




Najd National Schools
International Program

Child Protection Policy



Najd National School for Boys
International Program
Child Protection Policy

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I. Policy Statement

Najd National Schools recognizes that children have the right to be protected from inappropriate behavior taking place inside or outside school premises. Because students' welfare is our central attention, we have adopted a zero-tolerance policy against all kinds of abuse because we believe that students are entitled to grow up in a safe and healthy environment.

In order to deter abuse, we educate our faculty and staff to identify and report all cases of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. We also train them to identify sexual exploitation, neglect, and inappropriate behavior between children.

We provide guidance for faculty, staff, and parents about identifying any potential case of abuse taking place in school or at home. We also expect all the employees we recruit to be up to the level of awareness of this issue of abuse.

II. Scope

The scope of this policy applies to faculty, staff, volunteers, students, or anyone on behalf of Najd National Schools.

III. Objectives

This policy and inclusive guidelines were devised to ensure that children will be safe during the learning process. The purpose of the policy is to:

- Create a healthy educational environment that offers protection to all students
- Define child abuse practices
- Inform the recruitment procedure

- Protect the children who receive Najd National School's services, while respecting their right for confidentiality
- Provide staff and volunteers with a policy that reflects our approach about child protection
- Provide assessment tools for a clearer identification of abuse
- Present staff with a framework for reporting abuse

IV. Abuse

We will define the various types of abuse including physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, sexual and commercial exploitation, child neglect, and inappropriate behavior of children towards other children. Each section will include a detailed definition, plus an indicator section.

IV. 1. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse refers to a non-accidental act on a child that is carried out with the intention of causing physical harm. This kind of harm includes choking, slapping, pinching, pushing, or boxing someone. Faculty and staff will inquire about any visible sign of physical harm in order to know whether it is a result of physical abuse or not. In some cases, students might disclose cases of physical abuse, but sometimes you have to look for the following in order to spot students who are physically abused:

- Signs of bruising, burning, red bulges on the skin
- Unexplained black patches around the eye
- Crying and refusing to go back home or go to school
- Any physical injury that relates to certain categories of physical abuse

- Looking worried when a certain individual approaches the subject
- Agitation as if something wrong is going to happen
- Recoiling when touched
- Aggression towards other students

IV. 2. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the determined emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on child's emotional development. This form of abuse has detrimental effects that are no less harmful than physical abuse. The problem with emotional abuse is that it can sometimes be hard to detect. Emotional abuse includes shouting, silencing, ridiculing, bullying, degrading, mocking, or emotionally blackmailing children. All types of emotional abuse affects children's attention span drastically, and could also impact the child's social, emotional, and physical development. Faculty, staff, and parents should investigate the situation if the child:

- Seems anxious or afraid
- Appears socially detached and unresponsive
- Lacks of attachment to parents
- Displays aggression or extreme behavior
- Underachieves or loses concentration
- Practices attention seeking behavior
- Looks anxious more frequently
- Becomes extremely passive or aggressive
- Has delayed physical, emotional, and mental growth
- Thieves compulsively
- Is characterized by unwavering tiredness

IV. 3. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves enticing or forcing a child to take part in sexual activities including rape, kissing, touching, masturbating, or involving children in looking at photos of sexual nature, or any sexually suggestive behavior. Sexual abuse can bring about shame, self-guilt, suicidal thoughts, psychological agony, addiction, and self-abrasion. Molesters use traditional or online grooming to lure their victims into an illicit sexual behavior. In cases of sexual abuse, children will have the following signs and indicators:

- Pain or irritation to the genital area
- Difficulty urinating
- Shying away from a specific person
- Having sexually transmitted diseases
- Change in mood or appetite
- Age inappropriate sexual behavior, or sexually provocative
- STDs
- Withdrawing from friends or family members
- Flashing one's genitals to others
- Mentioning getting special attention from a secret friend
- Adopting more childish mannerism
- Thumb sucking, baby talk, or any sign of regressive behavior
- Abdominal pain or discomfort while sitting or walking
- Experiencing unexplained physical illness

IV. 4. Sexual Exploitation & Commercial Sexual Exploitation

Sexual exploitation is the act of taking advantage of a person's sexuality and attractiveness for a personal gain. It is the act of attempted or practical abuse of someone's power or trust for sexual purposes. Children may be tricked into believing that they are in a loving relationship; eventually, they trust their abuser without realizing that they are being abused. Sexual exploitation thrives in a school environment where there is access to children. This act violates human rights and is a betrayal of the fundamental values of Najd National Schools.

