



## **UWC East Africa Child Protection Handbook**

### **Child Protection at UWC East Africa**

*UWC East Africa is committed to providing a safe, collaborative and caring environment.*

Our highest priority is protecting the students in our care. We demonstrate this through the operations of each campus, the recruitment of all adults working with/around the students in our care and the physical environment of each campus

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## 1. Introduction

Child abuse and neglect are concerns throughout the world. Child abuse and neglect are violations of a child's human rights and are obstacles to the child's education as well as to their physical, emotional, and spiritual development. ISM endorses the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*, of which our host country, Tanzania is a signatory. The school also recognizes the Tanzanian Child Protection regulations as stated in the "Law of the Child Act" 2009.

Schools fill a special institutional role in society as protectors of children. Schools need to insure that all children in their care are afforded a safe and secure environment in which to grow and develop, both at school and away. Educators, having the opportunity to observe and interact with children over time, are in a unique position to identify children who are in need of help and protection. As such, educators have a professional and ethical obligation to identify children who are in need of help and protection, and to take steps to insure that the child and family avail themselves of the services needed to remedy any situation that constitutes child abuse or neglect.

All staff employed at UWCEA must report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect whenever the staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered, or is at significant risk of suffering abuse or neglect. Reporting and follow up of all suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect will proceed in accordance with administrative regulations respective to this policy. Furthermore, cases of suspected child abuse or neglect may be reported to the appropriate employer, to the respective consulate in Tanzania to the appropriate child protection agency in the home country, and/or to local authorities.

UWCEA seeks to be a safe haven for students who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives. As such, UWCEA will distribute this policy annually to all parents and applicants, will communicate this policy annually to students, will provide training for all staff working at UWCEA and will make every effort to implement hiring practices to insure the safety of children, and will review the policy annually for compliance and effectiveness.

In the case of a staff member reported as an alleged offender, UWCEA will conduct a full investigation following a carefully designed course of due process, keeping the safety of the child at the highest priority.

## **2. Preventing**

As part of our overall educational programs and specific to our shared responsibility to educate children and to ensure a safe environment in which all children can learn and grow, UWCEA will:

1. Ensure all adults on campus who work with/around children submit a criminal background check.
  - Visitors do not need a police check but must be supervised by somebody with prior police clearance. An ID badge must be worn.
  - Any employee or volunteer who is starting in the school with a recognised work remit, regardless of period of service will be required to show a criminal background check from a recognized authority that has been conducted within the last 12 months.
  - An individual's criminal background check should come from the country that they have been living in for the last 12 months and should record activity for the past three years regardless of the country you have been working in.
  - A police clearance check should be renewed every three years.
  - For professional staff, their first police clearance certificate should be paid for by themselves. All other helpers will have the costs of the police certificate paid for by the school. All renewals will be paid for by School.
  
2. Provide age appropriate lessons for all grade levels to help students understand personal safety, needs and rights.
  
3. Annually familiarise all staff, adults working around children and parents with the Child Protection Handbook.
  
4. Review this Child Protection Handbook and related policies regularly or as appropriate
  
5. Advise Teachers to complete a CP form for any cases of child welfare concerns and hand to DCPO (Designated Child Protection Officer)
  
6. Guide and instruct teachers at each stage of the process, including how to listen, how to respond to a student, completing forms, informing the DCPO (Designated Child Protection Officer) and follow-up.

### 3. Recognising

How are abuse and neglect defined?

Definitions of abuse are complex and based in various cultures of child-rearing behaviours, gender and role responsibilities and expectations. The primary determination of abuse is that it is dependent on some form of a relationship that is used to meet the needs of the more powerful person, either a member of the family, a teacher, or a friend. Research guides much of the definitions that are based in understanding the impact of certain behaviours.

