



Bloom Learning Centre

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING POLICY

9 December 2025



Bloom Learning Centre's Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy

Approved and adopted – Date 9 December 2025

This policy has been developed and implemented in consultation with the staff and owner/director of the Centre

Review Date 9 December 2025

Child Protection Officer Llana Geezel Montoya
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Owner/DirectorMichelle Mehta



CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING POLICY

Definition of Child Abuse

Child Abuse is defined as any form of physical, emotional, or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads, or could lead, to injury or harm to a child. Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the child or a stranger, and can be an adult, or another child. In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, this shall be considered a child welfare and protection issue for both children and child protection procedures will be followed for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

- Physical Abuse: intentional actual or likely physical injury to a child or failure to prevent injury through neglectful actions.
- Child Sexual Abuse: any sexual act, including non-contact acts, with a child performed by an adult or an older child, including but not limited to:
 - sexual touching on any part of the body, clothed or unclothed
 - penetrative sex. including penetration of the mouth
 - encouraging a child to engage in a sexual activity, including masturbation
 - intentionally engaging in sexual activity in front of a child
 - showing children pornography, or using children to create pornography
 - perpetuating, encouraging, or allowing for the sexual exploitation of a child (giving things to a child in exchange for performing sexual activities)
 - exposing oneself or saying sexual things
- Emotional Abuse: actual or likely severe negative impact on a child's emotional, psychological, and behavioural development, resulting from persistent or severe emotional/psychological ill-treatment.
- Neglect: severe or persistent failure to provide for a child's physical, emotional, or basic needs.

Legal Requirement to Notify – Children Act (2012 Revision), Part IIIA.32A

If a teacher, principal, counsellor or other employee/volunteer in an institution established for the care and education of children has a reasonable suspicion that a child has been or is being abused or neglected, and the suspicion is formed in the course of the person's work, that person shall notify the Department (Department of Children and Family Services) of the suspicion as soon as practicable after s/he forms the suspicion.

A person who contravenes this section commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of five thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term of one year or both.



A notification under this section shall be made by the employee or volunteer following Bloom Learning Centre's reporting procedures.

Responsibilities of Bloom Learning Centre Employees and Volunteers

Teachers and other employees/volunteers who have formed reasonable suspicion that a child is being abused/has been mandated to report that information, following Bloom Learning Centre reporting procedures (see Appendix I). Bloom Learning Centre's Child Protection Officers are: Geezel Montoya and Apple Sonsona.

- In deciding whether to report an incident or situation of suspected abuse/neglect, it is not required that the person making the report have proof that abuse/neglect has occurred. Any uncertainty in deciding to report suspicion shall be resolved in favour of the child and the report made immediately.
- The employee or volunteer will report what has been said by the child or what has been observed leading to the suspicion of child abuse/neglect, including the context of that information. While appropriate clarifying questions may be necessary, there shall be no attempt by the employee/volunteer to interview the child, as the role of investigation lies with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and/or the Family Support Unit (FSU) of the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service (RCIPS). The child shall be protected from repeated disclosures.
- Documentation of what is said (or of any injuries) is important. The child's own words shall be used as much as possible.
- If the child is injured, the employee/volunteer shall escort the child to the administrative office (or seek appropriate medical attention) and inform the Child Protection Officers of the action.
- The employee or volunteer referring the suspected case of child abuse/neglect must **not** contact the parents, unless otherwise indicated (e.g. if the incident occurred at the EI, following consultation with the MASH).
- Given the sensitive nature of child abuse/neglect referrals, the employee or volunteer should not expect feedback following the referral to Child Protection Officer. Children Act, (2012 Revision) Part IIIA.32C provides protection to the notifier and requires that the receiver of notification of suspected child abuse (DCFS/FSU) shall not disclose the identity of the notifier to any other person other than in the instance of communicating to another person acting in the course of official duty. Only in cases when "the court is satisfied that the evidence is of critical importance in the proceedings and that failure to admit it would prejudice the proper administration of justice" will a notifier be called to provide evidence. In these instances, Bloom Learning Centre will support the employee by assigning another professional to accompany them at such hearing.



- Bloom Learning Centre leadership shall undertake to ensure that all employees and volunteers are provided with information and training that will enable them to carry out their duty to report suspected child abuse or neglect as well as training regarding identifying and responding appropriately to Child Protection issues.

