



Inter-Agency Chuuk Child Protection Policy

Responsibility of: CDOE Child Protection personnel/Principals/Teachers and Stakeholders

Effective Date: 2022

Next Review Date: 2024

Target Audience: CDOE personnel/Principals/Teachers and Stakeholders

Reference: FSMC, TITLE 41. PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE: CHAPTER 5 - Child Abuse

Other related documents:

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) ratified by the Federated States of Micronesia 1993. The CRC provides the expectations of all signatories in protecting children from abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence.

Chuuk State Family Law Legislation

Chuuk State Department of Education (CDOE) Anti-Bullying Policy

Chuuk State Human Trafficking Law

Policy Statement

The CDOE has zero tolerance against abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence against children. The Department also recognizes that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that it has an obligation to put in place reasonable measures to ensure, as far as possible, the safety and wellbeing of children under our Care and those in the communities in which we live. Representatives of the Chuuk State Child Protection Policy Working Group (CCPPWG) are available to give guidance on how to interpret the policy and its application to all the communities in the five regions.

Scope

This Chuuk State Child Protection Policy (CCPP) shall apply to all individuals employed by the CDOE, including temporary and casual hires. It also applies to the CDOE's contractors and volunteers, in connection with their duties and responsibilities to the CDOE. When working with or through partners or sub-contracted agencies, CP agencies will ensure that their safeguarding procedures are consistent and in line with the principles and approaches set out in this Policy. Furthermore, to strengthen child protection, responsive and referral mechanisms, the CCPP provides a platform for an inter-agency approach and commitment.

Chuuk State Child Protection Standards, Principles and Indicators

The CDOE including CP agencies are obligated to adhere to or use the following the following standards, principles and indicators as benchmarks to protect children from abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence.

Standard 1: A commitment to child protection and wellbeing

Principle: *Child protection and wellbeing is embedded in organizational leadership, governance and culture*

Indicator: CP agencies put into practice its commitment to the CCPP and how a child safe culture is modelled at all levels of the organization.

Standard 2: Taking child participation seriously

Principle: *Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.*

Indicator: CP agencies provide an enabling environment for children and young people to have their rights respected, participate in decision- making and have their voices heard as stipulated in the CCPP.

Standard 3: Involving families and communities

Principle: *Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child protection measures.*

Indicator: CP agencies must always seek to work in ways which are culturally sensitive and provide respect where it is deemed appropriate.

Standard 4: Respecting equity and diversity

Principle: *Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.*

Indicator: CP agencies must create an environment where children and young people's diverse circumstances and needs are recognized, and all children feel safe, welcomed, included and protected.

Standard 5: Ensuring that staff are suitable and supported

Principle: *People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to demonstrate child protection and wellbeing values in practice.*

Indicator: CP agencies must put into practice its recruitment and staff development policies including screening, induction and supervision to ensure that staff and volunteers' compliance to the CCPP.

Standard 6: Child-focused complaint, response and referral systems

Principle: *Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused.*

Indicator: CP agencies ensure that accessible and responsive complaints management processes including referral pathways that are focused on the needs of children and young people.

Standard 7: Staff knowledge, skills and awareness

Principle: *Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.*

Indicator: CP agencies to provide periodic training and professional learning for staff and volunteers on acquiring the necessary knowledge, skills, values and beliefs exclusively but not limited to the CCPP.

Standard 8: Protected physical and online environments

Principle: *Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimizing the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.*

Indicator: CP agencies promote child safety and wellbeing in physical and online environments in order to reduce the risk of harm and to protect children and young people from physical as well as cyber bullying.

Standard 9: Review of child protection policies and practices

Principle: *Implementation of the (inter) agency child protection policy is regularly reviewed and improved.*

Indicator: CP agencies must continue to reflect on and improve its Child Protection policies and practices. The CDOE must ensure that CP agencies are informed of the Chuuk Child Protection Policy (CCPP) compliance and regulations.

Standard 10: Documenting policies and procedures

Principle: *Policies and procedures document how the CP agencies protect and safeguard children and young people.*

Indicator: CP agencies document and make available policies and procedures for ensuring the protection of children and young people. CP agencies must take responsibility to meet their obligations regarding duty of care towards children, and take necessary action where it is believed that a child is at risk or is actually harmed.

Definitions of terms and concepts

Abuse - a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can take the form of physical, psychological, financial or sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the health, survival, development or dignity of a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Abuse can be a single act or repeated acts and can be unintentional or deliberate. Abuse often involves criminal acts.

Child Protection (CP) agencies – refer to stakeholders, including the CDOE, partners and/or organizations who work (in)directly with children. This refers to but is not limited to non-government organizations (NGOS), faith-based organizations (FBO), donors, Chuuk Women's Council, Youth Groups, government departments, public and private sectors.

Child – The CDOE including the CP agencies regard a child as anyone under the age of 18 years under the Chuuk State Family Law Act. It is widely recognized that children are generally more vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence due to factors such as age, gender, social and economic status, developmental stage, and dependence on others.

Definitions: Forms of Abuse

Sexual abuse

Definition: The Chuuk Department of Education (CDOE) agrees with the definition of sexual abuse and exploitation as "...the imposition of sexual acts, or acts with sexual overtones, by one or more persons on a child."¹

Examples: Indecent touching, penetration and sexual torture, as well as indecent exposure, using sexually explicit language towards a child, and making pornographic material of children or showing children pornographic material.