#### **Physical abuse is:**

- Inflicting physical injury on a child by other than accidental means, causing skin bruising, burns, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function, death; and/or
- Creating a substantial risk of physical harm to a child's bodily functioning; and/or
- Committing acts that are cruel or inhumane regardless of observable injury. Such acts may include, but are not limited to, instances of extreme discipline demonstrating a disregard of a child's pain and/or mental suffering; and/or
- Assaulting or criminally mistreating a child as defined by either the criminal code or school policy; and/or
- Engaging in actions or omissions resulting in injury to, or creating a substantial risk to the physical or mental health or development of a child; and/or
- Failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any of the above

#### Possible indicators of physical abuse

- Unexplained bruises and welts on any part of the body
- Bruises of different ages (various colours)
- Injuries reflecting shape of article used (electric cord, belt, buckle, ping pong paddle, hand)
- Injuries that regularly appear after absence or vacation
- Unexplained burns, especially to soles, palms, back, or buttocks
- Burns with a pattern from an electric burner, iron, or cigarette
- Rope burns on arms, legs, neck, or torso
- Injuries inconsistent with information offered by the child
- Immersion burns with a distinct boundary line
- Unexplained laceration, abrasions, or fractures

**Neglect** is failure to provide for a child's basic needs within their own environment.

Neglect may be:

- Physical (e.g., failure to provide necessary food or shelter, or lack of appropriate supervision – this would include failure to provide proper adult guardianship, such as leaving children unsupervised at home for any extended period of time.
- Medical (e.g., failure to provide necessary medical or mental health treatment); and/or
- Emotional (e.g., a pattern of actions, such as: inattention to a child's emotional needs, failure to provide psychological care, or permitting the child to use alcohol or other drugs, specific examples may include verbal humiliation, refusing to acknowledge presence of child, invasion of privacy for no specific reason, violent threats, etc.)

Possible indicators of neglect

- Child is unwashed or hungry
- Parents are uninterested in child's academic performance
- Parents do not respond to repeated communications from the school
- Child does not want to go home
- Both parents or legal guardian are absent for an unreasonably long period of time
- Parents cannot be reached in the case of an emergency

**Sexual abuse** is committing or allowing to be committed any sexual offense against a child as defined in either the criminal code of the host country or school policy, or intentionally touching either directly or through clothing, the genitals, anus, or breasts of a child for other than hygiene or child care purposes.

Sexual abuse has some different characteristics of child abuse that warrant special attention. While physical abuse is often the result of immediate stress and not usually planned, sexual abuse requires planning with results that are more insidious. The planning, referred to as grooming, often results in victims accepting the blame, responsibility, guilt and shame for the sexual behavior of the offender.

Sexual abuse requires far more secrecy than other forms of child abuse, so is more difficult to report. Many victims, through the process of grooming, are taught that the sex is a form of love, so tend to love their offender and often present as happy and well-adjusted children with no negative symptoms because of their perception of being loved.

Possible indicators of sexual abuse

- Sexual knowledge, behaviour or use of language not appropriate to age level
- Unusual interpersonal relationship patterns
- Venereal disease in a child of any age
- Evidence of physical trauma or bleeding to the oral, genital, or anus areas

- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Refusing to change into physical education (PE) clothes, fear of bathrooms
- Child running away from home and not giving any specific complaints
- Not wanting to be alone with an individual
- Pregnancy, especially at a young age
- Extremely protective parenting

**Bullying** is behaviour that hurts someone else – such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online, and is linked with aggression. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally. Bullying that happens online, using social networks and mobile phones, is called **cyber bullying**. Other types of bullying include relational bullying, physical bullying, and verbal bullying.

Possible indicators of bullying:

- Verbal abuse, such as name calling and gossiping
- Non-verbal abuse, such as hand signs or text messages
- Emotional abuse, such as threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone
- Exclusion, such as ignoring or isolating someone
- Undermining, by constant criticism or spreading rumors
- Controlling or manipulating someone
- Racial, sexual or homophobic derogatory comments
- Physical assaults, such as hitting and pushing
- Online cyber bullying

\*Note: These signs can be covert, and hidden from view, requiring fluency in the language of bullying before they are detected.

**Cyber bullying** is becoming increasingly common. Unlike other types of bullying, it can happen anytime anywhere – a child can be bullied when you might think they are safe like when they are alone in their bedroom. It can feel like there's no escape. Children may know who's bullying them online or someone using a fake or anonymous account may target them. Cyber bullying negatively impacts children emotionally, psychologically and socially.