Where there is reasonable suspicion that a child may be suffering or may have suffered abuse/neglect, there is immediate duty to report that suspicion and the information upon which it is based to the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). This requirement applies whether the information was initially extended in confidence. This requirement also applies whether the information comes directly from the child or indirectly from another employee, volunteer, or community member.

Once information for a report has been obtained, a written referral must be submitted to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) unit as soon as possible, utilising the MASH *Suspected Child Abuse Report Form*. Where deemed necessary (in time sensitive situations, for example, where there are concerns about the child going home or if the child is in imminent danger), Child Protection Officers will call the MASH immediately. If after hours, the telephone report shall be made directly with the RCIPS. The telephone referral will be followed by a written referral to the MASH, following the procedures outlined in Appendix I.

When making the referral to MASH, how the parents become informed will be discussed and the best course of action agreed upon with that agency.

A record of follow-up contact made to external agencies regarding a referral made shall be kept by Administrative Coordinator or the Child Protection Officer. (See Appendix 9)

Responsibilities of the Bloom Learning Centre after Referring Cases of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

Following any report of suspected child abuse/neglect, Administrative Coordinator will assume a role of support and advocacy for the child, as required. A support plan will be developed (see Appendix 8). Owners, Bloom Learning Centre leaders, staff and volunteers must cooperate with DCFS and/or FSU throughout any investigation and release relevant records and employee/volunteer reports, considering laws addressing data protection.

If the suspected offender is an employee of the Bloom Learning Centre or is hired to perform duties on the campus, the Director/Owner reassign the staff. The staff shall temporarily be relieved from interacting with the children and will be given other activities while still in the process of the investigation. If the suspected offender is the Owner or Manager, Bloom will ensure impartiality during the investigation. The Owner will refrain from attending the setting, while the Manager will be reassigned to off-site



administrative duties until the matter is resolved. The HR Manager for Bloom will oversee the investigation process to ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability.

Should DCFS or the RCIPS need to interview a child at Bloom Learning Centre, the procedures outlined in Appendix 7 will be followed. It is not the Bloom Learning Centre's responsibility to inform parents of the interview; however, the subject of parent notification will be discussed with DCFS/RCIPS and a decision taken in the best interest of the child. Bloom Learning Centre shall assist the DCFS/RCIPS by providing an appropriate interview space and arranging discreetly for the child to be interviewed. The DCFS worker/RCIPS Officer may request that an employee of the Centre be present during an interview to offer support to the child. If the worker/officer does not ask for support for the child, the representative from the Centre may make this request on behalf of the child.

If it is necessary for DCFS/RCIPS to remove the child from Bloom Learning Centre during the investigation, the Centre shall comply with this request, according to the protocol for the removal of children (Appendix 7).

Following investigation, an appropriate representative from Bloom Learning Centre will participate in DCFS case conferences and liaise with DCFS staff on behalf of the child as requested.

All information related to suspected child abuse/neglect cases shall be treated confidentially. Bloom Learning Centre will provide a secure cabinet for the filing and maintaining of confidential information related to child abuse/neglect cases. NO documentation related to child abuse/neglect reports or investigations shall appear within the child's cumulative folder.

When following procedures for reporting suspected cases of child abuse/neglect, the safety and welfare of the child will always dictate which course of action is to be pursued. Any uncertainty shall always be resolved in favour of the child's best interest. When in doubt, consult the MASH.



Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy Statement of Receipt and Agreement

I understand that as a person working with and/or providing services to children at Bloom Learning Centre, I am subject to a criminal background check. My signature confirms that I have read and understood the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy, and that I agree to comply with the standards contained therein. I understand that any action that violates this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from Bloom Learning Centre.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____



Appendix 1: Bloom Learning Centre Procedures for Reporting Suspicions of Child Abuse/Neglect

If alleged offender is not a staff member:

1. Bloom Staff/Volunteer has reasonable suspicion of child abuse and/or neglect.
 - In the case of disclosures, staffs and volunteers will respond appropriately (see Appendix 4) and refrain from asking leading questions, ensuring to ask open ended questions to obtain necessary information for a referral (e.g. How did you get that bruise? Tell me more about what happened).
2. As soon as possible (within 1 to 2 hours but by no later than end of day) staff/volunteer will report any disclosure or suspicion of child abuse, even in historic cases, to the Child Protection Officer (Geezel OR Apple) by completing the internal reporting form Appendix 5 or if the form is not available a clean sheet of paper can be used to write down the details. Staff/volunteers must submit the report to the Child Protection Officers personally.
 - The Child Protection Officer must immediately document the disclosure or the reasonable suspicion using the DCFS/MASH Suspected Child Abuse Report Form (appendix 6) *Important Notice:*
 - ❖ *It is not the staff/volunteer member's role to investigate or determine the validity of what is observed or told.*
 - ❖ *Staff/volunteers must remember that there should not retain a copy of the report and must refrain from discussing the matter with anyone else or further with the child.*

If the child is in imminent danger, or there are concerns about the child going home, the report must be made immediately.

3. Child Protection Officers must check the completed referral form and submit within one hour of receiving the report.
 - Where necessary, for example, in emergency situations where the child is in imminent danger, or if there are concerns about the child going home, the CPO will immediately call the MASH.
 - If there is uncertainty whether a referral is needed, the CPO will contact the MASH for guidance and information prior to making a report. If indicated by the MASH that a referral is not required, the report is kept and the advice from the MASH should be documented.
4. Child Protection Officers will consult with each other, where relevant.
5. The Child Protection Officer will await further instruction or intervention from MASH.



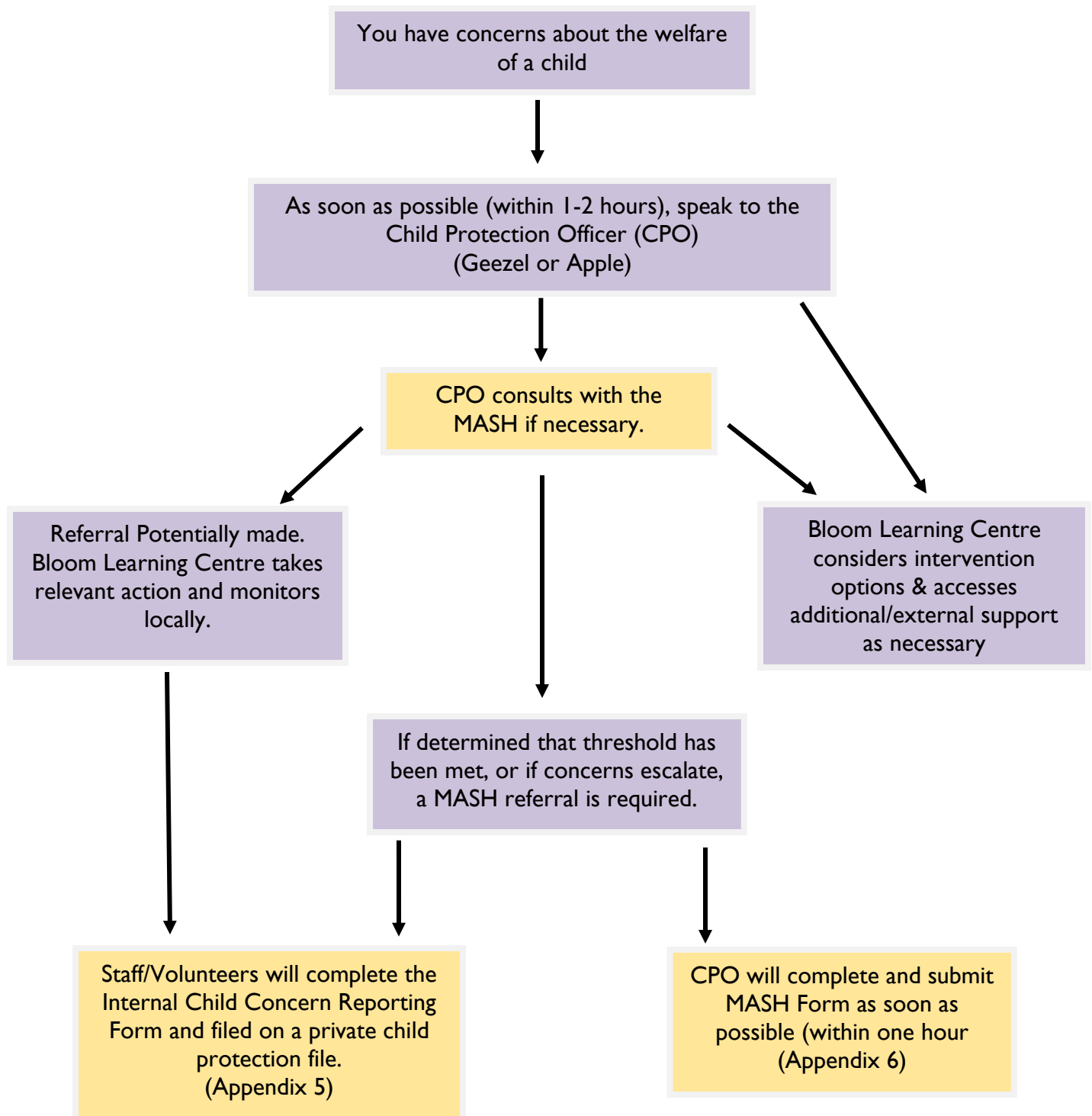
6. If after hours, the Child Protection Officers (Geezel or Apple) shall make a telephone report directly with the RCIPS. Child Protection Officers (Geezel or Apple) will follow-up the telephone referral with a written referral to the MASH the following business day.
7. All referrals and internal reports are kept separately from the child's permanent record and accessible only by the Child Protection Officers in the Admin Office where it is locked.
8. Following the submission of the referral to MASH, the Child Protection Officer will notify the owner/director that a referral has been made. To maintain confidentiality, no specific details of the report, child or alleged offender will be shared, only a confirmation that a referral has occurred. This ensures the owner/director is aware of the action while safeguarding sensitive information.