Sexual exploitation includes observing other person's external genitalia or exposing genitalia to another person. Sexual exploitation also includes taking photos or videos of one's nakedness, intimate body parts, or any form of sexual activity without prior consent. Child's sexual exploitation doesn't necessarily have to be face-to-face; it can take place online.

Online sexual exploitation can take the form of grooming where an adult develops a relationship with a child for indecent purposes. Sexual offenders use fake identities to convince their victims that they are potential boyfriends or girlfriends, and then they steer the conversation towards sexual experiences or ask the victim to send nude photos or videos. The presence of social media, messaging, and live streaming can facilitate this offence. Child sexual offenders usually pay facilitators to display sexual content of sexual offenders and their victims, or any other form of sexual offence. Therefore, we will need to bring awareness against this issue in our school curriculum.

Commercial sexual exploitation is another form of exploitation and involves exchange of favors; a favor might be a promise of good grades or protection. In this form of



exploitation, the abuser promises the child money, gifts, food, clothes, or good grades in return for a sexual favor.

Signs of sexual exploitation include:

- Sudden secretive behavior of a child
- Physical or mental developmental disabilities
- Skipping school
- Making trouble in class
- Possession of unexplained gifts
- Emotional instability (Mood swings)
- Switching to a new page on mobile phone when you approach the child
- Improper sexual behavior
- Over-familiarity with strangers
- Sexting
- Mysterious physical harm like bruising or cigarette burns

* Note that some signs and indicators do not necessarily indicate abuse.

IV. 5. Neglect

Child neglect is an ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs, like clothing, proper sustenance, adequate shelter, medical care, or emotional needs. This form of abuse leaves a child with emotional scars and physical manifestations. Neglectful parents might abandon children at home or in a room for a long time, or sometimes leave them on the street playing with friends without checking on them. Parents might also abandon children in a dangerous situation that could inflict harm on them, for instance, children would be running around the place and messing with plugged electrical appliances, matches, or the stove. The following are signs and indicators of neglect:

- Dehydration due to deficiency of water intake
- Poor hygiene and infestations
- A body odor smell of urine or feces
- Poor dental care and hygiene
- Dirty uncut nails, unclean hair
- Weight loss
- Repeated late arrival to school or non-attendance
- Low self-esteem
- Fatigue because of nutritional deficiency
- Absence of adaptive aids needed for the child (glasses, medication, etc.)
- Extreme loneliness or need for affection
- Compulsive thieving

IV. 6. Inappropriate Behavior of Children towards Other Children

Young children are curious by nature about their body parts. In Grade School, children develop social awareness about the sensitivity of the topic of sexuality, so this topic becomes secretive and hidden from adults. By the age of ten, children start showing the first signs of puberty, and this brings more interest in their sexuality. At that point, they become fully aware of their sexuality, and start indulging in masturbation and experimental sexual activity with other children, sometimes it involves children of the same sex. Professional help is required when developmental sexual activity involves children of different ages groups, or when forced sex is used in any context. We also need to intervene if sexual activity starts interfering in children's daily life, activities, and interests.