Indicators of cyber bullying:

- Sending threatening or abusive text messages
- Homophobia, racism or sexism
- Making silent, hoax or abusive calls
- Creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- 'Trolling' - the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- Excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- Encouraging young people to self-harm
- Voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- Creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- Sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- Pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

## 4. Responding

### What happens when a teacher has reasonable cause to believe?

The above mentioned possible indicators of abuse and neglect will be used by the staff member as a guideline for reporting to the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) who will determine if the case needs further attention.

A report must be made when a staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect. All reports are confidential.

Behavioral indicators in isolation do not constitute abuse or neglect. Together with other indicators, such as family dynamics, they may warrant a referral.

### How should I respond to a child who reports abuse or neglect?

While it's normal to feel a little overwhelmed and confused in this situation, listening to a child who shares possible abuse or neglected information to you is one of the most important roles you can perform. Just remember, you can make a tremendous difference in the life of an abused or neglected child. While not inclusive, here are a few **DO's** and **DO NOT's** that may help ease your mind if a child shares information with you about their situation.

#### **DO:**

- ✓ Remain calm and reassuring. A child may retract information or stop talking if they sense a strong reaction.
- ✓ Find a private place to talk without interruptions
- ✓ Put the child at ease by sitting near them, not behind a desk
- ✓ Ask permission before touching the child. Touch may be associated with physical or emotional pain in children who have been physically or sexually abused
- ✓ Reassure the child that they are not in trouble and have done nothing wrong.
- ✓ Use the child's vocabulary when reporting, not yours
- ✓ If possible, write down exactly what the child says to you
- ✓ Let the child know what you will do: *"We need to tell the counselor. He/she knows how to help you and your family"*
- ✓ Support the child: *"I'm sorry that happened to you"*
- ✓ Do what you can to make certain the child is safe from further abuse

#### **DO NOT:**

- ✗ Press for details. You do not need to prove abuse or neglect. Simply report the case to the counselor of your school
- ✗ Ask "why" questions or interrogate. These questions require children to explain actions that they may or may not understand, or unable to interpret properly, and this may confuse or fluster the child making it harder for them to continue
- ✗ Promise that you will not tell anyone about the child's disclosure of possible abuse or neglect

- × Ask leading or suggestive questions: *“It must have hurt you a lot, didn’t it?”* or *“Did your father do that to you?”*
- × Make angry or critical comments about the alleged perpetrator. The child often knows, loves, or likes this person.
- × Disclose information indiscriminately. Keep in mind the child’s right to privacy and your obligation to confidentiality.
- × Make the child feel different or singled out
- × Investigate the case yourself
- × Make judgment on whether the child is being truthful. Accept their disclosure and report it
- × Put your personal feelings into your conversations: *“I am not surprised, you know how much I’ve been worried about your behaviours”*

### **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Considerations**

It’s important to keep in mind cultural influences when assessing information or behavior, and to avoid allowing personal beliefs or biases to influence decision-making. Culture shapes attitudes and ideas about acceptable child behavior and discipline. For example, a family might have a different attitude toward nudity that is more relaxed than is typical. The same can be said for family sleeping, which is common in some cultures. Some families consider spanking and acceptable disciplinary measure, while other families find it unacceptable under any circumstances. These values can vary widely and cultural issues need to be understood. In order to work with people with various cultural identities in a way that promotes respect and dignity, it is important that you:

- ✓ Recognize any of your own pre-existing beliefs and biases and remain neutral
- ✓ Become educated about our culture(s) and understand information within the context
- ✓ Resist the temptation to classify or label persons based on cultural preconceptions