(if allegation concerns a staff member)

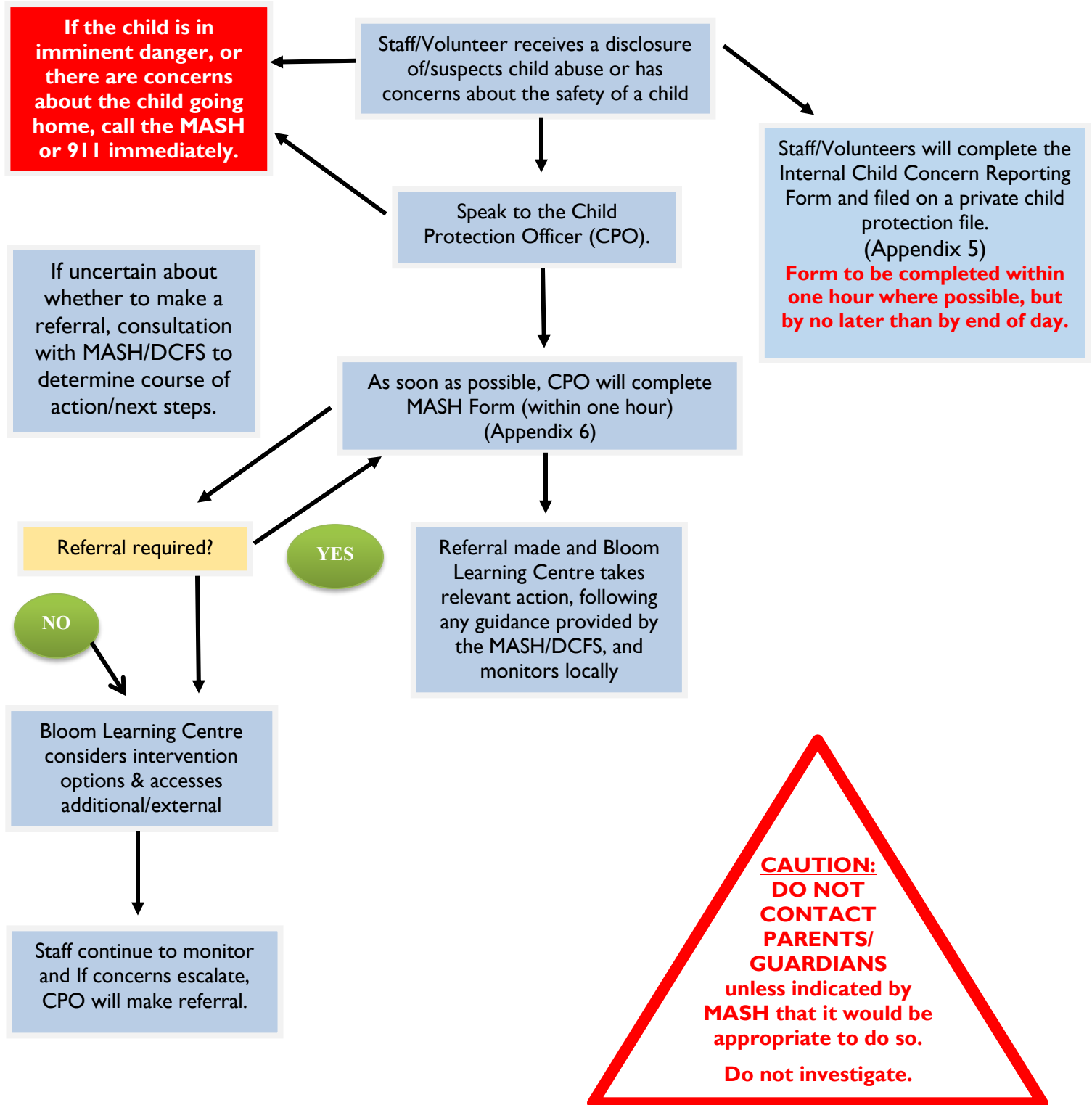
1. Follow steps 1-7 above.
2. Internal Procedures:
 - The staff member shall be temporarily relieved of interacting with children and will be given other tasks while investigation is still on process by the owner/director.
 - Once the investigation has concluded the management team then meets to determine the next steps, and the need for disciplinary action (disciplinary action must be recorded and noted in employee's file)
 - If the threshold for a MASH referral was not met, the Human Resource Manager will conduct an internal investigation to ascertain if there were any policy violations.
 - If the threshold was met and the matter will be investigated by the RCIPS/DCFS, the owner/director together with the Child Protection Officers will consult with the MASH regarding commencing an internal investigation, to not interfere with the external investigation. The findings and outcomes of the internal investigation will be documented by the school admin and placed in employee's file.
3. Within 24 hours, Child Protection Officers (Geezel or Apple) e-mails EduChilProtection@gov.ky, providing the following information, ensuring not to include any identifying information regarding the case:
 - Date the referral was made to the MASH.
 - Nature of the allegation (e.g. sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, etc.)



Appendix 2: Procedures for Responding to Child Welfare Concerns



Appendix 3: Flowchart for Procedures for Reporting Child Abuse Suspicions





Appendix 4: Responding to Disclosures – Dos & Don'ts

DO	DON'T
Stay calm	Panic or look shocked
Listen and be attentive	Rush the child
Start with open ended questions: ✓ Tell me more about what happened. ✓ I notice you have a bruise; how did that happen?	Ask leading questions: X Did mommy do this to you? X Were you at your dad's house? X Did you get hit with a belt?
