

Division: Programs

Policy #: PROG – 305

Policy Name: Protection of Children and Youth

Policy Statement

The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (the “District”) is committed to the prevention of child maltreatment, and to the well-being and safety of students entrusted to its care. The District requires employees to be vigilant in their efforts to identify children who may be in need of protective intervention and to report all relevant information to the **Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development (CSSD)** as per the requirements of the **Children, Youth and Families Act (CYFA)**.

In accordance with the **Child and Youth Advocate Act**, the District will also cooperate with the **Child and Youth Advocate** (the “Advocate”) in the course of any investigation s/he may conduct.

BACKGROUND

Children and youth are entitled to be protected from abuse, neglect, harm or threat of harm. The District supports a safe, caring and socially just environment in which the protection of children and youth is paramount. It recognizes that employees are in an advantageous position to identify children and youth who are, or may be, in need of protective intervention, and that they have a duty to report their concerns to CSSD, in accordance with Section 11 of the CYFA. The District is committed to ensuring that the principles of justice and due process are followed in the application of all aspects of this policy.

SCOPE

This policy is applicable to all District staff and volunteers.

DEFINITIONS

CHILD - The CYFA defines a “child” as a person actually or apparently under the age of 16 years.

YOUTH - The CYFA defines a “youth” as a person who is at least 16 years of age but under 18 years of age.

Approved: June 14, 2014

Approved: January 16, 2016; April 30, 2018; September 7, 2019

POLICY DIRECTIVES

1. If a teacher, guidance counsellor, school administrator or any other employee or volunteer with the District has a reason to believe that a child or youth is, or may be, in need of protective intervention, s/he must directly and immediately report the concerns to CSSD.
2. The informed person will then also report the matter to the school administrator.
3. If it is not certain that the matter warrants a report to CSSD, the employee or volunteer is advised to consult with the relevant CSSD office as to options and appropriate course of action.
4. If there is a possibility that the child or youth may be in immediate danger, the informed person or school administrator/designate must contact the police and then notify CSSD.
5. The District will cooperate with any investigation conducted by the CSSD, including enabling interviews of a student to take place at school.
6. Every effort will be made to protect both the identity of the child or youth in possible need of protection and the confidentiality of any investigation.
7. Where there are ongoing concerns about a child or youth, it is expected that the school will continue to report those concerns to CSSD and to provide supports and interventions appropriate to the situation.
8. If the information of concern involves a District employee, the Associate Director (Programs and Human Resources) must be immediately notified.
9. The District will also cooperate with any inquiry or investigation conducted by the Child and Youth Advocate.

Approved: **June 14, 2014**

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