

The below is intended to help all staff to refer when in need. It aims to respect current circulars and policy documents issued by the Education Department. Additionally it also aims to be in line with the Teachers' Code of Ethics (2012). It is a live document and will be amended in order to respect the realities present in our Resource Centre. This document is the result of staff input in the In-service held in (June 2014) and the 2nd SDP (2014-15).

Use of social media: refer to DES 12/2011

Educators should also ensure that their profile picture upholds their professional image and that if one is posting photos of his/her students, they need to have parental consent before posting something online. As educators, we also need to establish boundaries with our students. An educator needs to be very careful about the language and tone used in communicating with students. Educators need to establish clear boundaries so as to have a professional educator-student relationship. It is very important that students learn to respect us and to keep a respectful tone in their interaction, while we reciprocate with the same attitude of respect.

While sharing one's experiences is healthy, even if we do it online, as educators we need to be very careful about how to comment about our students, our schools and the learning community. We need to remember that we are responsible for what we post on line and do our very best to avoid any negative, defamatory comments that may lead to any form of disciplinary or legal action against us. Interacting with colleagues online can help stay connected. However, one must adhere to a professional conduct when interacting with colleagues online. If at times, one feels the need to vent out his/her feelings, make sure that you understand that whatever is written publically, can be accessed by anyone, interpreted in different ways and can have dire consequences.

Anything in writing, can be easily printed or captured and used against you. It is very imperative that educators understand that facebook or other social networks cannot be used for personal reasons during contact time with pupils in class. Contact time is there for lessons.

Nurse:

The nurse is a professional and hence she / he is left to make his / her own judgements on the health condition of the patient.

The school nurse is to write on contact book as regards any medical and health issues in relation to the student. The contact teacher is always to be informed prior writing.

Consent forms:

If consent forms are not received by the date indicated, this will be considered as the parents/carers are not interested in the outing or activity. No need to fetch for consent on the day or outing or activity.

Emergency procedure (internal):

If a student or staff is involved in an accident which requires an immediate medical assistance the following procedure is to be followed:

1. phone office 110 – so that nurse is called on PA system – in the meantime a member of staff needs to phone clinic and hurries up to inform nurse (just in case PA is not heard or phone is busy).
2. first aider is called (a list will be provided)
3. SMT is informed

Food handling: refer to DCM 069/2015

Heads of Schools are kindly requested to note that any person involved in food preparation or food handling must, according to Legal Notice 178/2001 – Food Handlers (Registration) Regulations, 2001, have followed a Food Handling course and obtained the Food Handlers' Card. The different members of staff in schools, including but not limited to educators, have specific roles directly and/or indirectly related to providing a quality educational experience to students, which should always retain priority over other peripheral activities. Nonetheless, in such cases where schools run their own tuck shops with the help of school staff, the latter must also possess a valid card so as to handle food.

A list of staff and food handlers will be in evidence in the kitchen.

Disclosure by Staff:

If the disclosure made by staff does not negatively affect the performance at work, SMT does not have to be informed. If the person opens up to you but does not have the courage to seek help, encourage him / her to go to SMT or search for services available.

Disclosure by Students: (Refer to Policy: Child Protection Procedures for Schools 1999)

6.3 The Head of School/Effective Head or any other member of staff (except the trusted member of staff) should not communicate with the child. No member of staff should contact any of the child's family (unless urgent medical treatment is required, see 10.1) or any other person regarding the issue of alleged child abuse.

6.3.1 At this stage, it is imperative that no contact is made with the parents/carers of the child by any professional concerned.

6.4 If the abuse has been perpetrated by another child refer both children (i.e.abuser and abused).

6.5 Should an allegation of abuse be disclosed on school premises to advisory/support employees or to contract employees, working in an educational establishment, referrals are still to be made by the designated member of staff.

6.5.1 Should an allegation of abuse be disclosed to professionals from Student Services of the Education Division, not on school premises but during working hours, a referral to the C.P.S.U. is made by the employee to whom the alleged abuse was disclosed. Once the referral is made the employee will notify the Head of School/Effective Head about the referral. This should be made clear to all clients when setting boundaries in the initial contract.

6.5.2 Should the disclosure be made to professionals from Student Services in the Education Division during school holidays, the Head of School/Effective Head will be notified by the person to whom the disclosure was made, in writing following the referral.

6.5.3 If the child has already been working with this particular professional such as School Counsellor, School Psychologist, Education Social Worker or Guidance Teacher, then the working relationship will continue throughout the investigation to enable this professional to offer support to the child. No therapeutic intervention should take place during the investigation of the case.