CDOE Policy Statement: It is the policy of the Chuuk Department of Education that no student should suffer sexual abuse for any reason. The CDOE and School employees with evidence of this policy being contravened must follow the reporting procedure outlined in this Policy.

Emotional abuse & neglect

Definition: The CDOE agrees with defining emotional abuse and neglect as:

- Psychological abuse (emotional abuse) refers to non-accidental verbal or symbolic acts by a child's parent or caregiver that result, or have reasonable potential to result, in significant psychological harm to the child²
- Neglect is any confirmed or suspected egregious act or omission by a child's parent or other caregiver that deprives the child of basic developmental and/or age-appropriate needs and thereby results, or has reasonable potential to result, in cognitive, emotional, physical or psychological harm to the child. This includes educational, medical, physical, or psychological neglect, or abandonment⁴

Examples: Humiliation, name calling, put downs, confiding in children, shaming, being inconsistent, using children as informants, playing mind games, intimidation, threats, rude gestures, constant yelling, rude looks, gossiping, exclusion/isolation, not providing medical attention, not providing children adequate food or water to thrive, not providing children with adequate hygiene/clothing/sleep nor quality education which takes into consideration the child's diverse learning needs.

CDOE Policy Statement: It is the policy of the Chuuk Department of Education that no student should suffer emotional abuse or neglect for any reason. The CDOE and stakeholders with evidence of this policy being contravened must follow the reporting procedure outlined in this CCPP.

¹ Save the Children, Save the Children's Policy on: Protecting Children from Sexual Abuse and Exploitation, August 2003, p. 2, available at: <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/2638/pdf/2638.pdf> [accessed 4 February 2019]

² Onigu-Otite E, Jamora MS. Abuse and Neglect. Johns Hopkins Psychiatry Guide. 2017. https://www.hopkinsguides.com/hopkins/view/Johns_Hopkins_Psychiatry_Guide/787122/all/Abuse_and_Neglect. [Accessed February 4, 2019]

Corporal Punishment/Physical abuse

Definition: The CDOE agrees with the defining of 'corporal' or 'physical' punishment being "any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light..."³.

Examples: Caning, slapping, throwing objects at, pinching, spanking, smacking, choking, burning, twisting arms, forcing students into stress positions (such as kneeling or squatting) for extended periods.

CDOE Policy Statement: It is the policy of the Chuuk Department of Education that no student should suffer Corporal Punishment or physical abuse for any reason. The CDOE personnel and School employees with evidence of this policy being contravened must follow the reporting procedure outlined in this CCPP.

Responsibilities

Chuuk Department of Education (CDOE)

To ensure the wellbeing of children in schools the CDOE must:

- Provide CDOE and school staff with adequate training in child protection matters;
- Ensure that applicants for employment pass a security check that clears them of crimes against children;
- Ensure all new employees sign the Staff Code of Conduct;
- Ensure that all CDOE and school employees adhere to the Chuuk State Child Protection Policy;
- Support schools and families who raise concerns about child protection;
- Articulate Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) and acknowledging the socio-cultural status of the child in terms of access and equity to quality education including early childhood education, special and inclusive education, non-formal or informal education and related activities, free of charge; and
- Ensure all decisions on measures and actions concerning a specific child or a group of children must respect the best interests of the child or children, with regard to education. In order to promote quality education, the CDOE need to have well-trained teachers and other professionals working in different education related settings, as well as a child-friendly environment undertaking appropriate teaching and learning methods, premised on the notion that education is not only an investment in the future, but also an opportunity for joyful activities, respect, participation contributing to successful student outcomes.

Schools

To establish the wellbeing of children in schools, Principals must:

- Ensure all school staff are familiar with and adhere to the Chuuk State Child Protection Policy (CCPP);
- Ensure staff attend all CDOE mandated CCPP training;
- Take any reports of abuse seriously and support children, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns;
- Take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of any concerns;
- Act appropriately and effectively in instigating or co-operating with any subsequent process of investigation;
- At all times, be guided through the child protection process by the principle of 'best interests of the child'; and
- Responding to the responsibilities at the CDOE level and enhancing children's responsibilities to overcome the limitations of their vulnerability of any kind.

³ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), *General comment No. 8 (2006): The Right of the Child to Protection from Corporal Punishment and Other Cruel or Degrading Forms of Punishment (Arts. 19; 28, Para. 2; and 37, inter alia)*, 2 March 2007, CRC/C/GC/8, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/460bc7772.html> [accessed 14 January 2019]

Partners

All CDOE employees, volunteers, consultants, school principals, staff, and families, sub-contractors, partner organisations and visitors are obliged to follow this policy and maintain an environment that prevents abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence which encourages reporting of breaches of this policy using the appropriate procedures.

All people working with CDOE will:

- Read, understand and adhere to the CCPP, Anti-bullying Policy and Human Trafficking Act;
- Strive to promote a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, exploitation, neglect and violation in all working environments;
- Strive to develop relationships with all stakeholders which are based on equality, trust, respect and honesty;
- Prioritize the safety and welfare of children;
- Report any concerns they may have about the welfare and wellbeing of a child;
- Report any concerns they may have about the behavior of a CP representative in relation to CP issues; and
- In a one-to-one situation with a child or young person, where privacy and confidentiality are important, try to make sure that another adult is aware that contact is taking place and why. If possible ensure another adult is in sight and that the child or young person knows another adult is around.

