsibilities

### 2.1 Annual Workshop

**Every** school is required to hold a staff Child Safeguarding workshop **annually**. This should train and inform all staff and address areas that are unclear or challenging for the school. This workshop **must be** carried out by the Local Office (LO) (Local Office = CIE Regional Office or Catholic Schools Office). If your school runs this workshop yourself, the LO must be part of the planning and attend the training. The training must include **ALL** staff, but can be done separately for each of the following groups:

- Teachers
- Interns
- Administrative staff,
- Coaches and
- Support staff and
- Any volunteers

For Public Schools on Private Property (PSPPs), the Basic Education Employment Initiative (BEEI) for Unemployed Youth raises further CSG challenges. Should your school have BEEI people in it, they **must be trained in CSG by the LO**.

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The Child Safeguarding workshop must include **all leadership** of the school. Too often the principal or other school leaders are missing, and they therefore miss out on vital knowledge. ALL STAFF must sign a register to attest to their presence in a workshop, as well as an individual register. We have attached these for your information. CPTD points are allocated to these workshops.

## **2.2 Designated Child Safeguarding Person (DCSP)**

Each school **must** have an appointed Designated Child Safeguarding Person (DCSP) who has been trained by the Local Office and is supported by them (see description attached). It is this person's responsibility to manage any incidents according to the policy and the referral process, and they should be your main support.

## **2.3 The Umbrella of Care Poster & Poster of National Designated Child Safeguarding Person (NDCSP)**

The *Umbrella of Care* poster contains slots for cards containing the contact details of all the necessary points of contact for any school (including SAPS, Doctors, Clinics or Hospitals, Emergency Services, Psychologists, Social Workers, Department of Social Development, Clergy and others), and must be displayed in a position accessible to staff. In a large school it may be necessary to have several of these posters in the various phases of the school. This allows the schools to show the various organisations or people to whom the school can turn for help.

Of essential importance to **ALL** schools is the card with contact information of the local Department of Social Development, to whom abuse must be reported. Also, on this poster should be the local Family, Child Protection and Sexual Offences Unit (sometimes called the FCS or CPU) of the South African Police Services.

The Poster of the NDCSP aims to allow anyone with concerns to reach out for help to someone outside the school.

## **2.4 New Referral Chart**

During this current school term, the new referral chart will be shared. It is essential that the school leadership and the DCSP understand the complexities of reporting incidents, as well as the responsibility of the school.

All CSG incidents are to be reported first in accordance with legal requirements, in order to support the one abused correctly. Others to whom a serious incident is to be reported include: the Board of Governors / SGB, local education officials, and the owner of the school. The Local Office must be informed, who will then report to Mduduzi Qwabe, the National Designated Child Safeguarding Person, who then reports to the NCBE.

It has come to the attention of the NCBE CSG sub-committee that schools often refer cases to lawyers or advocates. We must emphasise that these people **should not** be your first port of call as they may not understand the complexity of the various acts and laws which apply to CSG. In addition, investigations require practitioners skilled in dealing with children and young people, and incorrect investigations could prejudice both the child /children and the school.

Please request advice or help. Your trained Designated Child Safeguarding Person should be aware of requirements and to whom to turn to for advice. CIE is available for assistance at any time.

## 2.5 Online CSG course

The NCBE CSG Sub-committee has authorised an online course which explains the NCBE Policy. A letter from Fr Hugh O'Conner, chairperson of the NCBE explained the requirements relating to this course. This course will be compulsory for all teachers in every South African Catholic school in 2026, and you are encouraged to enable all your staff to complete this.

## 2.6 Employing new staff

When employing new staff members, it is essential that the recruitment process has children's safety as a priority. This means that **references must be checked** and police clearance **must** be obtained prior to appointment. A police clearance takes 24 to 48 hours, unless there is a conviction (in which case it can take up to six weeks). Checking the other two registers (SACE Register and Sex Offenders Register) take far longer, and while these must also be done they make waiting impractical. For recruitment of new BEEI youth, this is an essential requirement and an excellent introduction to CSG in a Catholic school, and they will also need to complete the online course.

## 2.7 Service Level Agreements

Many schools employ external providers for coaching, after-care, tuck-shops, cleaning and maintenance or building.

Your agreements **must** contain CSG requirements and **external providers must be informed** about and / or trained in the CSG policy.

Please find attached the 2018 Toolkit, which offers support for the above. It also offers a usable checklist for each standard from the policy. This can assist you to audit how your school is managing CSG.

## 3. At Your Service

We trust that this informs you of your responsibilities with regards to Child Safeguarding the children in our Catholic schools. For any queries please contact Mduduzi Qwabe at CIE: 011433188 or [mduduzi@cie.org.za](mailto:mduduzi@cie.org.za)

## **The Designated Child Safeguarding Person (DCSP) is expected to:**

### **Manage referrals**

- Refer cases of suspected abuse to the relevant local authorities.
- Support learners and staff who make referrals
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.

### **Work with others**

- Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies. Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.

### **Undertake training**

The DCSP should undergo regular training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role.

In addition to the formal training, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other DCSPs, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so that they:

- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's CSG policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;
- Stay alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
- Are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff.

### **Raise awareness**

- The DCSP should ensure the school policies are known, understood and used appropriately;
- Ensure the school's Child Safeguarding policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum requirement) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or owners regarding this;
- Ensure that child protection is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made, and the role of the school in this.

### **Availability**

- During term time the DCSP should always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the DCSP would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools, working with their DCSP to define what 'available' means.



**NATIONAL CATHOLIC BOARD OF EDUCATION  
CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY UNDERTAKING**

I .....

[please PRINT]

Representing the following Company / Organisation

.....

or Volunteering to assist the School in the following manner

.....

.....

am aware that there is a Child Safeguarding Policy in effect, and I undertake to comply with the conditions of this policy.

.....

Signature

.....

Date