- Excessive obsession with sexual body parts
- Regular, determined sex play with other children, even after being warned not to
- Flashing body parts at other children
- Pattern of inappropriate sexual act
- Mimicking sexual intercourse with other children
- Forced sexual behavior
- Masturbation in front of other children
- Any sexual activity causing physical or psychological harm

V. Procedures / Responsibilities

It is the intention of Najd National Schools to ensure that all faculty and staff comprehend their roles and responsibilities in the process of helping us combat all forms of abuse. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure the application of this policy. Faculty and staff must be attentive and fully aware of the signs and indicators of potential or actual abuse. They will be responsible for reporting concerns, suspicions, or accusations of suspected cases of abuse, even if a child does not want to disclose a personal case of abuse. Faculty and staff should be aware of the array of situations that they have to deal with, including cases of abuse that involve a child with another child or a child with a staff member.

V. 1. Child Protection Officer

Najd National School has assigned a child protection officer whose main role is to receive and act upon any reported concerns. The Child Protection Officer (CPO) has to fulfil the following responsibilities:

- Implement the Child Protection Policy and promote best safeguarding practice
- Introduce the Child Protection Policy to new staff during the induction week
- Conduct presentations on various topics relating to child protection
- Report incidents of abuse to the child health, safety, and protection committee
- Raise awareness of the code of conduct that articulates the values of Najd National School
- Attend to any breach of the staff code of conduct immediately
- Keep the Child Protection Policy up to date with the latest developments in child protection field

- Initiate and retain contact with local and statutory agencies
- Report to the child health, safety, and protection committee
- Liaise with statutory and civil child protection agencies
- Lock and secure confidential records of all reported cases and their resolution

V. 2. School Clinic

The school clinic staff have to record any case of corporal punishment or any non-accidental body hand marks or bruises they find on children's bodies. They will record any cuts or bruises using a paper illustration of the human body to mark them on it. Then, they will send this illustration to the child protection officer who will act upon this recorded evidence of abuse.

V. 3. Child Health, Safety, and protection committee

Our Health, Safety, and Child health, safety, and protection committee will be responsible for receiving concerns about any child. This committee that consists of the principal, educational expert, the school doctor, teacher representative, and the child protection officer, will act on the information they receive and choose the most appropriate response to any alleged case of abuse. This committee undertakes to:

- Create child welfare policies
- Find solutions for child health, safety, and protection pending issues
- Monitor compliance with Saudi safety standards for child safety and protection
- Implement and monitor all aspects of child health, safety, and protection
- Create long term and short term strategic plans and initiatives for health and safety improvement

- Provide advice on a range of major matters affecting children at school

V. 4. Child Protection Procedures

V. 4.1. Reporting

All faculty and staff should do whatever is best for child's interest. In the event of suspected or alleged case of abuse, the first person to be notified of the case is the CPO.

If the CPO is not available, report the incident to the child health, safety, and protection committee principal. Staff must not conduct investigations or attempt to solve any case of child abuse on their own. Any concerns reported to staff should be addressed as soon as possible. After a staff or faculty member notifies the CPO, a decision will be made as to whether seek further guidance or notify the Social Services Department in Riyadh.

All reported cases should be addressed as soon as possible. In the case of direct disclosure, it is essential to listen attentively to children and take whatever they say seriously. Any failure to report a concern about a child is a breach of the rights of children, and will incur legal issues upon the lawbreaker.

V. 4.2. Confidentiality

No promise of secrecy should be given when the abuse is alleged. Staff must share all the information they know with the CPO and concerned agencies. All the information surrounding the case must not be shared with people who have nothing to do with the investigation. The child health, safety, and protection committee principal should inform the family of the abused about all the procedures involved in the investigation.



Disclosure of information to the committee helps the investigation and helps eliminate or lessen any potential future threat.

V. 4.3. Filing

It is the responsibility of the CPO to record all cases of abuse in writing and secure them in a child protection file.

V. 4.4. Dealing with Disclosures of Abuse (Speak out Cases)

Abused children only disclose their concerns with the people they trust. If children put their trust in you, you show sympathy because abused children are very sensitive and have low self esteem and might withdraw if they don't see these traits in you. The staff member should follow the 5Rs process.