All people working with CDOE will not:

- Sexually harass, assault or abuse a child;
- Physically harass, assault or abuse a child;
- Emotionally abuse a child, such as engaging in behaviour intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade;
- Condone, or participate in behavior which is abusive, discriminatory, illegal, or unsafe;
- Develop, encourage or fail to take necessary action of relationships with children which could in any way be deemed sexual, exploitative or abusive;
- Act in ways that may be violent, inappropriate or sexually provocative; and
- Agree with a child to keep a secret which has implications for their safety or the safety of other young people.

Referral Pathways

The CCPP referral pathway provides operational guidance for front-line staff at the CDOE, schools and agencies that specifies pathways to fulfilling CP obligations under the Policy.

Chuuk Department of Education (CDOE)

As the CDOE is responsible for leading the development of child care and protection services, and also plays the central role in case management and decision-making whenever a child is identified as at risk or in need of care and protection, the CDOE shall designate a Child Protection Officer's role to include the following:

Role of Child Protection Officer

- ☐ Receive and assess reports of children in need of care and protection.
- ☐ Notify the Division of Public Safety if the report indicates that a crime has been committed against the child and conduct a joint interview of the child with the Officer-in-charge.
- ☐ Take emergency action to remove a child at risk of immediate harm, with support of the Public Safety where necessary.
- ☐ Approve placement of a child in temporary emergency care.
- ☐ Organize and facilitate an inter-agency case conference / family conference to discuss and decide on a care and protection plan.
- ☐ Document the agreed care plan, coordinate referrals to agencies and organisations, and facilitate the child and family's access to services as needed.
- ☐ Where necessary, apply to the court for a Care and Protection Order.
- ☐ Monitor and review implementation of the plan, including identifying and overcoming barriers or problems, and revising the plan as needed.
- ☐ Regular communication and follow-up with other service providers.
- ☐ Maintain an up-to-date list of potential care-givers and/or foster parents and other service providers in the local area.

Teachers and other school officials interact closely with children on a daily basis, and therefore play a key role in empowering children to protect themselves and in identifying children who are at risk or in need of protection. In addition, providing education support and/or facilitating school re-entry is often an important part of a child's care plan, particularly children who have been out of school or not fully engaged in school (e.g. child labourers, street children, children in conflict with the law).

Role of Teachers and Schools

- ☐ Ensure full implementation of a contextualized school child protection policy and create a safe environment for all children.
- ☐ Ensure that all children know how to report and seek help if they are experiencing abuse, exploitation, neglect, violence or bullying (by someone within the school, at home, or in their community), and create an environment where children feel confident to ask for help.
- ☐ Be alert to signs that a child may be abused, exploited, neglected or bullied.
- ☐ Provide basic counselling services to children.
- ☐ Immediately refer any child identified or suspected as in need of care and protection to the Child Protection Officer at the CDOE in accordance with school reporting procedures.
- ☐ Respond in a timely manner to requests from the Child Protection Officer for information about the educational history of a child suspected of in need of care and protection.
- ☐ Participate in child protection case conferences, as requested, and advise on education/ training support available for the child.
- ☐ Facilitate school re-entry or tutoring support as needed.

All child protection cases that come to the attention of Department of Public Safety, Health workers, teachers or NGOs should be referred to the *Child Protection Officer* who then takes the lead in deciding how best to respond and who needs to be involved.

Department of Public Safety (DPS)

Whilst the child protection officer leads the process of care and protection planning for the child, the Officer-in-charge would lead any criminal investigation against the perpetrator. Where a crime has been committed, close coordination is needed to ensure that children and their families are supported to access justice, and to ensure that the child is safe from further harm.

Role of Public Safety

- ❑ Immediately notify the Child Protection Officer of any reported case of a child who is a victim of a crime or otherwise in need of care and protection.
- ❑ When requested, assist the Child Protection Officer to remove a child who is at risk of immediate harm.
- ❑ Thoroughly and professionally investigate all alleged offences against children.
- ❑ Interview the child as soon as possible, using child-sensitive interview techniques. Where feasible, conduct joint interviews with the Child Protection Officer to reduce the need for the child to repeat his/her story.
- ❑ Where needed, assist the child to access medical treatment and a forensic medical examination.
- ❑ Participate in child protection case conferences, as requested, and advise on safety issues.
- ❑ Consider the safety and well-being of the child when deciding whether to release the accused on bail, and impose no-contact provisions if the accused is released.
- ❑ In consultation with the prosecutor, coordinate criminal court proceedings and take all necessary action for prosecution before the courts.
- ❑ Keep the child, the child's parents/guardian, and the child protection officer informed about the progress of the criminal case.

Health workers

Health workers are often the first point of contact for children who have been abandoned, abused or neglected and can play an important role in identifying children in need of care and protection and ensuring appropriate medical care and follow-up. They can also play an important role in prevention and early intervention through their regular interactions with children and parents. For children who have experienced violence (particularly sexual abuse) health workers may have a dual role in treating injuries as well as conducting a forensic medical examination to collect evidence for a criminal prosecution. It is important to remember that these are two distinct roles. ALL children should receive care and treatment for their injuries as a matter of priority, as well as any follow-up health care as needed (physical and mental health). Forensic medical examinations should be conducted only when they are needed for criminal prosecution. In particular, forensic genital examinations can be very invasive and distressing for child sexual abuse victims, and should be conducted only by a trained professional, and only where they are likely to produce relevant evidence (i.e. the incident was recent and involved penetration or injuries, and there is likely to be a criminal prosecution). In all cases, the best interest of the child (including his/her emotional well-being) take precedence over evidence collection.