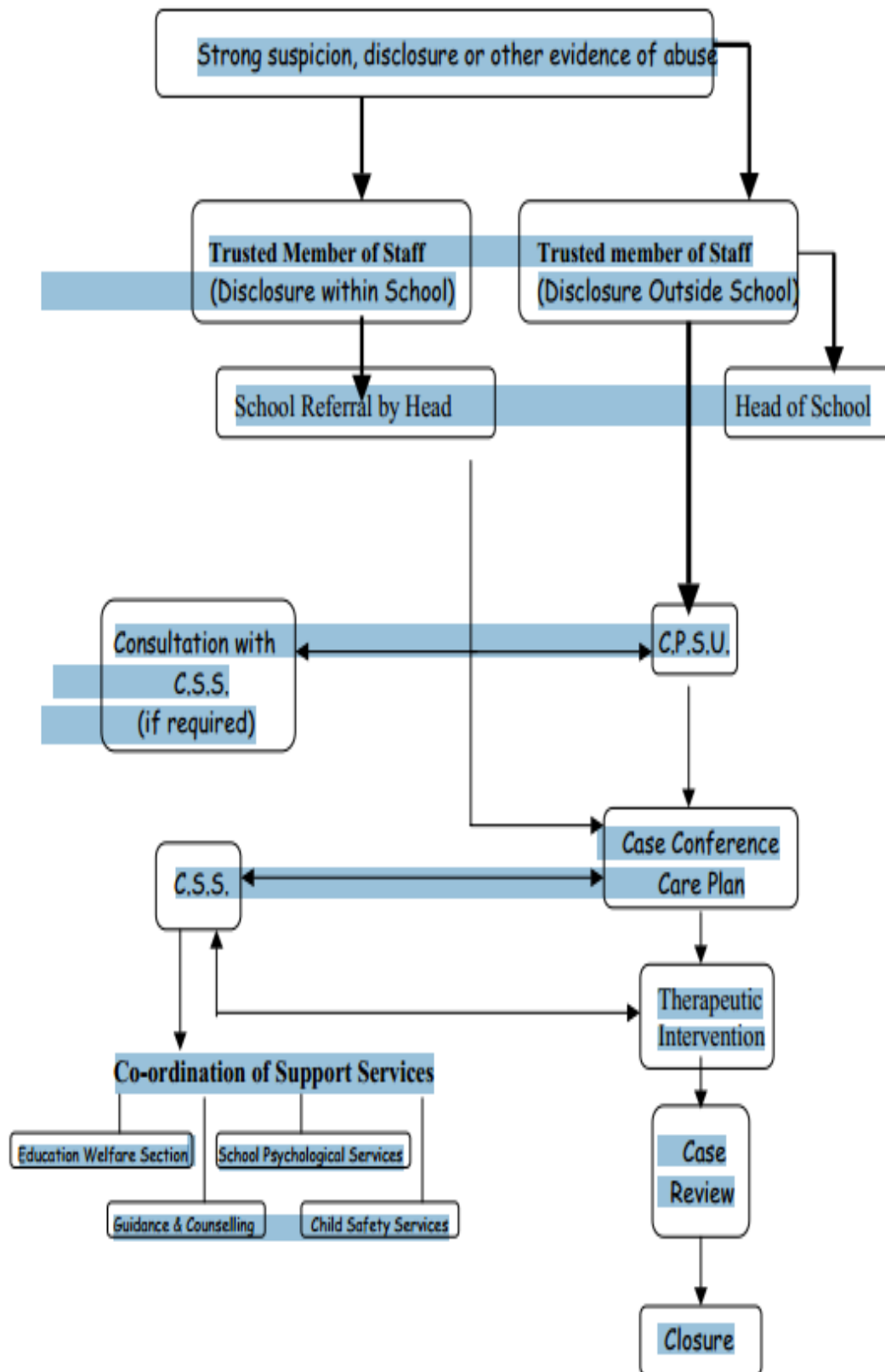
6.5.4 Where the employee is also a priest and disclosure occurs within the sacrament of confession, the employee should encourage the child to seek help by disclosing to another trusted professional who can refer the case. When disclosure occurs outside the sacrament of confession, usual referral procedures should be followed.

6.5.5 Should an allegation of abuse be disclosed to an employee of the an educational establishment (excluding professionals from Student Services), and such an employee does not work within the school setting (for example, an¹³ Education Officer), then this employee will notify the Head of School/Effective Head.

8. Summary Chart

8.1

Referral System



Pick up of students during school hours:

Once contact teacher knows about pick up she is to inform immediately the SMT and the office staff. If an LSA knows about pick up she is to inform immediately the contact teacher.