V. 4.4.1. Receive


This is the initiation stage, and the most sensitive one. Listen to the child attentively; this is not an investigation, so do not press for information. Any mistake in this stage will hinder smooth progression of the investigation.

V. 4.4.2 Reassure

Children sometimes feel guilty for disclosing any concern they deem sensitive. You need to reassure them with the thought that choosing to report is a wise decision. Do not promise children that their case will be a secret.

V. 4.4.3. Respond

At this stage, you should focus on objective narration of the story and avoid asking subjective leading questions like yes/no questions. Be cognizant when you ask children



to narrate the incident because we do not want children to tell their version of the alleged case.

V. 4.4.4. Record

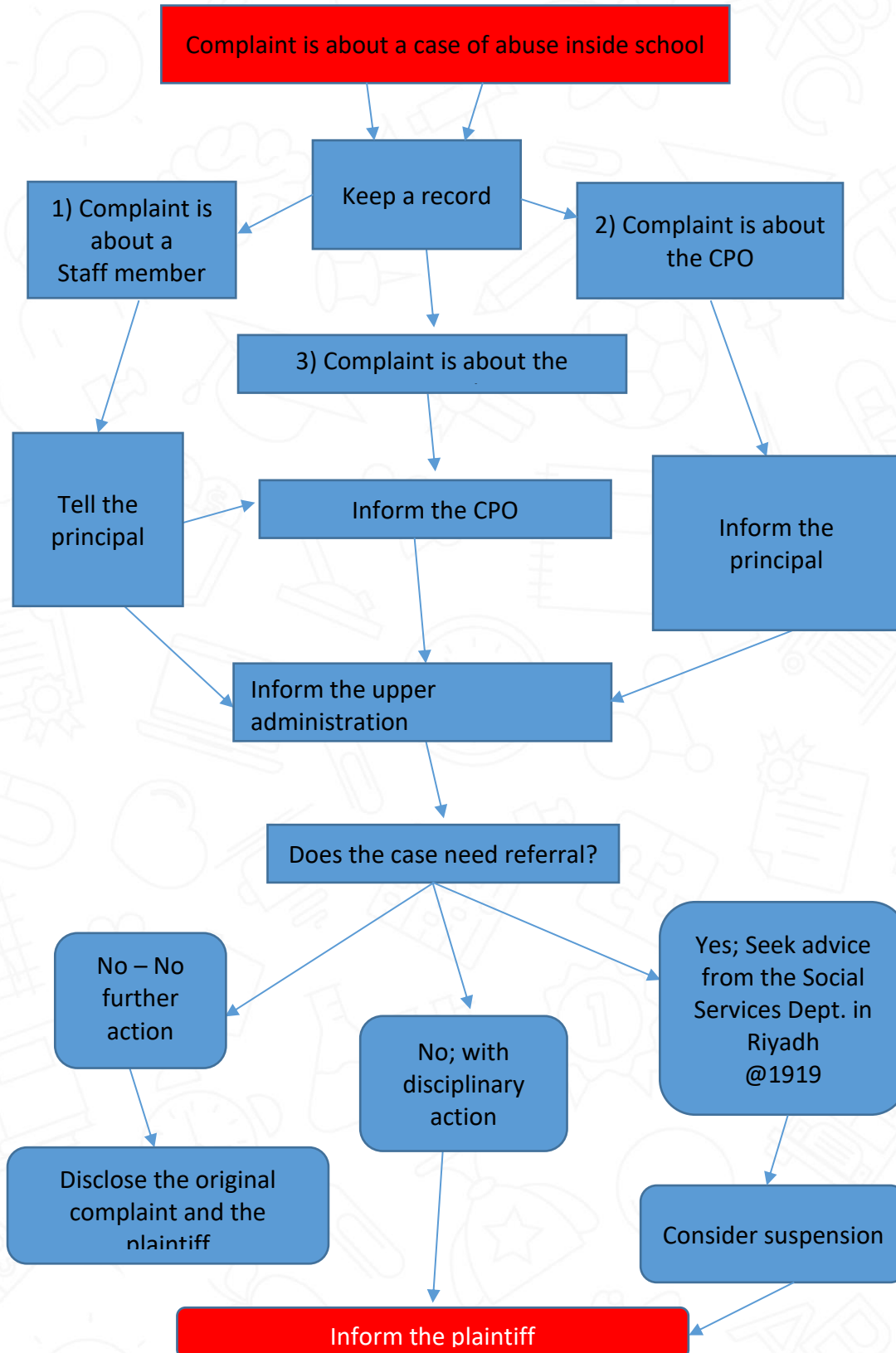
You should write the discussion immediately; include your name, the name of your colleague if present, time, place, and date. When you write down the discussion, quote what the child has said whenever possible. Write down or sketch any injuries a child has endured. Ask the school clinic to provide you with an illustration of the human body to use for recording any non-accidental body hand marks or bruises. Note that what you write might be used in court proceedings.

