

## **PHYSICAL & VERBAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN**

### **All Allegations**

Any allegation of physical or verbal abuse of a child by a teacher must be immediately investigated by the Principal, including interviews with witnesses and the teacher and student concerned and a detailed report of the incident prepared. (See attached form)

A copy of the report is to be given to and discussed with the teacher, student's parent(s) / guardian(s) and School Committee Chairperson

### **No Abuse Committed**

If the Principal's report concludes that no physical or verbal abuse actually took place and the teacher, parent(s) / guardian(s) and School Committee Chairperson all agree with this finding, then each party is to record and sign their agreement on the report and to receive a copy of the signed report. No further disciplinary action is required.

### **Minor Abuse Only**

If the Principal's report concludes that the physical contact or verbal abuse was of such a minor nature that only internal disciplinary action and counseling is warranted and the teacher, parent(s) / guardian(s) and School Committee Chairperson all agree with this finding then each party is to record and sign their agreement on the report and to receive a copy of the signed report. The internal disciplinary action and counseling to be taken is to include :

- a) the teacher apologising in writing to the parent(s) / guardian(s) including a commitment not to re-offend and sending copies of the letter to the Principal and School Committee Chairperson
  - b) the Principal advising the teacher of the expected standards and procedures for discipline in the school and the monitoring and counseling program to be implemented
  - c) the Principal or a Senior Teacher monitoring the teacher's behaviour through making spot visits to the teacher's classroom at least once a week for the first month then at least once a month for the next 5 months
  - d) the Principal providing relevant professional counseling and support for the teacher concerned through a relevant professional development program and appraisal system
- Note : On the second occasion that a teacher commits a minor physical abuse the incident must reported to the Ministry of Education for further action.

## Serious Abuse

If the Principal's report concludes that serious physical abuse has occurred or if any one of the parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher or School Committee Chairperson disagrees with the findings of the report, then the report is to be sent to the Secretary of Education.

On receipt of a Principal's report stating that serious physical abuse has occurred and the parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher or School Committee Chairperson all record and sign their agreement with the report the following procedures will be followed:

- a) if MOE files record a previous serious physical or verbal abuse of a student by the teacher then the Secretary of Education will immediately dismiss the teacher and initiate procedures for deregistration as stated in the Education Act
- b) if MOE files do not record a previous serious physical or verbal abuse of a student by the teacher then the Secretary of Education will :
  - I. immediately suspend the teacher without pay for a minimum period of two weeks
  - II. ascertain the teacher's ability to refrain from physical abuse by conducting personal interviews and arranging counseling sessions for the teacher with a person experienced in anger management and physical abuse cases
  - III. meet with the Principal and School Committee Chairperson to determine whether or not the teacher will be permitted to resume employment at the school and consequently:
    - (i) lift the suspension and allow the teacher to resume teaching at the same school, if this is the unanimous decision of the Principal, School Committee Chairperson and the Secretary of Education, and order the Principal to ensure compliance with the same internal disciplinary and counseling procedures specified for minor physical abuse ; or
    - (ii) terminate the teacher's employment as a teacher at the school, if this is the unanimous decision of the Principal, School Committee Chairperson or Secretary of Education, or the decision of the Secretary of Education if consensus cannot be reached ; and
    - (iii) initiate procedures for deregistration as stated in the Education Act, if this is the decision of the Secretary of Education ;

If one or more parties disagree(s) with the Principal's report the Secretary of Education will conduct an investigation which may include requesting an official police investigation. The procedures to follow the Secretary's report will be the same as would follow a Principal's report. All Principals are to comply with the requirements of this policy and failure to comply will result in disciplinary action by the Secretary of Education.

## Format for Principal's Report

**Title :** Principal's Report on Alleged Physical Abuse by a Teacher

Name(s) of :

School \_\_\_\_\_

Principal \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher accused \_\_\_\_\_

Student abused \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/ Guardian(s) \_\_\_\_\_

School Committee Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction

Name of person making the allegation \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time allegation was made \_\_\_\_\_

Details of the allegation made (names, actions, time, place, witnesses)

Description of the Principal's investigation (people interviewed and when)

### Teacher's Description of the Incident

Main events leading up to the incident including location and times

Specific actions by the teacher, student and others during the incident

Specific effects on the student

### Student's Description of the Incident

Main events leading up to the incident including location and times

Specific actions by the teacher, student and others during the incident

Specific effects on the student

**Witness' Description of the Incident** – Name \_\_\_\_\_

Main events leading up to the incident including location and times

Specific actions by the teacher, student and others during the incident

Specific effects on the student

**Findings** (Principal's opinion of what actually occurred)

Main events leading up to the incident including location and times

Specific actions by the teacher, student and others during the incident

Specific effects on the student

**Conclusion**

I conclude that this incident involved \_\_\_\_\_ (no / minor / serious) physical abuse.

**Previous Record of Teacher In Regard To Physical Abuse**

Number of previous minor physical abuse cases \_\_\_\_\_

Number of previous serious physical abuse cases \_\_\_\_\_

**Principal's signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher** Name \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (agree / disagree) with the conclusion of this report.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (agree / disagree) with the information on previous cases of physical abuse.

Teacher's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Parents/Guardians** Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_

I/We, \_\_\_\_\_ (agree / disagree) with the conclusion of this report.

Parent/Guardian signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**School Committee Chairperson** Name \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (agree / disagree) with the conclusion of this report.

Chairperson's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_