Role of Health Workers

- ❑ Respond in a timely manner to requests from the Child Protection Officer for information about the medical history of a child suspected of needing care and protection.
- ❑ Immediately refer any child diagnosed as or suspected of being abused or neglected to the Child Protection Officer.
- ❑ Provide immediate medical treatment for injuries and any follow-up medical care that the child may need.
- ❑ Ensure informed consent from the child and his/her non-offending parent or caregiver, or request direction from the Child Protection Officer where parental consent is being unreasonably withheld.
- ❑ Avoid asking the child to repeat what happened in detail.
- ❑ Where indicated, conduct a forensic medical examination and collect forensic evidence as soon as possible. Child sexual abuse victims should be examined only by a qualified professional.
- ❑ Prepare a medical report as soon as possible (free of charge) and testify in court if required.
- ❑ Participate in case conferences, as requested, and advise on the child's ongoing health care needs (including mental health care).

Child Safety Organizations (CSO) service providers

In Chuuk State, CSOs (NGOs, faith-based organisations, women and youth groups) play an important role in the delivery of support services to children and their families. The types of services that CSO provide, and their relationship with government, may vary due to protocols and procedures. However, in this inter-agency child protection policy, referral pathways commonly describe their role as follows:

Role of CSO Service Providers

- ☐ Immediately notify the Child Protection (Community Partnership) Officer if a child needs protection who will refer the matter to the Child Protection Officer at the CDOE.
- ☐ Participate in child protection case conferences, as requested, and advise on what support and assistance the CSO is able to provide to the child and family.
- ☐ Provide services to the child and family in accordance with organisational capacity and as agreed in the CSO plan (counselling, temporary alternative care, parenting advice, in-kind support, etc.).
- ☐ Provide regular progress reports to the Child Protection Officer.
- ☐ Have a child safeguarding policy and ensure that all staff are properly screened, sign a child protection code of conduct, trained and comply with child safeguarding standards.

The type and range of CSO service providers tends to vary in different regions, so local service mapping and partnership building may be needed as part of the roll-out of the CCPP referral pathway at the local level.

Legal Services and Victim/Witness Support

Children and their families may also need support to help them navigate the justice system, including legal advice from a lawyer or paralegal, as well as support from a victim/witness supporter through the criminal justice process. Legal advice is often provided by the State legal aid organizations, while victim/witness support services are generally provided by an NGO or specially trained volunteers.

Role of lawyers/paralegals

- ☐ Provide legal advice to assist the child and parents to make an informed decision about pursuing criminal charges against the perpetrator, and advocate on behalf of the child with the justice agencies.
- ☐ Assist the child to make a claim for compensation.
- ☐ Assist the child and parent in any disputes relating to care, custody and maintenance of the child.
- ☐ Provide independent legal representation for the child in Care and Protection proceedings.

Role of victim/witness supporters

- ☐ Attend police interviews with the child to provide emotional comfort.
- ☐ Act as liaison between the criminal justice system and the child, keeping them informed of the progress of the case.
- ☐ Provide the child with simple explanations of the criminal justice process and their role in it.
- ☐ Organise a pre-trial familiarization visit to the courtroom.
- ☐ Provide logistical support and accompany the child on all court appearances.

Extended family and traditional / community leaders

There is growing recognition of the important role that extended family members and traditional and/or community leaders (including family elders and religious leaders) can play in the child protection system.

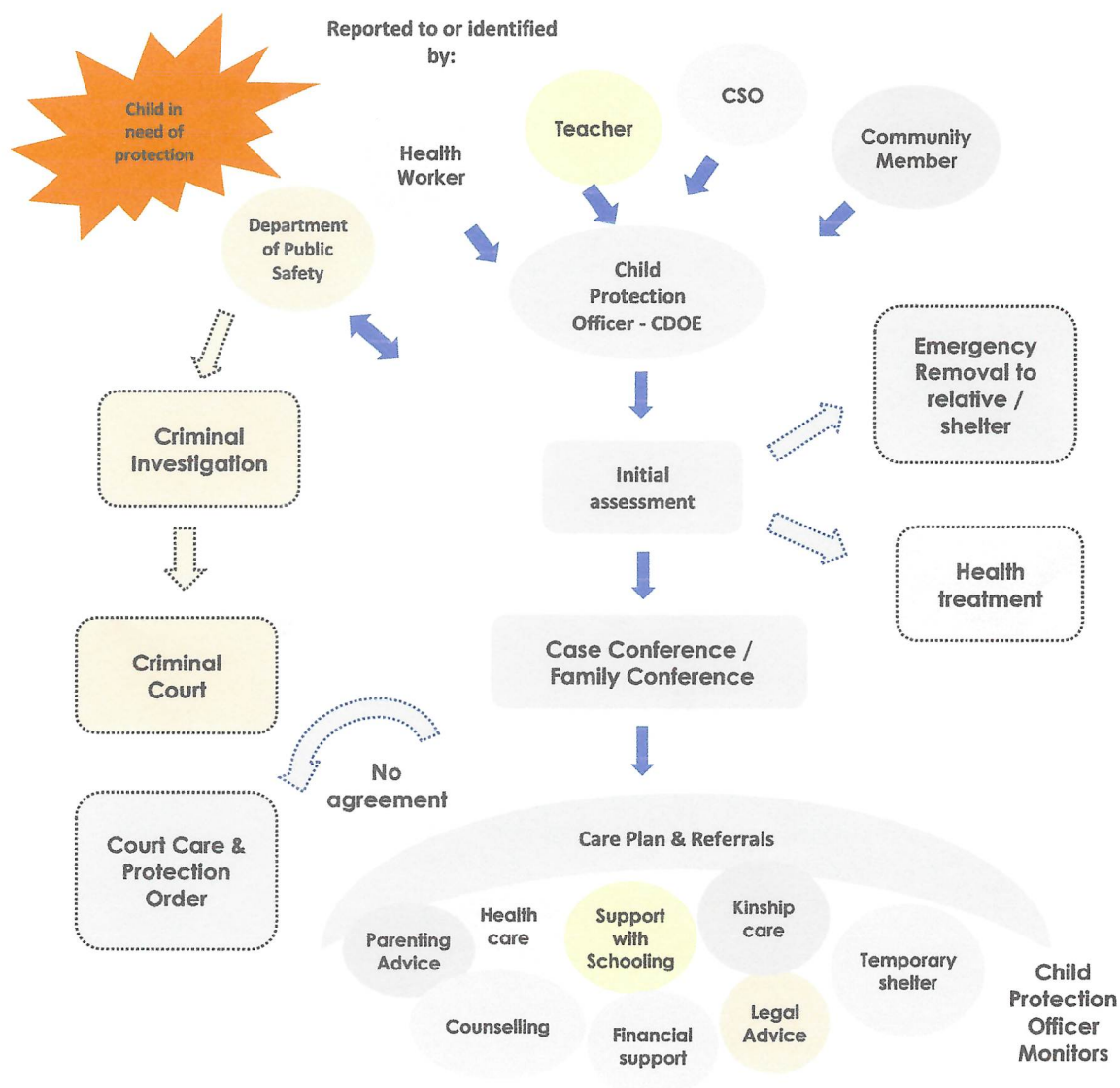
Role of extended family and traditional/community leaders