Follow up with age-appropriate closed questions if needed: ✓ Who did this? ✓ When did this happen? • <i>Not appropriate for preschool/lower primary (elementary) aged children*</i> ✓ Where did this happen? ✓ How often does this happen (older children), or ✓ Has this happened before (younger children)?	Minimise the child's experience, make assumptions, or offer explanations
	Imply the child is lying, or suggest the child is to blame (avoid why questions)
	Criticise the alleged perpetrator
	Press the child
	Try to deal with it yourself
	Ask the child for details about what the abuser did
	Show disgust or alarm
Make appropriate plans to ensure the child feels safe & supported following a disclosure (e.g. "would you like to go outside with your friends, or would you prefer to stay here?")	Scare the child, or make promises that "things will be fine"
	Make judgments about or suggest consequences for the abuser
Tell the child, in a reassuring and age-appropriate way, what will happen next.	Decide on your own whether to talk with a parent/guardian.
Consult with MASH before talking with the child's parent(s) or sending the child home.	Discuss the situation with anyone other than the relevant designated persons (Child Protection Officer in your setting, Social Worker, investigating Police Officers)
Focus the discussion on the child's needs	
Tell the child it is not his or her fault	

***Avoid "when?" questions** with preschool and lower elementary/primary aged children, as they have a very different sense of time. It is better to tie "when" questions to temporal indicators or event signposts such as asking if school was out, if it was before breakfast, or after lunch, during Christmas break etc.
(https://protectchildren.ca/pdfs/TTT_Interview_Guide)



Appendix 5: Internal Child Abuse/Neglect or Child Concern Reporting Form
Filed in child's private child protection file.

