



Cascade Christian School Society
Board Policy Manual

Policy No. 7036
Date: 2011-01-01
Revised: December 20, 2016

Subject: Harassment and Bullying Prevention

Introduction

In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds, and praise your Father in Heaven. Matt. 5:16

Let us, therefore, make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. Romans 14:19

In Matthew 22:37 - 39, Jesus states that the greatest commandment is to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." We are all made in the image of God. We are all equal before God. Students and staff at Cascade Christian School have the right to develop their potential, to learn and grow, to become faithful disciples of Christ, in a positive and safe environment. Any form or experience of abuse is harmful to individuals and their relationship to God, to the school environment, and to the Cascade Christian School community as a whole, and will not be tolerated. It is the goal of the school to provide an environment that enables all people and especially its students to feel safe, accepted and respected. This policy outlines Cascade's priority to prevent all abuse of children and staff (professional and volunteer) within their community, and to provide a safe environment regardless of their gender, race, culture, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity and expression, while remaining consistent with the school's faith-values, cultural perspectives and philosophical values.

1. DEFINITIONS

Abuse: Cascade Christian School Society accepts the following general definitions of abuse.

(Source: Department of Justice Canada; <http://canada.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/fm/childafs.html>)

The term "child abuse" refers to the violence, mistreatment or neglect that a child or adolescent may experience while in the care of someone they either trust or depend on, such as a parent, sibling, other relative, caregiver or guardian. Abuse may take place anywhere and may occur, for example, within the child's home or that of someone known to the child. There are many different forms of abuse and a child may be subjected to more than one form:

• **Physical abuse** may consist of just one incident or it may happen repeatedly. It involves a deliberately using force against a child in such a way that the child is either injured or is at risk of being injured. Physical abuse includes beating, hitting, shaking, pushing, choking, biting, burning, kicking or assaulting a child with a weapon. It also includes holding a child under water, or any other dangerous or harmful use of force or restraint. Female genital mutilation is another form of physical abuse.

• **Sexual abuse** and exploitation involves using a child for sexual purposes. Examples of child sexual abuse include fondling, inviting a child to touch or be touched sexually, intercourse, rape, incest, sodomy, exhibitionism, or involving a child in prostitution or pornography. See also **5.1 Sexual Harassment Definitions**

• **Neglect** is often chronic, and it usually involves repeated incidents. It involves failing to provide what a child needs for his or her physical, psychological or emotional development and well being. For example, neglect includes failing to provide a child with food, clothing, shelter, cleanliness, medical care or protection from harm. Emotional neglect includes failing to provide a child with love, safety, and a sense of worth.

• **Emotional abuse** involves harming a child's sense of self. It includes acts (or omissions) that result in, or place a child at risk of, serious behaviour, cognitive, emotional, or mental health problems. For example, emotional abuse may include aggressive verbal threats, social isolation, intimidation, exploitation, or routinely making unreasonable demands. It also includes terrorizing a child, or exposing them to family violence.

Abuse Prevention Committee: A minimum (but not limited to) 3-person team appointed yearly by the Board of Directors of Cascade Christian School Society which includes a Board of Director (preferably the Chair of the Board of Directors), the principal of Cascade, and one of the teaching staff. The purposes of this committee is to oversee the implementation of the abuse prevention policy; to respond, if necessary, to allegations of abuse to students within Cascade Christian School Society and to provide appropriate actions; and to promote abuse prevention within the school society. The Principal will be the chair of the Abuse Prevention committee and the priority contact person for all disclosures of abuse for Cascade Christian Community Society.

Administration: is a direct reference to the principal of Cascade Christian School. In some cases the term administration would also refer to the principal and the teaching & support staff of the school.

Adult: A person who is eighteen years of age or older.

Cascade, Cascade Christian, Cascade Christian School or the school, refers to Cascade Christian School Society of Chilliwack, B.C. Canada.

