

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS CHARTER SCHOOL

POLICY NUMBER	
SECTION	
TITLE	Child Abuse Reporting
ADOPTED	June 30, 2018
REVISED	April 29, 2019
REVIEWED/ REAUTHORIZED	April 30, 2019 By Board Approval

PURPOSE	To comply with legal requirements regarding mandatory reporting of child abuse.
DEFINITIONS	<p>Bodily Injury - Impairment of physical condition or substantial pain.</p> <p>Child - An individual under eighteen (18) years of age.</p> <p>Child Abuse: Intentionally, knowingly or recklessly doing any of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Causing bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act. 2. Fabricating, feigning or intentionally exaggerating or inducing a medical symptom or disease which results in a potentially harmful medical evaluation or treatment to the child through any recent act. 3. Causing or substantially contributing to serious mental injury to a child through any act or failure to act or a series of acts or failures to act. 4. Causing sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any recent failure to act. 5. Creating a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act. 6. Causing serious physical neglect of a child. 7. Engaging in any of the following recent acts: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Kicking, biting, throwing, burning, stabbing or cutting a child in a manner that endangers the child. b. Unreasonably restraining or confining a child, based on consideration of the method, location or the duration of the restraint or confinement.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Forcefully shaking a child under one (1) year old. d. Forcefully slapping or otherwise striking a child under one (1) year of age. e. Interfering with the breathing of a child. f. Causing a child to be present at a location while a violation of 18 Pa. C.S. §7508.2 (relating to operation of methamphetamine laboratory) is occurring, provided that the violation is being investigated by law enforcement. g. Leaving a child unsupervised with an individual other than the child’s parent, who the actor knows or reasonably should have known; is required to register as a Tier II or Tier II sexual offender under 42 Pa C.S. Ch. 97 Subch. H (relating to registration of sexual offenders), where the victim of a sexual offense was under eighteen (18) years of age when the crime was committed; has been determined to be a sexually violent predator under 42 Pa C.S. § 9799.24 (relating to assessments) or any of its predecessors; or has been determined to be a sexually violent delinquent child as defined in 42 Pa. C.S. § 9799.12 (relating to definitions). <p>8. Causing the death of the child through an act or failure to act.</p> <p>Exclusions from child abuse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Environmental factors – No child shall be deemed to be physically or mentally abused based on injuries that result solely from environmental factors such as inadequate housing, furnishings, income, clothing and medical care, that are beyond the control of the parent or person responsible for the child’s welfare with whom the child resides. 2. Practice of religious beliefs – if upon investigation, the county agency determines that a child has not been provided needed medical or surgical care because of sincerely held religious beliefs of the child’s parents or relative within the degree of consanguinity and with whom the child resides, which beliefs are consistent with those of a bona fide religion, the child shall not be deemed to be physically or mentally abused. 3. Use of force for supervision, control and safety purposes – the use of reasonable force on or against a child by the child’s own parent or person responsible for the child’s welfare shall not be considered child abuse if any of the following conditions apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The use of reasonable force constitutes incidental, minor or reasonable physical contact with the child or other actions that are designed to maintain order and control. b. The use of reasonable force is necessary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) To quell a disturbance or remove the child from the scene
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of a disturbance that threatens physical injury to personal or damage to property.

- (ii) To prevent the child from self-inflicted physical harm;
- (iii) For self-defense or the defense of another individual; or
- (iv) To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects or controlled substances or paraphernalia that are on the child or within the control of the child.

4. Rights of Parents – Nothing in this definition shall be construed to restrict the generally recognized existing rights of parents to use reasonable force on or against their children for the purposes of supervision, control and discipline of their children. Such reasonable force shall not constitute child abuse.
5. Participation in events that involve physical contact with child – An individual participating in a practice or competition in an interscholastic sport, physical education, a recreational activity or an extracurricular activity that involves physical contact with a child does not in itself, constitute contact that is subject to the reporting requirement.
6. Child-on-child contact – harm or injury to a child that results from the act of another child shall not constitute child abuse unless the child who caused the harm or injury is a perpetrator. No child shall be deemed to be a perpetrator of child abuse based solely on physical or mental injuries caused to another child in the course of a dispute, fight or scuffle entered into by mutual consent.