Once parent is at Centre, office informs SMT and SMT informs staff that parent is at Centre. Parent has to wait in reception until the student is brought in the reception. Parent signs to certify that he/she is taking the student. Escorts are informed by contact teacher that student has left premises.

If the information re pick is received at office, staff at office will inform the contact teacher accordingly and the mentioned above procedures are followed.

If student leaves premises due to sickness:

Nurse is called to meet the parent at reception together with the contact teacher. Parent is informed by contact teacher that a medical note stating "Fit for school" signed by doctor is to be forwarded once student is back at Centre.

If student leaves premises due to challenging behaviour:

Once should liaise with SMT in order to get instructions as regards way forward for the coming days.

Staff absent:

If possible inform van escorts by SMS that the day after he/she is sick. If SMS is not confirmed, a phone call should follow. One should make the necessary arrangements especially if staff is the first person to be picked by van.

Inform by SMS group members re sick (optional).

The office is informed by 8.15am that staff is sick.

If help is needed by group members, SMT is informed and group is to consider help as follows – Subject LSA paired; pairing with another group. The duties of the sick LSA are to be taken care by the other LSAs.

Teachers are to leave revision work in a place which has been agreed with the respective staff.

When a teacher is sick and an outing is scheduled – SMT is to be informed ASAP (due to transport logistics especially if van is hired) in order to cancel outing or find alternatives.

Groups are to consider VPs, Pottery and the surrounding areas when a teacher is sick.

Transport:

Prior asking for time off, staff is to ask escorts if there are any escorts also on time off on the particular day. If there other escorts on time off one should make sure that the ratio of staff and students is respected. If there is an issue SMT must be informed.

If possible inform van escorts by SMS that the day after he/she is sick. If SMS is not confirmed, a phone call should follow. One should make the necessary arrangements especially if staff is the first person to be picked by van. Escorts are to be informed as soon as possible! The earlier the better.

When parents forward pills to the Centre's nurse, these should be given to the escort who eventually will forward to the nurse.

It is the duty of each van escort to check that they have (i) correct contact numbers of students on route (ii) correct list of medications per student (iii) have a copy of consent stating that parents approve that student can be taken to hospital in case of emergency and given the necessary care. If there is an emergency on the van, one should check if there are any first aiders on the van. Depending on the emergency one should act accordingly. SMT are to be informed and guidance will be provided accordingly. SMT will contact parents and inform van escorts accordingly.

If for any reason or another van driver shows inappropriate behaviour or according to van escorts there are issues which risk the health and safety of all aboard on a frequent basis, a written report is to be forwarded to the SMT.

If there are parents who prefer that their son/daughter follow the below or any other option deemed by the van escorts not as per usual practice, a consent form should be filled:

- wait for transport alone in the mornings
- get off transport alone in the afternoon
- walk home alone in the afternoon
- get in the home alone in the afternoon

If for any reason van escort notices that on frequent occasions the students are not ready when van picks them up, SMT is to be informed. It is at the discretion of the van driver to decide how much to wait. It is advisable that a 5 min waiting time is carried out. If parents do not fetch out in the afternoon, the SMT is to be informed by a phone call.

Challenging Behaviour:

Challenging behaviour refers to terms specified in the Resource Centre Prospectus – “Challenging Behaviour guidelines”.

It is expected that when a challenging behaviour occurs:

- SMT is informed

- parents are informed – through contact book (minor issues), by phone by SMT (major issues)

- contact book should be signed

- if parents are informed more than three times in contact book (within a very short time period) a behaviour report is to be issued in order to be circulated with staff (listing strategies – what worked and what did not work).

- Staff log frequency and include a write up on standard templates (provided by SMT) and filed in the student's file.

- Contact teacher discussed with SMT outings activities.

Outings:

Outings are to be planned together as a group – teachers and LSAs. If all group members agree than booking is made. Plan B is to be considered and agreed upon.

Consideration for transport needs is to be carefully planned.

Time of activity is to be planned very well so to inform drivers accordingly.

Consider ordering packed lunch.

Learning objectives are to be clear to all.

Weather issues, accessibility, space limitations, phobias, toileting facilities, medicine issues are to be considered.

Parents are to be informed at least a week before in order give consent.

If students are to be left at Centre, teacher must ensure that the student is engaged in activities and if possible paired with another class.

If teacher is sick on the day, the outing is cancelled.

If three quarters of the class is not to attend the outing, the outing is cancelled.

On the day, temporary absence for (in office) is filled by teacher.