Children/Youth: In general, these terms are used to refer to all children under the age of eighteen.

Board of Directors: The body of leaders of Cascade Christian School Society who serve as its highest governing body, with responsibility for overseeing the vision, policy, and organization of Cascade Christian School Society.

Police check: A search by the police for records of criminal convictions, using a national database. Police checks are one screening tool in abuse prevention policies.

Principal: the "principal" of the Cascade Christian School is the person responsible for administering and supervising the school. It is expected that this responsibility includes student

discipline, school accountability, student safety, the educational program of the school and supervision of teachers, teaching assistants, staff, and volunteers.

Staff: any person who receives remuneration for their services offered at Cascade Christian School.

Support Staff: any person who receives remuneration for their services offered at Cascade Christian School, who is not a certified teacher. They are non-teaching staff.

Student: any person who is under the age of 18 and is enrolled at Cascade Christian School.

Teacher: a staff member of Cascade Christian School who holds a permanent B.C. teacher certificate. A teacher is the one who:

- Plans the instructional program.
- Delivers/teaches the majority of the course/subject.
- Assesses student learning.
- Reports to parents on student progress.

Teacher Assistant: Teacher assistants are not required to possess British Columbia teacher certification. While a teacher assistant's role may vary according to school needs, it may not be that of a British Columbia certified teacher. They are non-teaching staff.

Volunteer: any person who participates with Cascade as an unpaid adult helper in the programs and activities of Cascade Christian School.

Vulnerable Person: A person who on account of mental or physical impairments or temporary distress has special needs for protection.

Special Cascade Programs & Field Trips: Refers to any activity which is sponsored by the Board of Directors & by the administration of Cascade Christian for the benefit/education of its children and youth that occurs off campus or outside the class room. In particular "field trips" refer to those events that occur off-site from the Cascade campus. This includes the yearly Mexico Missions Trip for the Grade nine class. These trips must be sanctioned by the administration and the parent's of the students through Field Trip Forms.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

2.1. All people are image bearers of God, worthy of respect, and therefore must be treated in a manner that respects dignity and does not demean them in their own eyes or in the eyes of others. Human sexuality is also a gift of God to be respected, valued and celebrated.

2.2. Abuse of any person is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. We will strive to foster the development of healthy relationships and prevent abuse in our school. To the best of our ability, we will avoid situations that may give rise to abuse, unfounded allegations of abuse, or the appearance of impropriety.

2.3. All members of Cascade Christian School constituency are urged to be vigilant against abuse and will be held accountable for their words and actions.

2.4. While parents have the primary responsibility for the care and nurture of their children, Cascade Christian School shares in the responsibility to protect and promote the well-being of all children which come under its care.

2.5. Cascade Christian School Society upholds that by the grace of God, healing is possible for victims of abuse and the offenders. Healing is assisted through the ministry of the local church of Jesus Christ and counseling services. While counseling is not a primary service offered at Cascade nonetheless it will be encouraged and facilitated as much as possible on behalf of the abused and abuser and as early as possible.

2.6. When reports of suspected abuse occur, appropriate investigative and corrective actions will begin without delay. All actions will support healing, repentance, and restoration of the abused and the abuser. For abusers, these actions may include disciplinary measures, and for Cascade staff and volunteers up to and including denial of paid or volunteer positions. After satisfactory resolution, suitability for return to a paid or volunteer position will be reviewed by the Abuse Prevention Committee.

2.7. Particular expression of abuse is also a crime punishable under federal and provincial laws in Canada. Cascade Christian School Society recognizes the mandate of civil authorities to maintain justice; we pledge to co-operate with them in the implementation of laws prohibiting abuse. All allegations of abuse of a minor will be reported without delay to the Children's Aid Society and/or police, as required by provincial law. As a Christian community, however, we will not leave the matter of abuse and its impacts only to the law courts and social services alone, because abuse and healing also have a spiritual dimension. Cascade will seek to procure spiritual ministry and counseling services necessary for those affected.

