



LAUTOKA ANDHRA SANGAM COLLEGE

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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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1.0 POLICY OBJECTIVE:

This policy confirms Lautoka Andhra Sangam College's **zero tolerance on abuse, neglect and exploitation of children** and to take the necessary steps to ensure that children are protected during all school activities.

It also provides a framework for the protection, identification, managing and reporting incidents of child abuse in the school.

2.0 POLICY:

2.1 The staff and students of Lautoka Andhra Sangam College shall take all appropriate measures to protect all children from all forms of abuse.

2.2 Awareness and adherence to the contents of this policy shall be conducted and monitored by the Principal, CPO and Child Protection Committee.

2.3 All students' records relating to this policy shall be kept in strict confidence.

2.4 No persons with a proven or suspected child abuse background shall be recruited into the school; this should be vetted through police clearance.

2.5 The Child Protection Officer appointed by the school should have a valid registration with the Fiji Teachers Registration Board.

2.6 The Child Protection Officer shall be the focal point in all child protection issues.

2.7 Lautoka Andhra Sangam College shall have zero tolerance against child abuse perpetrators.

3.0 **RATIONALE**

Fiji ratified the United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child in August, 1993. As a signatory, Fiji has an obligation to protect children against:

- a.) All forms of physical or mental abuse(violence), neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.
- b.) Torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- c.) And promote their physical recovery, social integration and compensation in the event of any abuse or maltreatment.
- d.) Any work that is detrimental to their health and physical development.

4.0 **TERMINOLOGY**

1.) Bullying

An intentional hurtful behavior, usually repeated over a period of time, that intimidate or mistreat somebody weaker or in a vulnerable situation. The bullying may be physical or psychological and can use other means of communication including the internet and mobile phones. Bullying can be inflicted on a child by both men and women, as well as by young people themselves. The types of bullying include:

- a.) Physical-hitting, kicking, slapping
- b.) Verbal-racist or homophobic remarks, name-calling, threats
- c.) Emotional-tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from group
- d.) Sexual-unwanted physical contact or abusive comments and gestures
- e.) Spiritual-influencing/coercing the child to change his or her religion

2.) Child abuse

Refers to all direct or indirect abuse via omission or indifference against children by a parent, guardian, other adult and other children, whether bodily or emotionally.

3.) Child(ren)

In this policy, a child(ren) refers to a student who attends and is registered in this school.

4.) Child Protection

Describes the responsibilities and activities undertaken to prevent or stop children from being abused or maltreated.

5.) Child Protection Officer

A person selected by the school to be responsible for child protection issues.

6.) Emotional Abuse

The continual emotional ill-treatment of children that is likely to cause severe and lasting effects on their emotional development.

7.) Illicit drugs

Illicit drugs are unlawful drugs listed in Schedule 1 of the Illicit Drugs Control Act 2004.

8.) Neglect

It is when an adult fails to meet a child's basic physical, educational, financial and or psychological needs because of carelessness, forgetfulness, or indifference.

9.) Other means

An e-mail/fax from the parent's last known address would be equal to a signed consent note. It shall include the student's full name, form or class and specific type of activity.

10.) Perpetrator

A person who initiates and is actively involved in child abuse.

11.) Physical Abuse

Where children are physically hurt or injured – hitting, shaking, throwing, smacking, punching, kicking, shoving, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating and drowning.

12.) Psychological Abuse

Any form of abuse that may result in psychological trauma. Also referred to as emotional or mental abuse.

13.) Sexual Abuse

Any form of sexual activity performed on or involving children.

14.) School

All premises where teaching and learning takes place.

15.) School Head

Refers to the Principal

16.) Verbal Abuse

Sarcastic and derogatory remarks directed orally to children.

5.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATIONS AND AUTHORITIES

5.1 Education Act – 1978

5.2 Illicit Drugs Control Act – 2004

5.3 NCBBF – Fiji the state of the nation and the Economy 2008

5.4 Universal Periodic Review (UPR) – National Report submitted in Accordance with Paragraph 15 (A) of the Annex to Human Rights Council Resolution 5/1 – 2010