Take first aid kit.

Take mobile.

Take consent forms.

Contact teachers are to liaise periodically re students not going out.

Phoning parents:

SMT should always be informed by contact teacher/senior Isas prior to any phone call to parents.

The RC mobile is to be used. Phone calls are to be made in a quiet room; if sensitive information is to be discussed, the Head's office/ SMT office should be used.

No consent should be asked over the phone.

If there is no answer, consider phoning contact person or phoning later on.

Check if parents are separated and inform the parents.

If students are more than three days sick, and if possible staff is to phone home to check if student is well

Contacting persons outside Centre:

SMT is always to be informed prior contacting persons outside the Centre. Once go ahead is given and contact is made by email, the SMT is to be copied.

Purchases:

SMT is always informed about the need to purchase any item (any value).

If SMT approves, purchases are to be made.

If school transport is to be used, one should think beforehand in order that the enough time is allocated re the need for transport.

Maintenance:

Fill in on a separate form maintenance required.

Each job should be listed on a separate form.

Location should be clearly identified.

Priority is to be clearly indicated

SMT is to be informed is a top priority task has been referred and not taken care of as soon as possible.

Sick Students: Refer to Letter Circular DES/DQSE/04/2014

Students are certified sick by the Centre's nurse.

Once student is back (after sickness) a certificate stating he/she is fit for school should be provided. This is given to the nurse.

If student is on long sick leave, when possible contact teacher phones them home to check on them.

School Circulars are left apart in order to be given when student is back. One might also consider sending by post if urgent.

Student is registered on E1 as sick.

Sick leave: Refer to PSMC Chapter 4.3 Par: 4.3.1.4.

-if you are sick you are to inform Janet by 8.15am

-if you are sick - even for one day - you are requested to bring a medical certificate

-medical certificates are to be given to Janet as soon as you return back to work

-if sick and intend to stay at an address which is different to the one you gave us in the beginning of your scholastic year - it is your responsibility to inform Janet about this for the remaining of your sick leave.

Medicals (Private or public hospitals/clinics)

-it is your responsibility to inform the SMT at least three days before re possible medicals.

-you should also inform van escorts and class staff at least three days before

-it is your responsibility to ask the medical staff to give you the necessary papers that justify your absence at work - this should be filled properly - i.e.date of visit, time of appointment and time when you left hospital. This should be given to Asst Head.

-If the hospital appointment is finished and you wish to go back home instead of work - you are to inform the Head by sms (and if you do not receive a reply within 15 minutes, you are asked to

phone), how you will proceed - come back to work or avail of time off. If you avail of time off you should ask to be granted time off.

Time off: Agreement MUT 2010 pg. 41

-request for time off should be addressed to Head and such requests should not take for granted authorization of time off. You should always ask to be granted.

-you are requested to ask the SMT for time off at least three days before the requested day.

-SMT can refuse time off, especially when time off is requested when there is a whole school activity or other matters.

-if you need urgent time off which is not booked (example on the day) you are kindly asked to SMS the Head (and if you do not receive a reply within 15 minutes, you are asked to phone) for authorization. It is in your responsibility to inform escorts and liaise accordingly.

-the Head can only grant you time off for one day. If you need more you will need to liaise with the Head re procedure for authorization from Principal or Director Human Resources.

-This leave cannot be availed of just before or just after the holiday periods listed below, except in circumstances of urgent family leave:

Christmas - 23 December to 6 January Easter - Wednesday before to Wednesday after Easter Mid-Term - 1st, 2nd and 3rd November, provided that should the 2nd November fall on a Saturday or Sunday, an additional Day shall be granted in lieu. Mid-Term - Monday and Tuesday preceding Ash Wednesday (Carnival).

-those staff who do not avail of all the special leave might consider donating the special leave to others in needs as per circular HR/155/2014 "Donation of Vacation Leave/27.5 Hours Special Leave for Humanitarian Reasons" dated 29/10/14

Court sessions (Refer to PSMC)

-if you are asked to be a witness, this is not deducted as time off. You will be requested to inform the Head at least three days before and bring over the necessary documents.

-once session is ready you will be asked to inform the Head by sms (and if you do not receive a reply within 15 minutes, you are asked to phone), how you will proceed - come back to work or avail of time off. If you avail of time off you should ask to be granted time off.

-if you intend to open a court case - all sessions will be deducted from time off.

Interviews

-You will be requested to inform the Head at least three days before and bring over the necessary documents.

- Interview time will not be deducted from time off, once interview is ready you will be asked to inform the Head by sms (and if you do not receive a reply within 15 minutes, you are asked to phone), how you will proceed - come back to work or avail of time off. If you avail of time off you should ask to be granted time off.