3. POLICIES FOR ALL CASCADE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

This policy applies to all programs and activities held within Cascade Christian School facilities on a regular basis.

3.1. General Risk Reduction Strategies

Access: All rooms used for classroom instruction, (computer lab, special instruction rooms, Band etc.), will have windows in or near the doors. Windows will not be covered or obstructed at any time. All administration, support staff and volunteers will express an open door policy with regard to office space and administration rooms.

Supervision: Two or more adults (teachers, teaching assistants, parent volunteers) should be present for all activities involving students, though not necessarily in the same room. When only two adults are present for an activity involving only one or two students, the activity should be done in a context that is visible to others.

Meetings: Teachers, teaching assistants, staff and volunteer adults will meet one on one with minors or vulnerable persons only in public spaces or locations where they are clearly visible to others. Meetings for the purposes of individualized instruction should occur in a public space or with the accompaniment of another staff person. All Cascade staff and volunteers are expected to exercise discretion and avoid situations that may lead to perceptions of impropriety with each other or with students.

Hallways: During school hours, including one ½ half hour before and after, the hallways, playground, and sport field will be monitored to guard against improper conduct, promoting healthy interaction at all times.

Policy Review: The Cascade Board of Directors and the Abuse Prevention Committee will review Cascade Christian School Policy 7036 on Abuse Prevention yearly for the purpose of assessment and necessary amendment.

Visitors & Guests: While visitors and guests are welcome on to the school campus, nonetheless, they must register with the office during school hours before they can engage with any of the administration or students. This applies to parents of the students as well.

4. SCREENING AND RECRUITMENT

4.1 Discrimination

We understand “discrimination” to be defined as an action towards someone, taken with partiality or prejudice.

- a. **Employment:** Cascade Christian School does not discriminate in employment on the basis of gender, race, national or ethnic origins, age, or disability.
- b. **Enrolment and the Provision of Programs:** Cascade Christian School does not discriminate in enrolment and in the provisions of its programs or services on the basis of gender, race, national or ethnic origins.

4.2 Requirements for Adult Involvement at Cascade Christian School

At the recommendation of the Principal, the Cascade Board of Directors is responsible for the offering of contracts to all Teachers and support staff. At the same time Cascade Christian School relies heavily on parent volunteerism for key areas of leadership and support such as the Cascade Board of Directors, the Cascade Parent Advisory Committee and day to day programs; such as concerts, field trips and Cascade community gatherings. The recruitment of all Cascade personnel, whether paid staff or volunteer leaders, must include a personal interview, a reference check, and a Police Background Check of the prospective person.

4.3 Screening and Recruitment of New & Existing Cascade Teachers, Support Staff (Paid), Cascade Board of Directors and Volunteers (Unpaid)

- a. At the beginning of each new school year, each new prospective member of the Cascade staff and the Cascade Board of Directors will be required to fill out an application;
 - i. **Teachers** – See **Policy 6020: Employment Application – Teaching Position**
 - ii. **Support Staff** (Teaching Assistants and Support Staff) - See **Policy 6012 Employment Application – Support Staff Position**
 - iii. **Cascade Board of Directors** – See **Policy 7036 - Abuse Prevention: Appendix D**
- b. All applicants will undergo a personal interview, a reference check and a Police Background Check as part of their application. Upon successful application, they will receive an orientation by the Abuse Prevention Committee; they will be asked to **read and sign**;
 - **Policy 6029 - The Standard For Life and Living,**
 - **Policy 6031 - Cascade Statement of Faith,**
 - **Policy 6032 - Code of Ethics for Cascade Teaching and Support Staff**
 - **Policy 7036 - Abuse Prevention - Appendix A - The Cascade Covenant of Care**