5.5 MOE Child Welfare Decree 2010

5.6 The Immigration Act 2003 under Section 2 (1)

5.7 Adoption of Infant Act

5.8 Domestic Violence Decree

5.9 Marriage (Amendment) Decree 2009

5.10 The Family Law Act (2003)

5.11 Juvenile Act (1974)

5.12 MOE Management in Schools Policy-2010

5.13 MOE Fiji Primary & Secondary Schools Inspectorate Systems Policy-2010

5.14 MOE Early Childhood Education Policy-2009

5.15 MOE Customer Service Policy-2010

5.16 MOE Drugs and Substances Abuse Policy-2010

5.17 MOE Excursion Policy-2010

5.18 MOE OHS Policy-2010

5.19 Convention on the Rights of the Child-1989

5.20 HIV & AIDS Decree- 2011

5.21 Crimes Decree -2009

5.22 Child Welfare Decree - 2009

6.0 **PROCEDURES**

6.1 Lautoka Andhra Sangam College shall ensure the existence and implementation of regulatory measures with financial implications and all forms of provisions to protect children from any form of abuse

6.2 All parents / guardians shall be advised of activities or events that may take students outside the school compound and sign a consent note pertinent to the precise activity or give written permission by other means.

6.3 Students who take undue sick leaves or appear to recurrently have days off for injuries or unexplained reasons shall have their reports sent to the school Heads for monitoring and intervention advice

6.4 Students personal information-both written and visual and relating to this policy, shall be kept secure and made accessible only to the CPO, BMC and Principal

6.5 A personal case record for each student will be kept confidentially.

6.6 The Principal upon receiving all necessary documents regarding a child abuse allegation shall refer the case to necessary authorities (social welfare, police, MOE or MOH) for their intervention and he/she shall continuously request for updates.

6.7 **Responding to Suspicions & Allegations**

6.71 **Receiving Evidence of Possible Abuse**

Upon receiving reports of possible abuse , the receiving officer shall write down everything in the form log book. He/She must keep it confidential and will only report to CPO for further investigation.

6.72 **Recording Information by the Child Protection Officer**

Upon receiving written report from any officer, the CPO shall interview the child and write down everything that the child says. He/She will then report only to the Principal who will take the necessary action.

6.73 **Reporting the Concern**

All suspicious and allegations **MUST be reported promptly**. Failure to report or misreporting with the intent of shielding an accused can result in disciplinary action instituted against the reporter.

6.73.1 If the school head is not available, the case should be referred to the vice principal/assistant principal, which ever is applicable.

6.73.2 In the absence of the school heads and assistants, the next most senior staff should be the receiving officer.

6.73.3 Where there is a complaint against an officer of MOE, school teacher, employee or volunteer, there may be two types of investigation:

6.73.3.1 Criminal in which case the police are immediately involved

6.73.3.2 Disciplinary or misconduct in which case the school will be Involved.

6.74 **Confidentiality**

6.74.1 Every effort should be made to ensure that **confidentiality is maintained** for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know only basis only.

6.74.2 All information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people.

6.75 **Internal Inquiries and Suspension**

6.75.1 After consultation with MOE, the PSE will immediately suspend any individual accused of abuse pending further investigation.

6.75.2 Depending on the findings of the police inquires, the MOE will assess all individual cases and make appropriate recommendations to PSE on the cause of action to be instituted against the officer.

6.76 **Recruiting and Selecting Personnel work with Children**

All personnel recruited to work with children must undergo proper screening and induction according to MOE and FTRA regulations. [Appendix 8]

7.0 **Guidelines**

7.1 **Good Practice**

All personnel should adhere to the following principles and action of good practices in addressing child abuse incidents. [Appendix 9]

7.2 **Indicators of Abuse**

Indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following. [Appendix 10]

7.3 Appropriate use of child images and personal information

Staff to be aware:

7.3.1 Before photographing or filming a child, obtain consent from the child or a parent or guardian of the child and provide an explanation of how the photograph or film will be used.

7.3.2 Ensure photographs, films, videos, DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.

7.3.3 Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts.

7.3.4 Ensure file labels do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically.

7.3.5 Treat children’s information with confidentiality and never provide a child’s personal details to unauthorized person(s)

7.4 Appropriate use of internal communication systems

Staff must never use internal systems such as computers, mobile phones, or video and digital cameras inappropriately and never to exploit or harass children, or to access child pornography through any medium.

8.0 **EFFECTIVE DATE****04/05/2018**

9.0 **REVIEW DATE****04/05/2019**

10.0 KEY SEARCH WORDS

Abuse, Emotional Abuse, TRB, Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Substance Abuse

11.0 APPROVED BY THE PRINCIPAL OF LAUTOKA ANDHRA SANGAM COLLEGE

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Signature

04/05/2018
Date