- ☐ Notify the Child Protection Officer when there are concerns about a child in need of care and protection in their family/community.
- ☐ Participate in child protection case conferences, as requested, and help decide on how best to ensure the child's well-being and protection.
- ☐ Provide guidance and support to the child and family as agreed in the case conference and outlined in the plan (parenting advice, emotional support, in-kind assistance, home visits and supervision, alternative care).
- ☐ Notify the Child Protection Officer if the care plan is not being followed or there are any concerns about the child's safety and wellbeing.

Reporting and Referral Procedures

Mandatory reporting and referral of child abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence must be documented as part of the CCPP inter-agency plan. Each of the agencies must have their own child protection reporting and referral pathways to include pointers for reporting and referrals as articulated in this CCPP. It focuses on the inter-agency aspects of the reporting and response process (i.e. how the agencies will work together to support the child and family). In instances where a child is suspected of being the victim of abuse or neglect it is the duty of CDOE, school staff and the wider community to take the matter seriously and follow the procedure outlined in the flow diagram below.

Flow Chart outlining the Reporting and Referral Processes led by the CDOE CPO



(Adopted and adapted from UNICEF Guidance Notes: Inter-Agency Child Protection Referral Pathway)

Information Sharing and Respect for Children's Privacy

In responding to children in need of protection, agencies and individuals may have information needed to comprehensively assess the child's situation, and will need to work together to provide a range of services to the child and family. This requires agreement on sharing of necessary information, whilst at the same time respecting the child's privacy and dignity.

The CCPP inter-agency referral pathway outline the service providers' commitment to sharing information about sensitive child information, including:

- ❑ Guidance on how information will be shared – verbally, electronically or through a paper system;
- ❑ Joint commitment to implementing safeguards to ensure that the child's privacy and confidentiality is maintained (e.g. access to records only by authorised staff; password protection on computers or laptops storing confidential information; paper files kept in a locked cabinet/drawer; sensitive information not shared by email or other unsecure channels, etc.);
- ❑ Sharing of information and details on a "need to know" basis;
- ❑ Reference to any provisions under national law that require agencies or organizations to respond to requests for information from the child protection authority when it is carrying out assessments of children suspected to be needing care and protection; and
- ❑ All practitioners should not assume that someone else will pass on information that they think may be critical to keeping a child safe. If a practitioner has concerns about a child's welfare and considers that there may be a child in need of care and protection or that the child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm, then they should share the information with local authority and/or the Department of Public Safety. All the relevant personnel should be particularly alert to the importance of sharing information on a case by case basis or when a child moves from one local authority into another, due to the risk that knowledge pertinent to keeping a child safe could be lost.

Confidential information

The employee, contractor, or volunteer shall maintain the confidentiality of all information considered confidential, including but not limited to child information, personal information and academic records unless disclosure is required pursuant to the personal safety of a child. In light of this:

- ❑ All agencies should have arrangements in place that set out clearly the processes and the principles for maintaining confidentiality. The arrangement should include how information will be shared within their own agency; and with others who may be involved in a child's life; and
- ❑ No reference is to be associated with any provisions under national laws that override any requirements for professional confidentiality (e.g. patient-doctor confidentiality) where the wellbeing or safety of a child is at risk.

Monitoring and Reviewing of the CCPP Referral Pathway

The Chuuk State Inter-agency Child Protection referral pathways should be viewed as "living" documents that are periodically reviewed and updated to reflect lessons learned and best practices, and to overcome any bottlenecks, barriers or challenges experienced.