- c. At the beginning of each new school year, each new prospective non-paid volunteer will be required to undergo a personal interview, a reference check (**See Appendix D**) and a Police background Check. Upon successful application, they will receive an orientation by the Abuse Prevention Committee; they will be asked to read and then sign;
- **Policy 7036 - Abuse Prevention - Appendix A - The Cascade Covenant of Care**
- d. The Abuse Prevention Committee will conduct the interviews, following up on the references for all adults who make application for Cascade employment/paid staff, the Board of Directors and volunteer. The minutes of this committee are considered confidential. They along with the written reports of police and reference checks will be placed in a permanent, confidential file in a secure location in the school office, to be consulted only by members of the Abuse Prevention Committee and the Chair of the Cascade Board of Directors. These documents will be kept on file for at least fifty years as a record of due diligence. Any paid or volunteer staff member may request to see the content of his or her file.
- e. At the beginning of each new school year, **continuing members of the Cascade staff and the Board of Directors** from the previous school year are not required to undergo another personal interview, reference check or Police Background Check. They are required to reread and resign policies;
- **Policy 6029 - The Standard For Life and Living,**
 - **Policy 6031 - Cascade Statement of Faith,**
 - **Policy 6032 - Code of Ethics for Cascade Teaching and Support Staff**
 - **Policy 7036 - Abuse Prevention - Appendix A - The Cascade Covenant of Care**
- f. At the beginning of each new school year, **continuing adult volunteers of Cascade** from the previous school year are not required to undergo another personal interview, reference check or Police Background Check. They are required to reread and resign policy;
- **Policy 7036 - Abuse Prevention - Appendix A - The Cascade Covenant of Care**
- g. If a Cascade Christian School staff member or volunteer does not accept/renew Cascades policy commitments for all staff or volunteers, for that given year, they are disqualified to serve in the educational programs of Cascade Christian School.
- h. If a police check reveals past criminal activity which has no bearing on possible relationships with children, the Abuse Prevention Committee, after review, may approve that an applicant for Cascade Christian School can work with its students/children.

4.4. Code of Ethics for Cascade Christian School Staff

Please see Cascade Christian School Society **Policy 6032 - Code of Ethics for Cascade Teaching and Support Staff**

5. ABUSE - BULLYING

Cascade Christian School considers any type of bullying as a form of abuse. Cascade views it as fundamentally disrespectful and it will not be tolerated in any way. Stated positively, the absence of bullying, will mean that its students and staff will have the opportunity to participate and contribute meaningfully in activities associated with Cascade.

As outlined in the ERASE Bullying (Expect Respect and a Safe Education) it is an important part of our culture to develop and foster an understanding that at Cascade Christian School all members of the school community (students, staff, parents) feel safe, accepted and respected.

5.1 Common Forms of Bullying

Some common forms of bullying and harassment of which Cascade Christian School recognize are:

- Name-calling
- Unwelcome and repeated teasing
- Locking in a confined place
- Racial and sexually related slurs
- Unwelcome touching and/or physical assault
- Threatening notes, letters and emails
- Threatening words, actions or weapons
- Taunting
- Spreading rumours (gossip)
- Threatening or insulting graffiti
- Stalking
- Extortion
- Cyber-bullying (bullying by any electronic medium)
- Unwelcome comments in chat-rooms
- Other forms of word, actions or deeds that lead to intimidation or the victimization of another

5.2 Response to Bullying

Individuals who are involved in bullying will first be disciplined through corrective education, warnings, counseling, parent contact, appropriate consequences, in or out of school suspension or expulsion, depending on the severity of the infraction or the repeated nature of the infraction.

Cascade Christian School desires to be redemptive when applying discipline and recognizes that bullying is a learned behaviour that can be unlearned. Sometimes the bullying behaviour is not even recognized by the aggressor, and thus some education may be appropriate. However, if student safety is threatened in any way, the school reserves the right to immediately suspend the student to a board of review, The Abuse Prevention Committee, enacting **Appendix B, "Dealing with Reports of Abuse"**. A police investigation may be required.