## **5. Reporting**

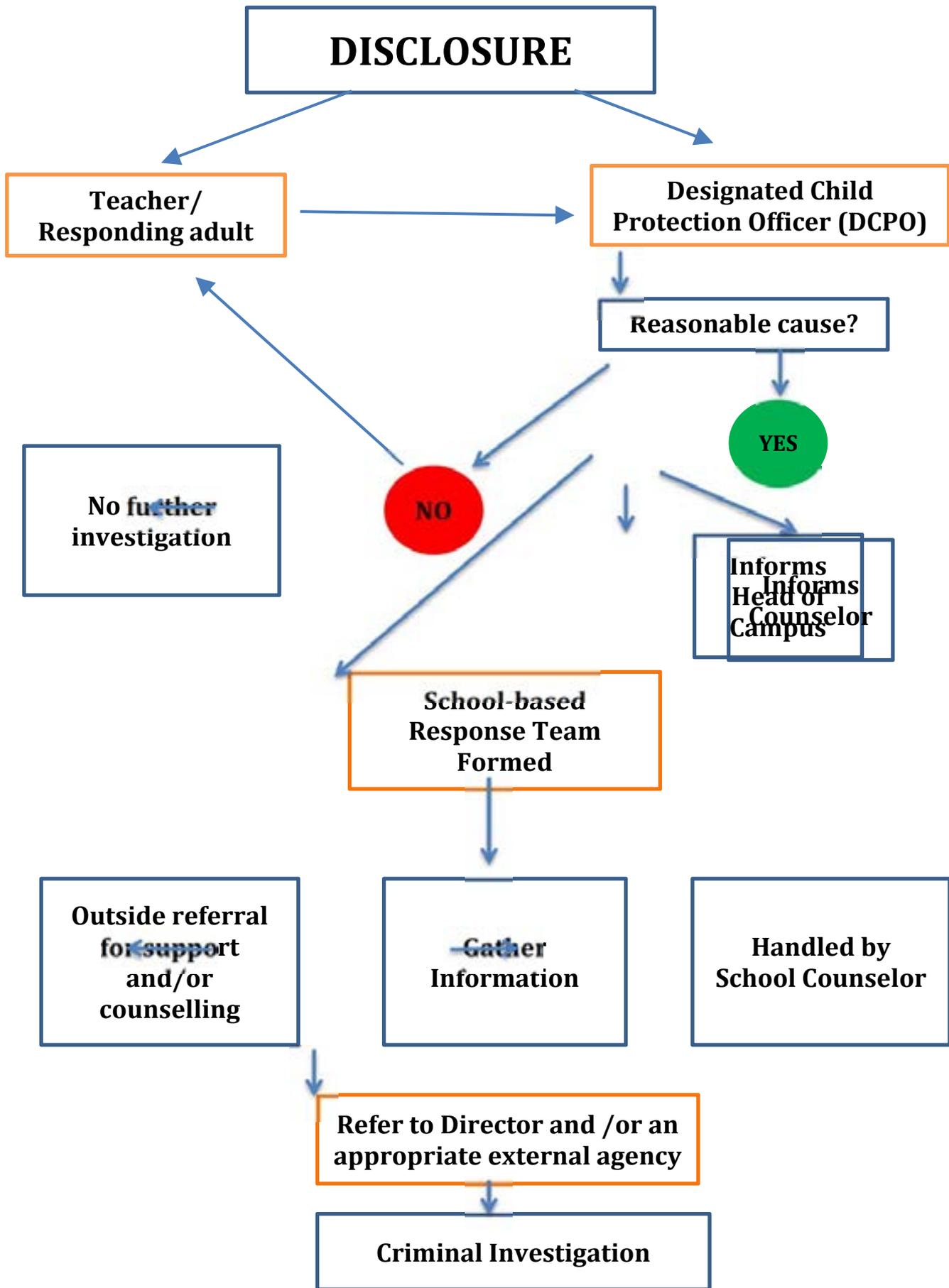
### **When suspected abuse or neglect is reported**

Where there is cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, it is the responsibility of the staff member to report their suspicions to the DCPO or to the Head of Campus. In all cases, the Head of Campus will be notified.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Campus to inform the Director of the suspected case of child abuse or neglect. The staff member involved will be informed that they are under investigation by the Head of Campus.

All staff, faculty and administrators are mandated to report incidences of abuse and neglect. All UWCEA employees are also required to report suspicion of abuse or neglect.

All reports of abuse and neglect must be made to the DCPO within 48 hours for immediate response.