V. 4.4.5. Report

You have no official consent to solve the problem. You should report this incident immediately to the CPO. If you couldn't reach the CPO, report the incident to the child health, safety, and protection committee principal. Any information you reveal to people who are not involved in the investigation may be considered libelous to the alleged.

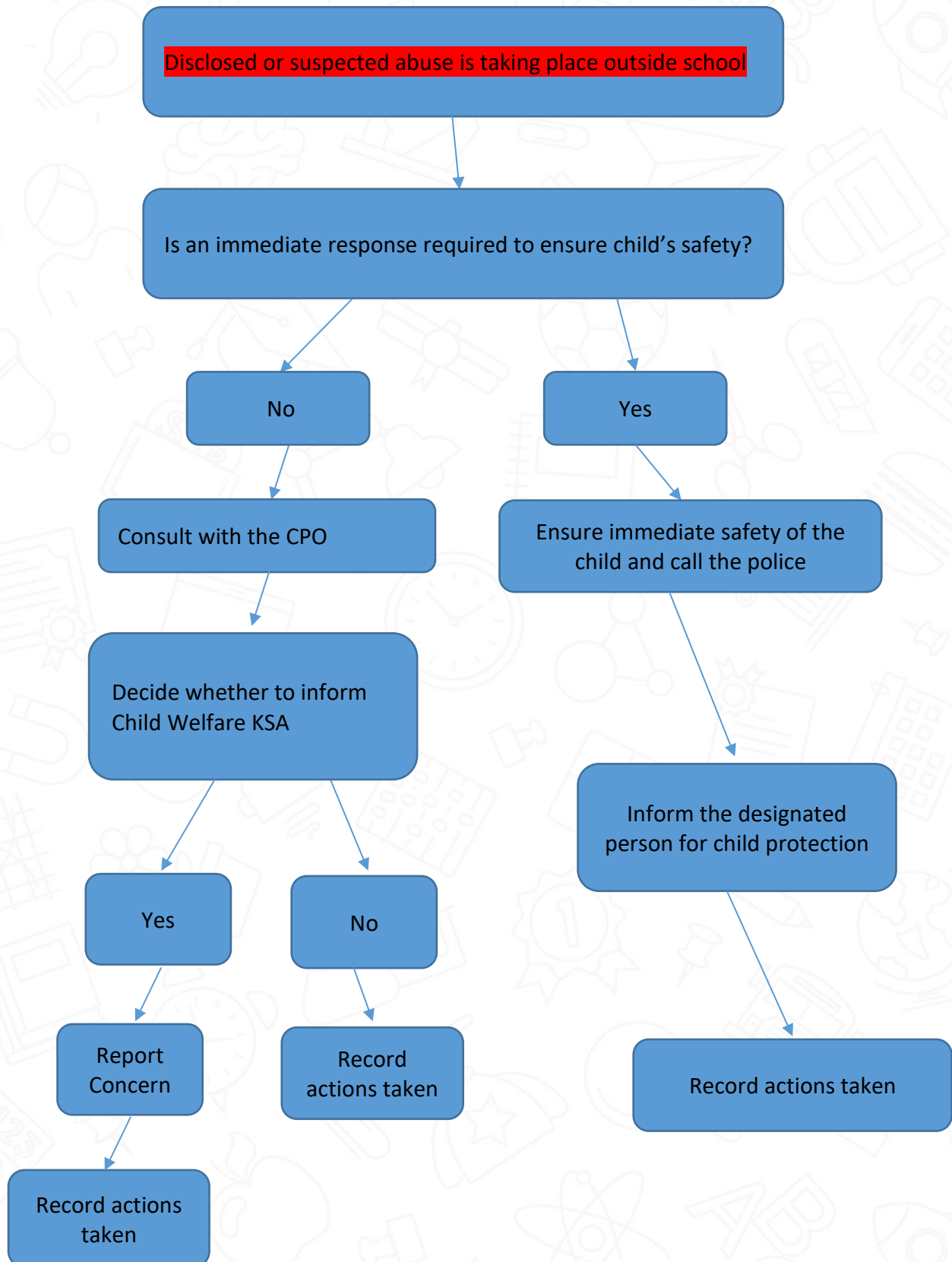
V. 4.4.5.1. Reporting a Case of Abuse that Took Place Inside School