5.3 Prevention Action Steps:

- Given the high degree of interchange and socialization between students on a daily basis, staff and students will be appropriately informed of Cascade's intolerance to bullying twice yearly by means of chapel instruction. It is the principal's responsibility to schedule and maintain this emphasis. Along with this, the Principal and Middle school teaching staff will

provide instruction to the Middle school students regarding a healthy biblical sexuality which avoids inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature. (See [5. Sexual Harassment](#)).

- Additionally by way of brochure, the student code of conduct will list the unacceptable common forms of bullying for parents and their students.
- Students will be encouraged to speak to a teacher as the immediate “first line of defense” if they believe they are experiencing any kind of bullying from another person. The student and the teacher will then inform the Principal of the incident(s).
- Teaching and support staff will be informed/reminded of this policy at the beginning of each school year by the principal.

6. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

We understand sexual harassment to be defined as “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.” Furthermore, we believe that the following types of conduct also constitute sexual harassment at different levels as described by Michele A. Paludi and Richard B. Barickmann (*Academic and Workplace Sexual Harassment: a Resource Manual*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991).

6.1 Sexual Harassment Definitions:

- A. Gender Harassment:** Generalized sexist statements and behaviors that convey insulting, degrading and/or sexist attitudes.
- B. Seductive Behavior:** Inappropriate and/or offensive physical or verbal advances of a sexual nature.
- C. Sexual Bribery:** Solicitation of sexual activity or other sex-linked behavior by promise of reward.
- D. Sexual Coercion:** Coercion of sexual activity or other sex-linked behavior by threat of punishment.
- E. Peer Harassment:** Sexual harassment by colleagues in a classroom, work environment, or social setting.
- F. Sexual Assault:** Sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual touching, or sexual interference (child). These are the ultimate forms of sexual harassment and are criminal offenses as well.

All forms of harassment, by staff, volunteers or students, creates a toxic harmful environment that makes education and work less productive and satisfying, and are clearly violations of biblical standards. Therefore all staff will proactively discourage the above behaviors.

6.2 Examples of Prohibited Conduct:

Examples of conduct prohibited by this policy include, but are not limited to:

- A. Flirtation, leering, advances and/or propositions of a sexual nature,
- B. Insults, humor, jokes and/or anecdotes that belittle or demean an individual’s or a group’s sexuality or gender,

- C. Comments or gestures of a sexual nature about an individual's body or clothing,
- D. Displays of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, in any form,
- E. Inappropriate touching, such as patting, pinching, hugging, or repeated brushing against an individual's body,
- F. Suggestions that submission to or rejection of sexual advances will affect decisions regarding such matters as an individual's employment, work assignment or status, salary, academic standing, grades, receipt of financial aid, or letters of recommendation.
- G. Sexual assault.

Please see **Appendix A - Appropriate and Inappropriate Touching**

7. PROTOCOL FOR REPORTING ABUSE

As the chair of the Abuse Prevention Committee, the Principal will be the priority contact person for all disclosures of abuse for Cascade Christian Community Society.

7.1 Sexual harassment by a student:

When the sexual harassment involves another student the complainant and/or his/her parents may talk to a teacher, a Board of Director, or the Principal. If the complainant talks with a teacher or Director first, then both the complainant and the teacher/Director are required to advise the Principal. The Principal will then follow up on the alleged harassment by talking to the harasser. The Principal will take the alleged complaint and report his findings to the Abuse Prevention Committee and if warranted the committee will enact policy, **Appendix B, "Dealing with Reports of Abuse"**. Legal authorities may be contacted at any time.