The following child-on-child acts constitute crimes against a child which are subject to reporting requirements of this regulation:

- (i) Rape as defined in 18 Pa C.S. § 3121 (relating to rape);
 - (ii) Involuntary deviate sexual intercourse as defined in 18 Pa C.S. § 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse).
 - (iii) Sexual assault as defined in 18 Pa.C.S. § 3125 (relating to sexual assault)
 - (iv) Aggravated indecent assault as defined in 18 Pa C.S. §3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault);
 - (v) Indecent assault, as defined in 18 Pa C.S. § 3126 (relating to indecent assault);
 - (vi) Indecent exposure as defined in 18 Pa.C.S. § 3127 (relating to indecent exposure)
7. Defensive force – Reasonable force for self-defense or the defense of another individual, consistent with the provisions of with 18 Pa. C.S. §§ 505 (relating to use of force for the protection of other persons), shall not be considered child abuse.

Direct contact with children - the care, supervision, guidance or control of children or routine interaction with children.

Independent contractor - an individual who provides a program, activity or service who is otherwise responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or control of children. The term does not include an individual who has no direct contact with children.

Perpetrator – a person who has committed child abuse and is a parent/guardian of the child, a spouse or former spouse of the child’s parent/guardian, a paramour or former paramour of the child’s parent/guardian, a person responsible for the child’s welfare, an individual residing in the same home as the child, an individual fourteen (14) years of age or older who is responsible for the child’s welfare or who resides in the same home as the child, or an individual eighteen (18) years of age or older who does not reside in the same home as the child but is related within the third degree of consanguinity or affinity by birth or adoption to the child.

Person responsible for the child’s welfare - a person who provides permanent or temporary care, supervision, mental health diagnosis or treatment, training or control of a child in lieu of parental care, supervision and control. The term includes any such person who has direct or regular contact with a child through any program, activity or service sponsored by a school, for-profit organization or religious or not-for-profit organization.

Program, activity or service - a public or private educational, athletic or other pursuit in which children participate, the term includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. A youth camp or program.
- b. A recreational camp or program.
- c. A sports or athletic program.
- d. An enrichment program.
- e. A troop, club or similar organization.

Recent act or failure to act – any act or failure to act committed within two (2) years of the date of the report to the Department of Human Services of the Commonwealth or county agency.

School Employee – an individual who is employed by a school or who provides a program activity or service sponsored by a school. The term excludes an individual who has no direct contact with children.

Serious mental injury – a psychological condition, as diagnosed by a physician or licensed psychologist, including the refusal of appropriate treatment that:

- a. Renders a child chronically and severely anxious, agitated, depressed, socially withdrawn, psychotic or in reasonable fear that the child’s life or safety is threatened.
- b. Seriously interferes with a child’s ability to accomplish age-appropriate

developmental and social tasks.

Serious physical neglect – any of the following when committed by a perpetrator that endangers a child’s life or health, threatens a child’s well-being, causes bodily injury or impairs a child’s health, development or functioning:

- a. A repeated, prolonged or egregious failure to supervise a child in a manner that is appropriate considering the child’s developmental age and abilities.
- b. The failure to provide a child with adequate essentials of life, including food, shelter or medical care.

Sexual abuse or exploitation – any of the following:

1. The employment, use persuasion, inducement, enticement of a child to engage in or assist another individual to engage in sexually explicit conduct, which includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. Looking at the sexual or other intimate parts of a child or another individual for the purpose of arousing or gratifying sexual desire or any individual.
 - b. Participating in sexually explicit conversation either in person, by telephone, by computer or by a computer-aided device for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification of any individual.
 - c. Actual or simulated sexual activity or nudity for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification of any individual.
 - d. Actual or simulated sexual activity for the purpose of producing visual depiction, including photographing, videotaping, computer depicting or filming. **Does not include** consensual activities between a child who is fourteen (14) years of age or older and another person who is fourteen (14) years of age or older and whose age is within four (4) years of the child’s age.
2. Any of the following offenses committed against a child: rape; statutory sexual assault; involuntary deviate sexual intercourse; sexual assault; institutional sexual assault; aggravated indecent assault; indecent exposure; incest; prostitution; sexual abuse; unlawful contact with a minor; or sexual exploitation.