IEVP procedure:

Use of mobiles: Standard Operations Procedures 2010 pg. 41

- Mobile phones should be set to silent/vibrate/
- If it is necessary to make or answer a call then it should be done so in a private area.
- If it is necessary to speak on the phone in the presence of others then do so in low tones.
- Don't interrupt colleagues by answering your mobile phone.
- Don't answer your mobile whilst in a meeting.
- Ensure that you choose a ringtone that isn't likely to drive colleagues around the bend.
- Don't text messages during sessions/lessons.
- Accessing internet and websites should be avoided if you are searching for clinical information use the ilearn account.
- Mobiles are not to be used in front of students.
- If there are urgent family/other important matter, SMT is to be informed about usage of mobile.
- If a phone call is received (not important), one should inform caller to phone later.
- Action and warnings will be issued where the use of mobile phone is seen as excessive and is affecting work performance.

Email etiquette: OPM Circular No 4/2015

1. Use the "To" address line for the primary recipient/s only. These are the ones from whom you anticipate a response. If necessary, state within your email-content what is expected from each and every individual you have added to the "To" recipients.

Start off your mail by asking yourself these simple questions

My mail will reach a busy inbox:

- Will this add value to my purpose?
- Are all the "To" and "Cc" recipients valid?
- What action am I expecting back and from whom?

2. Use the carbon copy "**Cc**" features appropriately. Avoid copying people who do not need to see your message. Recipient included in the "**Cc**" needs to know about the contents of the email for information only and overseeing this email by the recipient will not cause an obstacle to your task/instruction. Overuse can cause your emails to be ignored. When replying, do not include the person in the "**Cc**" field unless you have a particular reason for wanting this person to see your response.

3. It is rarely appropriate to use the "**Bcc**" feature. Make sure when using "**Bcc**" that your intentions are proper. To send "**Bcc**" copies to others as a way of talking behind someone's back is inconsiderate. On the other hand, you may wish to use the "**Bcc**" feature so as to distribute a mail-shot (memoranda and social activities) to a number of recipients (usually 10 people or more) without exposing other contact's email address. This will also avert an unsolicited 'Reply to All' action by the receiver.

4. Refrain from using the "**Reply to All**" feature so as to give your opinion to those who may not be interested. In most cases replying to the Sender alone is your best course of action. Only use "**Reply to All**" if you really need your message to be seen by each person who received the original message and make sure to remove mail addresses from the "To" and "Cc" field that don't need to see your reply. Never use "**Reply to all**" when you receive an email as a member of a large geographic or service-wide distribution list.

5. When "**Forwarding**" email, if you cannot take the time to type a personal comment to the person you are "**forwarding**" to, then don't bother. Don't forward anything without checking out all the mail thread. This might lead to distributing unwanted information. Check out the internal and external recipient. You may wish to omit some receivers at this stage.

6. Do not request delivery and read receipts on every single email. Doing so is viewed as intrusive, annoying and can be declined by the other side anyway.

7. Always include a brief concise "**Subject**". No subject can get your email flagged as spam. A clear subject will help the recipient to prioritise his invaded inbox and will also demonstrate clarity. Later on, your message may be searched or sorted by the subject field. Keep in mind that the recipients might have rules pertaining to subjects which will automatically divert your mail to the appropriate channel.

8. Always reply to each e-mail within at least 24 hours, and preferably within the same working day. If the email is complicated, just send an email back saying that you have received it and that you will get back to them. This will put the sender's mind at rest and usually the individual will then be very patient!

9. When you reply to an email, you must include the original mail in your reply, in other words click 'Reply', instead of 'New Mail'. A 'threadless email' will not provide enough information and the recipient will have to spend a frustratingly long time to find out the context of the email in order to deal with it.

10. Other useful tips: a. Be concise and to the point b. Do not attach unnecessary files c. Do not overuse the high priority option d. Use the words URGENT and IMPORTANT only in very exceptional cases. e. Do not write in CAPITALS - IF YOU WRITE IN CAPITALS IT SEEMS AS IF YOU ARE SHOUTING Once an organisation manages to bring to fruition such policies, the result will be stunning. Users within the organisation have to be disciplined and do not hesitate to ask;
• *Why have you copied me?* • *What is expected of me once I got your mail?* • *I do not need to be informed in such instances, etc.* Anything which reduces the invasion to your inbox has to be communicated. This is a learning process. After all, you have all the right to stop intruders from littering your home postal mailbox. The same applies electronically.