7.2 Sexual harassment of a student by a Cascade Christian School Society staff member, or Cascade volunteer:

When sexual harassment involves a Cascade Christian School Society staff member or volunteer the complainant and his/her parents may talk to a teacher, a Board of Director, or the Principal. If the complainant talks with the teacher or a Board of Director first then both the complainant and the teacher or Board of Director will advise the Principal. The complainant will be asked to document his/her complaint in writing. The Principal will then follow up on the alleged complaint by talking to the harasser and then report his findings to the Abuse Prevention Committee. If warranted, policy **Appendix B, "Dealing with Reports of Abuse"** would apply and legal authorities may be contacted at any time. If the sexual harassment involves the Principal then the complainant and confidante involved would bypass the Principal and approach the Board Chairperson directly. At that time, and because of the conflict of interest, the Principal's involvement and participation with the Abuse Prevention Committee would cease until such time that it is appropriate for him to be reinstated to the committee. His position on the committee would be fulfilled by an appointment from the Board of Directors.

7.3 Retaliation

Threats, other forms of intimidation, and retaliation against a complainant or any other party involved in implementing the Cascade Christian School sexual harassment policy are violations of the policy and a further criminal offence, and may be grounds for disciplinary action or police referral by the Abuse Prevention Committee.

7.4 False Allegations

Because of the nature of the problem, complaints of sexual harassment cannot always be substantiated. Lack of corroborating evidence should not discourage complainants from seeking relief through the procedures outlined above. However, allegations found to have been made intentionally dishonest or made maliciously without regard for truth will subject complainants to disciplinary action by the Abuse Prevention Committee including, but not limited to, suspension, expulsion, or police referral.

7.5 Prevention

Respect is the key to the prevention of sexual harassment. Being aware of the effect of our actions and being willing to modify them when they offend others is also important. Each member of Cascade can help make a difference by:

- being aware of how your attitudes and actions can constitute or condone harassment
- speaking out against harassment
- refusing to laugh at harassment disguised as humour
- offering support to anyone being harassed
- not participating in any action that may bring discredit upon ourselves, our schools, or the Cascade Christian School community.

Again, any students who are involved in sexual harassment will be disciplined through corrective education, warnings, counseling, parent contact, appropriate consequences, in or out of school suspension or expulsion, depending on the severity of the infraction or the repeated nature of the infraction.

Cascade Christian School desires to be redemptive when applying discipline and recognizes that sexual harassment can be an especially complex matter. Cascade believes that learned or mimicking behaviour that is inappropriate can be unlearned and corrected. Sometimes the harassment behaviour is not even recognized by the aggressor, and thus some education may be appropriate. However, if student safety is threatened in any way, the school reserves the right to immediately suspend the student, staff member, or volunteer to a Board of Review, The Abuse Prevention Committee.

Appendix A

Appropriate and Inappropriate Touching

Guidelines for Cascade Teachers, Staff & Volunteers

Physical Contact

It is essential to be careful regarding behaviour, language and physical contact when working with children/youth/vulnerable adults:

- Do not show favoritism when dealing with children/youth/vulnerable adults. Show a similar level of affection and kindness to all.
- Do not engage in or allow the telling of sexual jokes or behave in a way that promotes sexual exploitation of others.
- Provide clearly stated consequences for inappropriate behaviour. Stop inappropriate behaviour early. Be fair, consistent and reasonable, matching consequences to the age and ability to the child/youth.
- Do not use corporal punishment such as hitting, spanking or strapping.

Appropriate and inappropriate touching

A touch can convey a multitude of positive messages and communicate care, comfort and love; however, it is important to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touching. It is also important to be aware of, and sensitive to, differences in interpretation to touching based on sex, culture or personal experience.

Some examples of **appropriate touch**:

Love and care can usually be expressed in the following common-sense ways:

- Holding or rocking an infant who is crying
- Affirming a participant with a pat on the hand, shoulder or back
- Bending down to the child's eye level and placing a hand gently on the child's hand or forearm
- Putting your arm around the shoulder of a person who needs comfort
- Taking a child's hand and leading him/her to an activity
- Holding hands for safety when changing locations
- Shaking a person's hand in greeting
- Holding a child gently by the hand or shoulder to keep his/her attention as you redirect behaviour
- Anointing a person with oil on the head
- Holding hands in a circle prayer or song
- Providing comfort with a wet, warm cloth.