To facilitate this, the child protection referral pathway should include:

- ❑ A commitment from all agencies to periodically review and revise the referral pathway protocol;
- ❑ Periodic meetings of local service providers to discuss how the inter-agency collaboration is functioning, identify best practices, and problem-solve any bottlenecks or barriers;
- ❑ A mechanism for feedback from local service providers to State-level policy makers (e.g. the Chuuk State Child Protection Policy Working Group- CCPPWG) to resolve more systemic problems;
- ❑ A mechanism for feedback from children and their families on the referral process and the support they received (e.g. monitoring and evaluation survey);
- ❑ Periodic case file audits of a random sample of case files to assess how services are being provided and documented.

Disciplinary action

If abuse has occurred and disciplinary action is to be taken by the Director of CDOE, it must:

1. Have children's welfare as its first priority.
2. Be in line with the CDOE's employment policy and procedures as much as circumstances allow.

Written warning – first minor conduct of a non-sexual nature

Upon completion of an investigation into the CDOE or School employee for professional misconduct with a child finding them guilty of a first minor offence, non-sexual in nature, the Director of Education will issue a formal written warning.

Formal Suspension – Second Offence or Moderate offence (non-sexual nature)

Upon completion of an investigation into the CDOE or School employee for professional misconduct with a child finding them guilty of:

1. a second minor offence of a non-sexual in nature or
2. a moderate offence of a non-sexual nature, the Director of Education will suspend the offender without pay for 1-4 weeks.

Immediate Termination of Employment and Department of Public Safety referral

Upon completion of an investigation into the CDOE or School employee for professional misconduct with a child finding them guilty of:

1. a third minor offence of a non-sexual nature
2. a major offence of a non-sexual in nature or
3. a sexual offence, the Director of Education will immediately terminate the offender's employment and automatically notify the Department of Public Safety.

Staff Policy Awareness

School principals and heads of agencies must ensure that all school staff and personnel are aware of the Inter-agency CCPP and its details at the beginning of every school year/each contract. A page of staff signatures proving awareness may be requested by CDOE at any time.

Procedure Overview

Recruitment and Selection:

- Safe recruitment and vetting processes are followed for all volunteers, employees, consultants and partners (For more detailed guidance, refer to individual agency Recruitment Policy)
- Where an employee, volunteer or partner is engaged in 'regulated activity' (direct work with children), a criminal background check will be undertaken as part of the recruitment process. (For more detailed guidance, refer to individual agency Recruitment Policy)
- All employees and volunteers must sign and abide by the Inter-agency CCPP and the Code of Conduct. The code sets out benchmarks of standards of practice expected of employees and volunteers, in terms professional competence, integrity acting as a representative and in safeguarding and/or protecting children (For more detailed guidance, refer to the CDOE Code of Conduct).

Induction and Support

All regular and volunteer workers are required to participate in an induction program that includes details of the CCPP as well as training in Child Protection issues, including recognizing and responding to signs of abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence against children. All agencies should have an in-house Induction training material. Clear processes for reporting and dealing with safeguarding concerns and incidents must be widely communicated, regularly reviewed and consistently applied. Where allegations are made about an employee, careful consideration must take place about the appropriateness of the person continuing to work with the Agencies.

Data Protection

Ensure that personal information is kept confidential unless agreement is sorted between the individual and/or their parent/guardian, except where it is necessary to pass this to a specialized child welfare or law enforcement agency in relation to a safeguarding incident. CP agencies must respect confidentiality and have a responsibility to protect sensitive personal data. Information should only be shared and handled on a need to know basis, that is, access to the information must be necessary for the conduct of one's official duties. Only individuals who have legitimate reasons to access the information are allowed to receive it. (For more detailed guidance, refer to individual agency Data Protection Policy and Statements).

Minimum Standards

Where employees or volunteers are contracted by other employers, or when working with partners, sub contracted agencies, each agency must facilitate a briefing on the Inter-agency CCP Code of Conduct to provide detailed information on how the organization works to protect children and ensure compliance.

Social Media

CP agencies must have policies regarding associations with the media and the use of actual names, images, including photographs and recordings (refer to the individual agency Social Media Policy). This should be applied in all situations. Specifically relating to protection of children, all agencies must:

- Use names and images of children which are respectful and not expose them to further vulnerability (not degrading or showing sexual images of children naked or partially clothed).
- Reproduce images and use names of children only where we have the written permission of their parents / guardians using a consent form (refer to Annex 3).
- Inform employees, volunteers and partners about the 'Social Media Policy' in relation to the use of technology (IT Policies), and understand the appropriate use of technology and social media.

Appropriate Interactions with Children

The CDOE and CP agencies are committed to providing a caring environment conducive to the physical, mental, social, and emotional wellbeing of children while they are participating in school activities. Therefore, employees, contractors, and volunteers who interact with children will maintain appropriate teacher/student and adult/child relationships.