Sexual misconduct – any act, including, but not limited to, any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity, directed toward or with a child or student that is designed to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the child or student. Such acts include, but are not limited to: sexual or romantic invitation; dating or soliciting dates; engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog; making sexually suggestive comments; self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature; any sexual indecent, romantic or erotic contact with the child or student.

	<p>Student – an individual enrolled in the Charter School under eighteen (18) years of age.</p> <p>Volunteer - an individual eighteen (18) years or older in an unpaid position with a program, activity or service who is responsible for the welfare of one or more children or has direct contact with children.</p>
<p>DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY</p>	<p>In accordance with Board policy the CEO or his/her designee shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Require each candidate for employment to submit an official child abuse clearance statement and other background checks as required by law. 2. Require each applicant for transfer or reassignment to submit an official child abuse clearance statement unless the applicant’s official child abuse clearance statement is current. 3. Require each volunteer to submit an official child abuse clearance statement and other background checks as required by law. <p>School employees, independent contractors and volunteers shall obtain and submit new background checks and clearances every sixty (60) months.</p> <p>The CEO or his/her designee shall annually inform students, parents/guardians, independent contractors, volunteers and staff regarding the contents of this board policy.</p> <p>The CEO or his/her designee shall annually notify (CHARTER SCHOOL) staff, independent contractors, and volunteers of their responsibility for reporting child abuse in accordance with board policy and administrative regulations.</p> <p>Training - CHARTER SCHOOL and independent contractors of CHARTER SCHOOL shall provide their employees who have direct contact with children with mandatory training on child abuse recognition and reporting. The training shall include, but not be limited to the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognition of the signs of abuse and sexual misconduct and reporting requirements for suspected abuse and sexual misconduct. 2. Provisions of the educator discipline act, including mandatory reporting requirements. 3. CHARTER SCHOOL policy related to reporting of suspected abuse and sexual misconduct. 4. Maintenance of professional and appropriate relationships with students. <p>Employees are required to complete a minimum of three (3) hours of training every five (5) years.</p>

Mandated Reporters – The following adults shall make a report of suspected child abuse if the person has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse:

1. A person licensed or certified to practice in any health-related field under the jurisdiction of the Department of State.
2. A medical examiner, coroner or funeral director.
3. An employee of a health care facility or provider licensed by the Department of Health, who is engaged in the admission, examination, care or treatment of individuals.
4. A school employee.
5. An employee of a child-care service who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
6. Clergyman, priest, rabbi, minister, Christian Science practitioner, religious healer or spiritual leader of any regularly established church or other religious organization.
7. An individual paid or unpaid who on the basis of the individual's role as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, accepts responsibility for a child.
8. An employee of a social services agency who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
9. A peace officer or law enforcement official.
10. An emergency medical services provider certified by the Department of Health.
11. An employee of a public library who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
12. An individual supervised or managed by a person listed under paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
13. An independent contractor.
14. An attorney affiliated with an agency, institution, organization or other entity, including a school or regularly established religious organization that is responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or control of children.

Duty to Report – CHARTER SCHOOL employees, independent contractors and volunteers shall make a report of suspected child abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is the victim of child abuse under any of the following circumstances:

1. The CHARTER SCHOOL employee, independent contractor or volunteer comes into contact with the child in the course of employment,

