



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION & STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Newberry House is committed to encouraging a culture of safety and preventing or reducing the risk of harm to students. This culture will be supported by safe staff recruitment, codes of conduct and safe activities.

2. WHY THIS POLICY EXISTS

Newberry House Montessori School seeks to ensure that the School is safe for all students and that effective measures are employed to address situations which may result in harm to a child. The policy is supported by the parent code of conduct, student code of conduct, staff code of conduct, application and enrolment policies, staff employment contracts, safety policies etc.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

This policy applies to:

- All staff employed by NHMS
- Student teachers in training who attend NHMS
- Substitute or temporary staff
- Lecturers/trainers/guests who hold training sessions on the campus whilst students are present
- Extra-mural staff who teach students at NHMS
- Volunteers who assist on activities, overnight activities and camps
- Parents of students at NHMS.

3.1. Staff Recruitment

- 3.1.1.** All prospective employees, volunteers and substitute staff will be informed of the child protection policy.
- 3.1.2.** All prospective employees, volunteers and substitute staff will be required to produce a police clearance certificate prior to their assuming duty. The police clearance certificate is to be renewed every two years.
- 3.1.3.** The staff code of conduct, which includes a clear and concise statement of acceptable behaviour and practice, will be presented to all staff prior to their assumption of duties.

3.2. Codes of Conduct

- 3.2.1.** All prospective employees, volunteers, students and parents will be informed of the Newberry House Montessori School codes of conduct.
- 3.2.2.** All staff, parents and students will be required to sign acknowledgement of the code of conduct.

3.3. Safe Activities

- 3.3.1.** The practical guidelines towards the implementation of safe activities follows below.

4. PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

- 4.1.** It is important that staff recognise and implement the following Montessori principles:
 - 4.1.1.** Treat all students with respect.
 - 4.1.2.** Provide an example of good conduct for students to follow.
 - 4.1.3.** Challenge, manage and report potentially abusive behaviour.

- 4.1.4. Develop a culture where students feel safe to discuss issues with confidence and openness.
 - 4.1.5. Respect each student's boundaries.
 - 4.1.6. Educate students on how to report concerns.
- 4.2. In general it is inappropriate to:
- 4.2.1. Spend excessive time alone with students away from others.
 - 4.2.2. Take any student or students off campus without the express permission of the Head of School.
 - 4.2.3. Take any student or students to one's own home without the express permission of the Head of School and the student's parent or legal guardian.
- 4.3. **Behaviour Protocols¹: Employees, volunteers and substitute teachers may never:**
- 4.3.1. Hit or otherwise physically assault or abuse a student or use any other prohibited punitive measures.
 - 4.3.2. Permit students in their care to abuse one another in any way.
 - 4.3.3. Develop relationships with students which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive.
 - 4.3.4. Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.
 - 4.3.5. Expose students to pornographic material of any nature or on any media whatsoever or allow such exposure to take place.
 - 4.3.6. Act in any way intended to shame, humiliate or degrade a student.
 - 4.3.7. Serve alcohol or any other controlled substance to a student.
 - 4.3.8. Discriminate against, show different treatment to, or favour particular students to the exclusion of others in any of the following: race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political views.
- 4.4. **Safety**
- 4.4.1. All external and perimeter gates are to be kept closed and locked at all times.
 - 4.4.2. Suspicious persons seen lingering outside the School property should be reported to the Head of School immediately.
 - 4.4.3. All areas need to be kept free of hazardous items as is reasonably practicable.
 - 4.4.4. No smoking is permitted on the School grounds.
 - 4.4.5. Staff safety inspections to be done regularly.
- 4.5. **Safety in Activities**
- 4.5.1. All employees, volunteers and substitute staff will provide clear guidelines on what to do to ensure the safety of the students during all extramural activities.
 - 4.5.2. Every effort must be made to minimise the risk of any form of abuse or injury.
 - 4.5.3. Appropriate levels of supervision must be put in place depending on the age of the students and the activity involved.

¹ Behaviour protocols are rules of appropriate and proper behaviour, which are designed to protect the child but also to protect adults from false accusations of inappropriate behaviour or abuse.

- 4.5.4.** Appropriate health and safety checks are to be carried out to ensure the safety of the venue, adequate changing areas and toilets, first aid supplies, safe transport, sleeping arrangements and adequate insurance.
- 4.5.5.** Prior to students engaging in any extramural activities parents or legal guardians must sign a permission and indemnity form.

4.6. Obligation by all concerned parties

- 4.6.1.** Should any of the concerned parties to whom this policy applies receive information about, or observe, actual or suspected abuse, he or she must immediately inform the Head of School. Where appropriate the matter will be investigated further.
- 4.6.2.** Should any of the concerned parties to whom this policy applies have knowledge or suspicion that a child is at risk, he or she must report the matter to the Head of School, who will determine what action to take.

4.7. Discipline procedures for students

The use of physical discipline or verbal abuse is a dismissible offence. As a general guideline, students should be made aware that a key part of growing up is learning how to deal with the results of one's actions.

4.8. Communication about students

The School may, in terms of the Enrolment contract, include photographs, with or without name, of your *child* in School publications, or in press releases to celebrate the School or your *child's* activities, achievements or successes.

REFERENCES:

South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996
 Employment of Educators Act, 76 of 1998
 South African Council of Educators Act, 31 of 2000
 The Children's Act, 38 of 2005
 Western Cape Provincial School Education Act, 12 of 1997
 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Section 28 of the Bill of Rights

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