

DIOCESE OF ORLANDO MISCONDUCT POLICIES & PROCEDURES

POLICY:

Whoever witnesses abuse that involves a parent and a child, an adult on any child or an employee on any child MUST report it IMMEDIATELY.

The procedures set out by the Diocese of Orlando to report any abuse – physical, sexual or emotional - are posted below.

PROCEDURE:

Any employee who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to child abuse or neglect by any person including another employee shall immediately make a report directly to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). That report shall be made by calling the toll free Florida State-wide child abuse or neglect hotline at # 1-800-962-2873.

The witnessing employee shall then promptly notify the Pastor, School Principal, Director of Religious Education or other responsible supervisor, who in turn, shall notify the Vicar General or Chancellor.

The person reporting the abuse or neglect shall confirm the report “verbally and in writing” to the local DCF office # 321 984-4780. A copy of the written report shall be sent to the Pastor, School Principal, Director of Religious Education or other responsible supervisor who shall, in turn, send a copy to the Vicar General or Chancellor.

SIGNS OF ABUSE & RESULTING BEHAVIORS

Physical Abuse: Unexplained bruises and welts
Unexplained burns
Unexplained lacerations or abrasions

Behavior: Wary of contact with adults
Apprehensive when other children cry
Aggressive or withdrawn
Frightened of parents
Afraid to go home

Physical Neglect: Constantly hungry, poor hygiene, inappropriate or dirty clothing
Unattended physical or medical problems

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Behavior: Begging or stealing food
Extended stays at school – early arrival/late departure
Poor attendance, tardiness
Fatigue, listlessness, falling asleep in class
Alcohol or drug abuse

Sexual Abuse: Difficulty walking or sitting
Torn or bloody underclothing
Bruises or bleeding of external genitalia
Venereal disease, especially in pre-teens
Delinquency or running away

Behavior: Unwilling to participate in P.E.
Withdrawn, fantasy or infantile behavior
Bizarre or unusual sexual behavior or knowledge
Poor peer relationships
Delinquency or running away

Emotional Abuse: Speech disorders
Lag in physical development

Behavior: Habit disorders, i.e., sucking, biting, rocking
Conduct disorders, i.e., antisocial, destructive
Neurotic traits, i.e., sleep disorders, inhibition of play
Psychoneurotic reactions, i.e., hysteria, obsession,
compulsion

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL POLICIES & PROCEDURES:

In addition to the above Diocesan policy on physical, sexual and emotional abuse, St. Joseph School has adopted and updated policies and procedures. Harassment and abuse of any individual because of sex, race, religion, national origin, age or disability either at school or during extra-curricula and sporting events is not tolerated. Such behavior is subject to disciplinary action.

Bullying & Sexual Harassment

It is a policy of St. Joseph School that bullying and peer sexual harassment is not tolerated. Using words – verbally or in writing – or comments towards another person that are associated with racism, sexism or violence is bullying and it will not be tolerated. Victims and witnesses to such behavior are required to report any incident to a staff member, teacher or administrator. Any student who witnesses bullying and fails to report it, will

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also be held accountable. All reports will be investigated and students responsible will be held accountable. The Principal will determine the consequences for such behavior on an individual basis. Consequences may include mandatory counseling, lunch detention, Friday detention, suspension or expulsion from St. Joseph School.

Legal Issues

St. Joseph School reserves the right to discipline students for off-campus conduct.

- ▶ On occasion, disciplinary actions have been called for resulting from something a student did outside of school or the school day, or something a student did on his or her own time. In these cases, the Principal may issue consequences because what a student does off-campus can detrimentally impact a school or a school sports program's reputation.

St. Joseph School will discipline any student who defames another student, St. Joseph staff member, or others in the school community. Deliberate defamation of others is not consistent with Christian values. Students and parents will be held accountable for intentional harm they cause others.

- ▶ In the legal arena, teachers are *no longer considered* quasi-public figures, thereby expected to take a certain amount of "grief" from parents and students. Courts have ruled that a teacher is entitled to the same right to their reputation that other people have. Therefore, if defamed, educators have a right to sue; courts have found in favor of teachers who brought defamation suits against parents or students.

St. Joseph School will discipline any student who makes e-mail threats to or about another student. Threats are threats whenever and however they are made.

- ▶ On occasion, a parent or student has registered a complaint with a teacher or Principal that their child is receiving (directly or indirectly) threatening or derogatory e-mails via Instant Messenger, Blogging, MySpace, FaceBook, or conveyed through other e-mail means. Parents must be vigilant in keeping their own children from initiating or receiving such threats. The Administration may impose a consequence if a matter of this nature is brought before them.