- 1) The employee, contractor, or volunteer shall not neglect to protect the wellbeing of a child or commit any abusive act or sexual exploitation with, to, or in the presence of a child, whether or not that child is or has been under the care or supervision of that employee, contractor, or volunteer, as defined below:
 - a) Any act that will violate the child's ability to grow, develop and learn to achieving full potential and capacity;
 - b) Any use of inappropriate language that is considered profane, vulgar or demeaning;
 - c) Any sexual act;
 - d) Any solicitation of a sexual act, whether written, visual, verbal, or physical;
 - e) Any act of child abuse, as defined by law;
 - f) Any act of sexual harassment, or any other type of discrimination, as defined by law;
 - g) Any intentional solicitation, encouragement, or consummation of a romantic or physical relationship with a child/student or any sexual contact with a child/student. The term "romantic relationship" shall include dating a child/student.
- 2) No CDOE CP agency employee, contractor, or volunteer is authorized to conduct a strip search of a child/student.
- 3) No physical punishment of any kind may be inflicted upon any child/student. An employee, contractor, or volunteer may only use force when the force is reasonable to restrain a child/student from hurting himself/herself or any other person or property.
- 4) An employee, contractor, or volunteer is strictly prohibited from discriminating against, including harassing, any child/student based on his/her race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and/or age.
- 5) The CDOE and CP agencies also prohibit any employee, contractor, or volunteer from harassing or bullying a child/student for any reason, including, but not limited to gender identity and expression, socio-economic status, and physical appearance and characteristics.

Anti-Bullying

The CDOE and CP agencies will not tolerate bullying behavior. Bullying is defined as inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical, psychological or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, which is repeated over time. It is noted that isolated or one-time incidents of intentional inappropriate behavior may not fall within the definition of bullying; however, it may still be considered inappropriate and subject to corrective action (For further information refer to Annex 1).

Responsibility to comply

The CDOE places a mandatory obligation on all employees, volunteers, contractors and partners to report concerns, suspicions, allegations and incidents which indicate actual or potential abuse, exploitation, neglect or violation of children's wellbeing which suggests this policy may have in any other way been breached. It is not the responsibility of the employees to decide whether or not abuse has taken place, however, concerns should be raised with an individual's line manager, functional lead or a designated safeguarding officer who will initiate the procedure for dealing with suspected or actual incidents of abuse.

The designated Child Protection Officer is responsible for ensuring that the reporting procedure is followed so that suspected or actual cases of abuse are responded to appropriately and consistently, and referred to the relevant statutory authority.

To ensure that all such situations are handled appropriately and effectively:

- Reports must be made, decisions and actions taken.
- The CDOE is not an investigative authority. It is essential that referrals are made to the relevant law enforcement agency to ensure that appropriate protection and support is given to the vulnerable individual, and that any evidence is collected in accordance with the law.
- All sensitive and personal data must be kept confidential (including the names of anyone who makes a report of abuse), and be shared on a strictly 'need to know basis', that is, access must be necessary for the conduct of one's official duties.
- Where an employee is the subject of an investigation, the designated safeguarding officer within the agency will report the case to the Child Protection Officer at the CDOE.
- CP agencies must commit to monitoring the implementation of the CCPP. This policy will be reviewed every two years and/or earlier if necessary.

Policy Status and review

This policy will be reviewed on the date below by [insert name].

Signed  Date 1/18/23

Policy review date: (mm/dd/year) 21/07/24

Hotline Access

To make a confidential report, please contact:

CDOE Child Protection Hotline

Telephone: (691) 330-8910

To file online: childprotectionreport@chuuk.doe.fm

Resources

UNICEF Guidance Notes: Community Child Protection Mechanisms; Inter-Agency Coordination Mechanism; Child Protection Implementation Plans; Child Protection Policies and Systems Design; Inter-Agency Child Protection Referral Pathway; Intersection between Child Protection Systems & Violence Against Women Interventions; Legal Framework for Child Protection; Role of the Health Sector in the Child Protection System; Role of the Social Welfare Sector in the Child Protection System; Child Protection in Schools Policy.

Annex 1 Anti-bullying Policy

<p style="text-align: center;">Policy</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chapter 7: Students</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7.16 Anti-Bullying</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For Chuuk State Department of Education</p>	
Effective Date:	
Summary:	The Department of Education is committed to ensure a supportive and safe learning environment for all students.
Policy Statement:	The Department of Education is committed to ensure a supportive and safe learning environment for all students.
Scope:	<p>It is the responsibility of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Principals, Assistant Principals, Teaching and Non-Teaching Staffs to be aware of this policy and implement it accordingly. • Classroom Teachers to communicate the policy to the school community. • Students to abide by the policy.
Definition:	<p>Bullying is an unwanted negative behavior, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons).</p>
Type:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical bullying can involve hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing, or otherwise attacking others. • Verbal bullying refers to the use of words to harm others with name-calling, insults, making sexual or bigoted comments, harsh teasing, taunting, mimicking, or verbal threats. • Relational bullying focuses on excluding someone from a peer group, usually through verbal threats, spreading rumors, and other forms of intimidation. • Reactive bullying involves the bully responding to being a former victim by picking on others. • Bullying can also involve assault on a person's property, when the victim has his or her personal property taken or damaged. <p>Other forms include:</p> <p>Face to face, whispered comments, notes passed, hurtful things written on walls/furniture, humiliation in front of a group, gossip and rumors about someone (when and if these actions have been occurring repeatedly) when they're unable to defend themselves.</p> <p>Bullying can happen in person or through digital platforms including online via social media, group chats or through text messages. It can be obvious or hidden and it can take place in the classroom or hallway, on the bus or in the bathrooms, while at lunch or playing at recess.</p> <p>Bullying is NOT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual arguments, disagreements or fights.