### **Step 1**

When a child reports abuse or there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse is occurring, the responding adult will seek advice from the DCPO/Head of Campus within 48 hours.

The DCPO will take initial steps to gather information regarding the reported incident and will form a school-based response team as needed to address the report.

The response team could include the school nurse, counselor, DCPO, and other individuals as the Head of Campus sees fit. In all cases, follow up activities will be conducted in a manner that ensures that information is documented factually and that strict confidentiality is maintained.

The following procedure will be used:

- 1) Interview staff members as necessary and document information relative to the case.
- 2) Consult with school personnel to review the child's history in the school.
- 3) Report status of case to Head of Campus
- 4) Determine the course of follow-up actions.

### **Step 2**

Based on acquired information, a plan of action will be developed by the School-Based Response Team to assist the child and family.

Actions that may take place are:

- Discussions between the child and Counselor in order to gain more information. Depending upon the age of the child, these discussions may include drawing pictures and playing with dolls to elicit more information as to what may have occurred.
- In-class observations of the child by the teacher, counselor, or administrator.
- Meetings with the family to present the School's concerns.
- Referral of the student and family to external professional counseling. In cases of severe abuse or where outside authority is deemed necessary and may result in further investigation and possible actions: Notification of the management of the sponsoring employer of the concern with the child/family, or to the welfare office at the home-of-record.
- Consultation with the consulate of the country of the involved family.
- Consultation with the school or another attorney.
- Informal consultation with local authorities

In the event that the abuse or neglect allegation involves a staff or faculty member of UWCEA, the Head of Campus will follow board policy pursuant to ethical professional behaviour.

### **Step 3:**

Actions that may take place are:

- Subsequent to a reported and/or substantiated case of child abuse or neglect: The counselor will maintain contact with the child and family to provide support and guidance as appropriate.
- The counselor will provide the child's teachers and the Head of Campus with ongoing support.
- Where appropriate the counselor will provide resource materials and strategies for teacher use.
- The counselor will maintain contact with outside therapists and multidisciplinary teams to update the progress of the child in school.

All documentation of the investigation will be kept in the child's confidential counselling records file. Records sent to schools to which their student may transfer will be flagged to let the receiving school know there is a confidential file for the child. UWCEA will make every attempt to share this information to protect the child.

Most cases of suspected abuse or neglect will be handled by school counselors, such as those involving:

- Student relationships with peers.
- Parenting skills related to disciplining children at home
- Student-parent relationships.
- Mental health issues such as depression, low self-esteem, grieving.

Some cases will be referred to outside resources, for example:

- Mental health issues such as depression, psychosis, dissociation, suicidal tendencies

Cases reported for investigation and outside resources:

Severe and ongoing physical abuse or neglect.

- Sexual abuse and incest.

In extreme cases when families do not stop the abuse or concerns remain about the safety of the child, reports could be made to:

- Local authorities.
- The consulate.
- The employer.
- The home-of-record welfare office.

The UWCEA child protection policy works for the child, for the family, and for our community. Research indicates that international communities are as prone to child abuse as communities in their home country. Child abuse is a multi-faceted issue that involves dynamics of the child, the family, and the community. The UWCEA Child Protection Policy works to respond at all three levels.

## **6. APPENDICES**

## Appendix 1

### **Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO): Job Description and Responsibilities**

- Act as first point of contact for responding adults bringing child protection disclosures and concerns forward.
- The DCPO is responsible to the Head of Campus.
- All disclosures should be recorded on the referral form and passed to the HOC and Counsellor.
- Use expertise and training to assess whether disclosures need to be further investigated. The DCPO will complete a written form.
- If disclosures need to be investigated further, DCPO will discuss with HOC and counsellor and if necessary assemble a school based response team to do this.
- Liaise with the Head of Campus to inform him or her of any issues and on going investigations and ensure that there is always cover for this role.
- Be able to keep detailed accurate secure written records of referrals and concerns.
- DCPO should be trained every three years.
- This responsibility is on a voluntary basis and needs to be a responsible adult that students and colleagues can trust.
- The Head of Campus will ensure that the community are aware of who the DCPOs are on an annual basis.
- Examples of DCPOs in the community might be:  
Counselor, Residential Parent, Head of Section, a tutor or teacher