In this scenario, you will deal with a case of suspected or disclosed case of abuse inside school.



V. 4.4.5.2. Reporting a Case of Abuse That Took Place Outside School

In this scenario, you will deal with a case of suspected or disclosed case of abuse outside school.



V. 5. Najd National School in-school Code of Conduct

In order to promote child welfare practices, all faculty and staff must abide by the following guidelines while dealing with students:

- Do not sit privately with a student, and if this was inevitable, keep the door open or ask another adult to join you.
- In the case of interviewing a child, use a room with a door containing an unobstructed visual panel.
- Avoid physical contact with students.
- Touching students is not allowed in cases other than dealing with accidents or injuries.
- Never rest your hand on a child's shoulder.
- Never cuddle, play with, or hold a child.
- All obvious or intimate contact must be avoided.
- Inform the CPO in writing, in the case of incidents where you think your actions were misinterpreted by a student. This applies in cases where you needed to restrain a child physically so as not to harm himself or others.
- All forms of corporal punishment are prohibited; you are not allowed to hit, pinch, push, or pull a student at any given circumstance.
- If possible, avoid contact with children in toilets, classrooms or minibus.
- Report a colleague if you suspect abusive behavior; if you do not, you will be accused of attempted cover-up and face prosecution.
- Your relationship with your students must be age-appropriate.
- Never use sexually suggestive comments in front of children.

- Make sure you watch all material you plan to present in your classroom and make sure it doesn't contain socially-sensitivity material, discussion, or theme.
- Never offer to transport any of your present or previous students during or outside working hours.

V. 6. Partnership

We partnership with parents, experts, and child protection organizations in order to best serve our child protection policy.

V. 7. Policy Review

The child health, safety, and protection committee is responsible for the review and the application of the policy. This policy will be reviewed and updated regularly in the light of its operational experience and in line with changes in legislation or designated policies.

VI. Legal Framework

We believe that all children, regardless of their age, race, disability, sexual orientation have equal protection rights that are protected by many Saudi and international laws:

The Sharia Law for Preserving Children Dignity against Abuse and Neglect

Conventions on the Rights of a Child (1989) (Royal Decree No. M/7 of 11 Sept. 1995)

Convention on the Rights of the Child in Islam (2004)

The Executive Bylaw of Protection from Harm (2014)

Suspicion Child Abuse and Neglect (2008)

The Protection from Abuse Act (2011 - Saudi Shura Council)

VII. Definitions

Child

For the purposes of use in this policy, the word child refers to a male or female student under the age of 18.

Staff

The word 'staff' in this policy refers to managers, board of trustees, contractors, or anyone on behalf of Najd National Schools.