Procedures:	<p>Any student(s) involve in the act of bullying will face consequences (see chart below), but not limited to detention and/or suspension.</p> <table><tr><td>1st Offense</td><td>Oral warning to the student</td><td>Teacher will administer verbal warning to the student</td></tr><tr><td>2nd Offense</td><td>Written warning to the parent</td><td>Principal will administer written warning to the parents</td></tr><tr><td>3rd Offense</td><td>1-month detention</td><td>Teacher should monitor the student's progress. <i>Improvement of student's behavior can reduce the duration of student's detention.</i></td></tr><tr><td>4th Offense</td><td>3-day suspension</td><td>Principal will administer the suspension to the student and his/her parents</td></tr><tr><td>5th Offense</td><td>1-year suspension</td><td>Justification for such cause must be provided by the Principal to the parents and a copy to the Department before subjecting student to a 1-year suspension</td></tr></table>	1st Offense	Oral warning to the student	Teacher will administer verbal warning to the student	2nd Offense	Written warning to the parent	Principal will administer written warning to the parents	3rd Offense	1-month detention	Teacher should monitor the student's progress. <i>Improvement of student's behavior can reduce the duration of student's detention.</i>	4th Offense	3-day suspension	Principal will administer the suspension to the student and his/her parents	5th Offense	1-year suspension	Justification for such cause must be provided by the Principal to the parents and a copy to the Department before subjecting student to a 1-year suspension
1st Offense	Oral warning to the student	Teacher will administer verbal warning to the student														
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4th Offense	3-day suspension	Principal will administer the suspension to the student and his/her parents														
5th Offense	1-year suspension	Justification for such cause must be provided by the Principal to the parents and a copy to the Department before subjecting student to a 1-year suspension														
SUPPORTING PROCEDURES AND MATERIALS:	Inter-agency Chuuk State Child Protection Policy (CCPP)															

Annex 2 Sample Reporting and Referral Form

REPORT OF A CHILD IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION		
CHILD'S INFORMATION		
Name:	D.O.B or approximate age:	
Place where the child is living:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
PARENT / CAREGIVER INFORMATION		
Mother's name:	Phone number:	Address:
Father's name:	Phone number:	Address:
Other Caregiver: name / relationship to the child	Phone number:	Address:
REASON FOR REPORTING		
Description of reason for concern about the child:		
Description of any action taken in relation to the child:		
REPORTER'S DETAILS		
Name:	Agency / Organization:	
Phone:	Title / position:	
Mobile:		
Date:	Signature:	

Annex 3 Sample Parental Consent for Photographic/Film Use of Children under 18 years of age

I, (adult's name) _____

Of (address) _____

Being the child/children's/ parent or legal guardian, hereby give permission for

(School name) _____

(School address) _____

To take and use publicity photographs/film of

(child/children's name/s) _____

Age of child _____

Age of child _____

Age of child _____

I also consent to use of the photos for publicity, marketing, and advertising for VSO projects. I agree that the photos/film may be combined with other images, text and graphics and be cropped, altered or modified in any way that VSO deems appropriate.

I consent to the provision of this form and the details within it to VSO, and to their storing these on a database.

I understand that the child's/children's name/s will not be given to press or public without my consent. I also understand that I may cancel this permission in writing, and that VSO will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the photograph/film is withdrawn from future use.

I further understand that I shall receive no remuneration for this assistance.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Annex 4 List of Agencies, Names and Designations

Agency/Organization	Representative/Name	Designation	Contact details/email address
Office of the Attorney General/ Prosecutor			
Chuuk Disaster and Emergency Operation Center (DEOC)			
Chuuk Women's Council			
Department of Education			
Department of Finance			
Department of Health			
Department of Labor			
Department of Planning / Statistics			
Department for Youth and Sport			
NGOs/FBOs who provide child protection services			
Traditional / Community Leaders			
Development Partners			

Annex 5 Sample Inter-Agency Action Plan

INTER-AGENCY ACTION PLAN		
Child's name:		Case File #/ Code:
Case Conference Date:		Persons present:
Services / Action to be Taken	Who?	By when?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		

Annex 6 Sample Inter-Agency Code of Conduct for Working with Children

CP Agency
official logo

I, _____, acknowledge that I have read and received a copy of the Chuuk State Department of Education Child Protection Policy, 2022. I agree that as a teacher/member of the wider school community and stakeholders, I must at all times comply with the Inter-Agency Code of Conduct for Working with Children. I agree to:

- *Treat children with respect regardless of race, color, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status;*
- *Not use language or behavior towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;*
- *Not engage children under the age of 18 in any form of sexual intercourse or sexual activity, including paying for sexual services or acts;*
- *Wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children,*
- *Not invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger,*
- *Not sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must obtain my supervisor's permission, and ensure that another adult is present if possible,*
- *Use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media appropriately, and never to exploit or harass children or access child exploitation material through any medium,*
- *Not use or threat to use physical punishment on children,*
- *Not hire children for domestic or other labor which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury,*
- *Comply with all relevant international and local legislation, including labor laws in relation to child labor,*
- *Immediately report concerns or allegations of child exploitation and abuse and policy non-compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures,*
- *Immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence, which occurred before or occurs during my association with RMI Dream that relate to child exploitation and abuse.*

When taking photographs or filming children for work purposes, I agree to:

- *Assess and endeavor to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images before photographing or filming a child,*
- *Obtain informed consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child. As part of this it must be explained how the photograph or film will be used,*
- *Ensure photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive,*
- *Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts,*
- *Ensure file labels, meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.*

I understand that the onus is on me, as a person associated with the CDOE through its projects and programs to use common sense and to maintain zero tolerance against abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence against children.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

1/18/23