Some examples of **inappropriate touch**:

- Kissing a child/youth/vulnerable adult or coaxing them into kissing you
- Extended cuddling
- Tickling
- Piggy – back rides
- Having others sit on your lap (except for babies/young toddlers)
- Touching anyone in any area covered by a bathing suit (except changing infant's diapers)
- Hand holding, except for the examples listed above
- Stroking a child/youth's hair
- Hugging, where an adult knows or ought to have known that hugging is inappropriate.

Dealing with a participant's inappropriate behaviour

The best approach to dealing with inappropriate behaviour is thoughtful prevention. If a teacher/volunteer has prepared for teaching/leading, makes clear statements about expectations and provides an engaging program, inappropriate behaviour will be avoided or reduced. If, however, a child/youth/vulnerable adult's behaviour is unacceptable, these practices must be followed:

- Tell or remind the child/youth/vulnerable adult what is expected.
- If it is necessary to speak to a child/youth/vulnerable adult in private, move to a quiet place in view of others. Seek supervisory help if needed and if available.
- Keep children/youth/vulnerable adults from harming themselves or others.
- If necessary, engage another adult to help you remove the child/youth/vulnerable adult from the situation to calm down.
- Discipline with children and youth must be limited to talking and time out. Correction to a vulnerable adult must be limited to talking to a vulnerable adult or his/her guardian.
- Provide a 'time-out' space for younger children on one side of the room until they are ready to rejoin the group. The 'time-out' should be no longer than one minute for each year of the child's age.
- Inform the parent/guardian of the problem and work co-operatively with them. They may have good ideas of how to deal with particular situations.

Do not use corporal punishment (such as hitting, spanking or strapping) under any circumstances.

Appendix B

Dealing with Reports of Abuse:

When a student or child is upset or distressed about a situation, he / she may turn to a trusted adult for support and advice. Often, though, they may be hesitant and shy about discussing what has happened. Feelings of guilt or shame are common. The teacher, teaching assistant, staff member or volunteer should help the student/child feel safe and understand that they can talk about what happened

A listening adult should be supportive and pay attention to what is said. Be cautious about asking questions. Asking questions can invalidate future statements to police or child welfare authorities and can cause a case to be dismissed in court. Accept the student/child story; do not dispute it. Investigating the incident is the responsibility of the protection agency or police. Although it is difficult, be calm, supportive and hopeful.

It is important not to make promises that you cannot keep, such as promising to stop the abuse, punish or remove the offender. Do not promise not to report the incident to the authorities. If you have inadvertently promised to keep what the student/child says confidential, tell him / her that you must tell someone who can help you both.

Note: Any person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a student/child may be in need of protection must report the suspicion to a protective agency or police authority.

A teacher/staff member/volunteer at Cascade Christian School who hears an allegation of abuse should confide this to the Principal or the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Cascade Christian School.

Reporting to a Protection Agency:

If the Abuse Prevention Committee has reasonable grounds to suspect that a student/child may be in need for protection, they will promptly report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to a children's aid society or other appropriate protection agency.

Professionals or officials must report any suspicion that a child is or has been bc in need of protection, where such a suspicion arises from information revealed in the course of his or her professional or official duties. By the way of example, in Ontario, professionals who fail to report a suspicion of abuse may be fined up to \$1,000, according to provincial standards.

Information Needed by a Protection Agency:

When one calls a protection agency, that person should prepare notes on why he / she is calling.

- Ask for an intake screener.
- Give your name and location, or you may remain anonymous.

- State that you are making a report regarding a person you believe to be in need of protection.
- Give your relationship to the person and / or family
- Indicate what you heard from the student/child, or what you observed.
- Offer facts such as dates, descriptions of the student/child and identifying facts about people who were involved.
- Share knowledge of other agency or community involvement if known.
- Provide any relevant background information.