State the nature and extent of the current injury, neglect, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse to the child in question and circumstances leading to the suspicion that the child is a victim of abuse or neglect, or your reason for being concern about a child:

Information concerning any previous injury, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect experienced by this child or other children in this family situation, including previous action taken, if any/known:

State other known information that may be helpful relating to the child's welfare:

Date:

Name of Staff Member:

Signature of Staff Member:

(Note: If this sheet is not enough, use a clean white sheet of paper and attached to this document)



Appendix 6: DCFS/MASH Suspected Child Abuse Report Form (page 1)

Full [form available here](#).

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE REPORT

To Be Completed by **MANDATED CHILD ABUSE REPORTERS**
Pursuant to Section 32A of The Children Law (2012 Revision)

MASH CASE NAME: _____	RMS# _____
HOPE #: _____	CPR# _____

I understand that I am making a report of child abuse and/or neglect in good faith and in accordance with the Children Law (2012 Revision) Section 32A, which requires me, as a mandated reporter, to send a report to the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

This form is available for you to use to make a written report of child abuse and/or neglect to DCFS. If you are unable to print out the form, contact DCFS and one will be sent to you.

Complete each item with the information known by you that may be pertinent to the suspected abuse/neglect. If there are items for which you have no information, please complete with "unknown". It is not necessary for you to try and get all information requested. If you need more space, please add a page. Once completed it may be printed and emailed to the DCFS office at MASH@gov.ky. The local office, address and fax number are located on this website www.dcf.gov.ky. Thank you for your interest and commitment to the safety and well-being of children.

A. REPORTING PARTY	NAME OF MANDATED REPORTER: _____		POSITION: _____			
	REPORTER'S BUSINESS/AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS: _____		DID REPORTER WITNESS INCIDENT: ☐ YES ☐ NO			
	REPORTER'S TELEPHONE: _____ FAX: _____ EMAIL: _____	SIGNATURE: _____ Signature	TODAY'S DATE AND TIME: _____			
B. REPORT NOTIFICATION	☐ LAW ENFORCEMENT ☐ DCFS		AGENCY: _____			
	OFFICIAL CONTACTED – TITLE: _____	TELEPHONE: () _____	DATE/TIME OF PHONE CALL: _____			
C. DETAILS ABOUT CHILD/YOUNG PERSON (One report per victim)	NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE): _____		BIRTHDATE: _____	APPROX. AGE: _____	SEX: ☐ MALE ☐ FEMALE	NATIONALITY: _____
	ADDRESS: _____		TELEPHONE: () _____			
	PRESENT LOCATION OF CHILD/YOUNG PERSON: _____		SCHOOL: _____		CLASS: _____	GRADE: _____
	PHYSICALLY DISABLED ☐ YES ☐ NO	DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED: ☐ YES ☐ NO	OTHER DISABILITY (SPECIFY): _____		PRIMARY LANGUAGE SPOKEN IN HOME: _____	
	IN FOSTER CARE? ☐ YES ☐ NO	IF VICTIM WAS IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE AT TIME OF INCIDENT, CHECK TYPE OF CARE : ☐ DAY CARE ☐ CHILDCARE CENTRE ☐ SCHOOL ☐ FOSTER FAMILY HOME ☐ GROUP HOME ☐ RELATIVE'S HOME ☐ FAMILY FRIEND			TYPE OF SUSPECTED ABUSE: ☐ PHYSICAL ☐ SEXUAL ☐ EMOTIONAL ☐ NEGLECT ☐ OTHER (SPECIFY): _____	
	RELATIONSHIP TO SUSPECT: _____		PHOTOS TAKEN? ☐ YES ☐ NO		DID THE INCIDENT RESULT IN THIS VICTIM'S DEATH : ☐ YES ☐ NO	



Appendix 7: RCIPS/DCFS Contact with Children at Bloom Learning Centre

Outline

In certain circumstances it may be necessary for a member of the RCIPS and/or DCFS to meet and have a confidential discussion with a child without the consent or knowledge of the parents/guardian. In some cases, it may also be necessary for the child to be removed from the Centre by DCFS/RCIPS Officers without the consent or knowledge of the parents/guardians. If either of these actions are taken, the circumstances requiring the meeting and /or removal will have been carefully considered by the relevant agencies and appropriately authorised.