	<p>occupation and the practice of a profession or through a regularly scheduled program, activity or service.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The CHARTER SCHOOL employee, independent contractor or volunteer is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or training of the child. 3. A person makes a specific disclosure to a CHARTER SCHOOL employee, independent contractor or volunteer that an identifiable child is the victim of child abuse. 4. An individual fourteen (14) years of age or older makes a specific disclosure to a school employee, independent contractor or volunteer that s/he has committed child abuse. <p>A child is not required to come before the school employee, independent contractor or volunteer in order for that individual to make a report of suspected child abuse.</p> <p>A report of suspected child abuse does not require the identification of the person responsible for the child abuse.</p> <p>Any person who, in good faith, makes a report of suspected child abuse, regardless of whether the report is required, cooperates with an investigation, testifies in a proceeding, or engages in other action authorized by law shall have immunity from civil and criminal liability related to those actions.</p> <p>Any person required to report child abuse who willfully fails to do so may be subject to disciplinary action and criminal prosecution.</p> <p>Any person who intentionally or knowingly makes a false report of child abuse or intentionally or knowingly induces a child to make a false claim of child abuse may be subject to disciplinary action and criminal prosecution.</p> <p>Any person who engages in intimidation, retaliation, or obstruction in the making of a child abuse report or the conducting of an investigation into suspected child abuse may be subject to disciplinary action and criminal prosecution.</p> <p>CHARTER SCHOOL shall not discriminate or retaliate against any person for making, in good faith, a report of suspected child abuse.</p> <p>Reporting Procedures - CHARTER SCHOOL employees, independent contractors or volunteers who suspect child abuse shall immediately make a written report of suspected child abuse using electronic technologies or an oral report via the statewide toll-free telephone number. A person making an initial oral report of suspected child abuse must also submit a written electronic report within forty-eight (48) hours after the oral report. Upon receipt of an electronic report, the electronic reporting system will automatically respond with a confirmation, providing CHARTER SCHOOL with a written record of the report.</p>
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	<p>An employee of CHARTER SCHOOL, independent contractor or volunteer who makes a report of suspected child abuse shall immediately, after making the initial report, notify the CEO and if the initial report was made electronically, also provide the CEO with a copy of the report confirmation.</p>
<p>GUIDELINES</p>	<p>When a report of suspected child abuse is made by a CHARTER SCHOOL employee or volunteer as required by law, CHARTER SCHOOL is not required to make more than one (1) report. An individual otherwise required to make a report who is aware that an initial report has already been made by an employee of CHARTER SCHOOL, independent contractor or volunteer is not required to make an additional report. The person making an initial oral report is responsible for making the follow-up written electronic report within forty-eight (48) hours, and shall provide the CEO with a copy of the report confirmation promptly after the written electronic report has been filed.</p> <p>When necessary to preserve potential evidence of suspected child abuse, a CHARTER SCHOOL employee may, after the initial report is made, take or cause to be taken photographs of the child who is the subject of the report. Any such photographs shall be set to the county agency at the time the written report is sent or within forty-eight (48) hours after a report is made by electronic technologies or as soon thereafter as possible. The CEO of CHARTER SCHOOL shall be notified whenever such photographs are taken.</p> <p>If the CEO or his/her designee reasonably suspects that conduct being reported involves an incident required to be reported under the safe schools act, the CEO or designee shall inform local law enforcement, in accordance with applicable law, regulations and board policy.</p> <p>If the CEO or his/her designee reasonably suspects that conduct being reported requires a report to the Pennsylvania Department of Education under the Professional Education Discipline Act, the CEO or his/her designee shall be responsible for making the report.</p> <p>Investigation – CHARTER SCHOOL principal shall facilitate the cooperation with the department of human services of the commonwealth or the county agency investigating a report of suspected child abuse, including permitting authorized personnel to interview the child while in attendance at CHARTER SCHOOL.</p> <p>Upon notification that an investigation involves suspected child abuse by an employee of CHARTER SCHOOL the principal shall immediately implement a plan of supervision or alternative arrangement for a CHARTER SCHOOL employee under investigation. The plan of supervision or alternative arrangement shall be submitted to county agency for approval.</p>

REFERENCES	Pennsylvania Public School Code of 1949 – 24 P.S. §§ 1-111, 1301-A <i>et seq.</i> Pennsylvania State Board of Education Regulations – 22 PA Code § 10.1 <i>et seq.</i> Child Abuse Recognition and Reporting Training – 24 P.S. § 1205.6 Child Exploitation Awareness Education – 24 P.S. § 1527 Educator Discipline Act – 24 P.S. § 2070.1A <i>et seq.</i> Endangering Welfare of Children – 18 Pa C.S.A. § 4304 False Reports of Child Abuse – 18 Pa C.S.A § 4906.1 Intimidation, Retaliation or Obstruction in Child Abuse Cases – 18 Pa.C.S.A. §4958 Child Protective Services Law – 23 Pa. C.S.A. §6301 <i>et seq.</i> CHARTER SCHOOL Board Policy - _____
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