## Appendix 2

## CHILD PROTECTION REFERRAL FORM

Reporting date: (DD/MM/YY) \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILS OF CHILD / YOUNG PERSON**

 Initial referral 

 Follow-up referral 

First Name:		Family name:	
Age:	Sex:	Class:	
Present location of the child:			
Date and time of incident/disclosure/when concern was raised:			

**TYPE OF REFERRAL** (Refer to page....in the UWCEA Child Protection Handbook and check as appropriate)

Categories	
Physical abuse	
Emotional abuse	
Sexual abuse	

Neglect	
Bullying (including cyber bullying)	
Other (specify)	

**REASON FOR SUSPECTING ABUSE/NEGLECT AND / OR DETAILS OF DISCLOSURE** (e.g. observed injuries, observed signs of neglect – be specific and explain in detail)

**REPORTED BY**

Name of person raising concern	
Position (Designation)	
Signature	
Witness	
Individual (name of student)	
Other	

I \_\_\_\_\_ understand and agree that all the information obtained from the child/young person and subsequently recorded on this form should remain confidential.

***Completed form should be submitted to Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) for next action.***

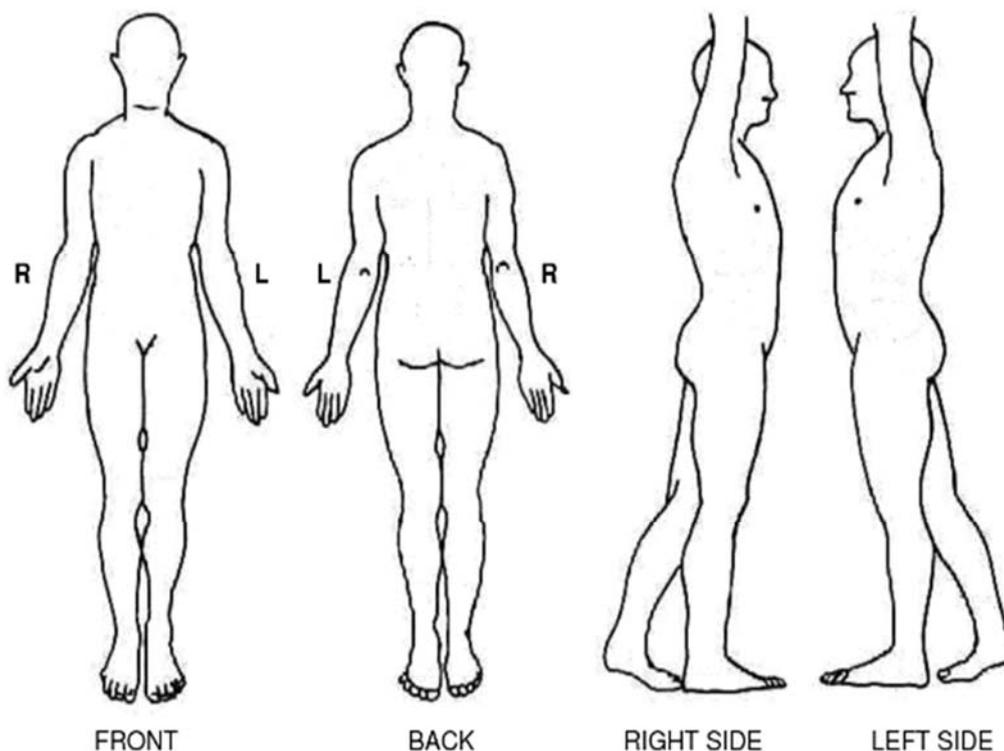
**Appendix 3**

**SCHOOL NURSE'S CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING FORM**

**BODY CHECK – CLINICAL**

Individual's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate on the chart below all bruises/ discolorations, skin breaks, injuries etc.  
 Describe below as needed, being as specific as possible (measure in cm's)  
 If there is more than one area affected, please number them (1,2,3 etc.)



Description: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Examiner \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_