However, our Centre has a duty of care to all our children, and it is essential that when a member of the RCIPS or DCFS arrives at our Centre to meet a child that the protocol below is followed.

Bloom Learning Centre Protocol

If a member of the RCIPS/DCFS visits the Centre and requests to see a child, the following protocol must be followed:

- The coordinator or staffs immediately informs the child protection officers (Geezel and Apple) that DCFS/RCIPS are on Centre and wish to speak with a child.
- Child Protection Officers meets the Officers and confirms their identity by requesting to see their DCFS/RCIPS issued ID Cards.
- Child Protection Officers ascertains the purpose of the visit and facilitates the initial meeting in an appropriate space. The Child Protection Officers should support the child during the meeting with the agreement of the attending Officers.
- If the Officers subsequently need to remove a child from Bloom Learning Centre, the administrative coordinator must ensure that the proforma below is completed and stored appropriately.
- The DCFS/RCIPS Officers are expected to inform the parent/guardian that the child has been removed from the Centre before the child is collected from the centre.



DCFS/RCIPS Removal of a Child from Bloom Learning Centre

RCIPS/DCFS Officer Details			
Name:		ID Number:	
Name:		ID Number:	
Child's Details			
Name:		Program:	
Parental Consent			
Is the parent/guardian aware that the child is being removed from the Centre? YES ☐ NO ☐			
If No, what is the justification for removal without consent?			
Who will inform the parents/guardian that their child has been removed from the Centre? (Name and title/badge number)			
When will the parent/guardian be informed that their child has been removed from the Centre?			
Signatures			
Name:	Signed:	Date:	Time:
Name:	Signed:	Date:	Time:
Name:	Signed:	Date:	Time:

When completed this form will be retained by the Centre's Child Protection Officers.



Appendix 8: Support Plan for a Child Who Might Be Experiencing Abuse/Neglect

Name of Child: _____ Name of Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Choose and implement strategies from each of the three categories that will meet the social-emotional needs of the child needing support.

1. Create Safety

- Use a calm voice
- Demonstrate warm, open body language
- Identify objects or places in the room that feel safe
- Choose respectful, non-judgmental words to address behaviours
- Provide consistent expectations and predictable routines
- Other: _____

2. Build Relationships

- Greet each morning
- Connect briefly every day
- Spend time individually each week
- Learn and ask about home interests and events
- Reinforce positive behaviours
- Other: _____

3. Teach Skills

- Self-regulation skills
- Identifying feelings
- Emotion-management skills
- Friendship skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Other: _____

4. Create Safety

Work with a counsellor or other specialists to identify accommodation that provides safety and support.

Examples are:

- Supporting a child with transitions so s/he feels safe
- Having a pre-arranged, supportive place the child can go if s/he can't handle being in the classroom
- Providing academic support as needed
- Providing appropriate choices as alternatives to the disruptive behaviours to help the child manage behaviours in a more positive manner, without feeling blamed
- Other: _____

Referral for additional services/support:

Referred to: _____ Date: _____



Appendix 9: Record of Follow-Up to a Referral

Child's Name:					
Referrer's Information					
Name:			Title:		Phone:
Date/Time referral given to CPO:			Date/time referral submitted to the MASH, and by whom:		
Agency Contacted					
Name of Social Worker:			Date(s) contacted:		
Name of RCIPS Officer:			Date(s) contacted:		
FOLLOW-UP					
Follow-up calls to DCFS			Follow-up calls to RCIPS		
Name DCFS SW:	Date:	Outcome:	Name RCIP Officer:	Date:	Outcome:
1.			1.		
2.			2.		
3.			3.		
4.			4.		