Procedure if Contacted by a Protection Agency:

1. Any request from a child protection worker (see photo ID or badge to verify identity) should normally be made in person. The worker will want to speak with the person filing the alleged abuse report and usually to the person to whom the child / youth spoke. If the matter is urgent and those investigating cannot do a personal interview, the investigator may telephone you from his / her office.

2. The child protection agent should identify themselves and provide their business contact phone number. Record the workers first and last name.

- Do not give any information at this time. The investigator will explain the process to follow and what information he / she is seeking
- It is your responsibility to verify that this is indeed a child protection agent. Simply say, "I need to move to another phone. May I phone you back in 30 seconds?" Move to a phone where you can ensure confidentiality.
- When you return the call, provide the necessary information.
- Ask what is to happen next. This is critical as a court order may be warranted and restraining order put in place. The organization should be aware of this. Details do not need to be given. Ask when the organization can expect a final report on the case if further information will be required.
- Make clear written notes about what you reported, date, time, phone number and name of investigator. Place in a confidential, locked, metal file cabinet.

Reporting to The Insurance Carrier

Any allegation of abuse, no matter how minor, should be reported immediately to your organization's insurance company. The prompt reporting of incidents is extremely important, because it allows your insurer to intervene and help manage the situation.

Organizational Response to a Report of Abuse:

Disclosure of an incident of alleged abuse is an emotionally charged experience. When an individual discloses that he / she is a victim of alleged abuse, it is important to:

- Assure him / her that he / she will be listened to and be provided with support throughout the process
- Take the allegations seriously
- Keep emotions in check; when disbelief or horror is shown, it may result in the individual becoming withdrawn or unwilling to share the experience with you
- “Listen more, talk less”
- Remind him / her that he / she is in no way at fault for the abuse
- Affirm that it is always appropriate to tell someone the he / she has been abused
- Remind him / her that your first priority is his / her protection
- Reassure him / her that ongoing care will be provided for him / her and his / her family
- Provide support to him / her; give reassurance that he / she has done the right thing in reporting this incident
- Report the incident to a designated senior authority within the organization

Do Not:

- Promise him / her that you will not tell anyone; some secrets should not be kept secret; assure the individual that this information is to be restricted to those who need to be advised.
- Prejudge the situation
- Take an adversarial approach, or defend the alleged perpetrator by making comments like, “I can’t believe they did that.”

Response to the Media:

- If it is deemed essential to respond to media, a designated individual will be the spokesperson for the organization – in the case of Cascade Christian School it will either be the Board of Directors Chairperson, or the Principal of Cascade Christian School.

A sample response could be as follows.

“All allegations of abuse or harassment are taken seriously. The protection of children / youth / vulnerable adults is a priority of Cascade Christian School. In accordance with civil law, an allegation of abuse has been reported to (insert the name of the appropriate governmental protection agency)”.

Appendix C

Covenant of Care

The Covenant of Care for Cascade Christian School Society

I promise, in all my relationships with children/youth/vulnerable adults, to follow appropriate action as defined by my training orientation – I have read Cascade Christian School Society *Abuse Prevention Policy 7036*.

I promise to use only the physical contact that is deemed appropriate by the document **(See Cascade’s Abuse Prevention Policy 7036 – Appendix A- Appropriate and Inappropriate Touching)**, which I have read and understand;

I promise to use appropriate language;

I promise to show no bias based on gender, ethnic background, skin colour, intelligence, age, religion, sexual orientation or socio-economic status;

I promise that I will not harass others;

I promise to respect confidentiality and privacy, unless a student or child at Cascade is in danger, then I will report to Cascade’s Abuse Prevention Committee (Principal Ryan Morrow, a Cascade Board of Director), a child protection agency or the police.

I have read and agree with the covenant of care.

Signature: _____ Date: _____