

Da Vinci Schools Board Policy Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting

The Board of Trustees is committed to supporting the safety and well-being of all students and desires to facilitate the prevention of and response to child abuse and neglect. The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall develop and implement strategies for preventing, recognizing, and promptly reporting known or suspected child abuse and neglect.

Da Vinci Schools' instructional program may include age-appropriate and culturally sensitive curriculum in the prevention of child abuse, sexual abuse, sexual assault, and human trafficking. Upon written request of a student's parent/guardian, the student shall be excused from taking such instruction. (Education Code 51220.5, 51900.6, 51950)

Employees of Da Vinci Schools who are mandated reporters, as defined by law and administrative regulation, are obligated to report all known or suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect. All mandated reporters shall receive training on child abuse identification and reporting within the first six weeks of each school year, or within the first six weeks of employment if employed after the beginning of the school year. (Education Code 44691; Penal Code 11165.7)

Procedures for reporting child abuse shall be included in the comprehensive school safety plan. (Education Code 32282)

Definitions

“Child abuse or neglect” includes the following: (Penal Code 11165.5, 11165.6)

1. A physical injury or death inflicted on a child by another person other than by accidental means
2. The sexual abuse, assault, or exploitation of a child (Penal Code 11165.1)
3. The negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child by a person responsible for the child's welfare under circumstances indicating harm or threatened harm to the child's health or welfare, whether the harm or threatened harm is from acts or omissions on the part of the responsible person (Penal Code 11165.2)
4. Willful harming or injuring of a child or the endangering of the person or health of a child where the person responsible for the child's welfare is a licensee, administrator, or employee of any facility licensed to care for children or an administrator or employee of a public or private school or other institution or agency (Penal Code 11165.3)
5. The willful infliction upon a child of any cruel or inhumane corporal punishment or any injury resulting in a traumatic condition (Penal Code 11165.4)

Child abuse or neglect does not include the following:

1. A mutual fight between minors (Penal Code 11165.6)

2. An injury caused by reasonable and necessary force used by a peace officer acting within the course and scope of his/her employment (Penal Code 11165.6)
3. An injury caused by any force that is reasonable and necessary for a person employed by or engaged in a school to accomplish any of the following: (Education Code 44807, 49001)
 - a. To stop a disturbance threatening physical injury to people or damage to property
 - b. For purposes of self defense
 - c. To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects within control of a student
 - d. To exercise the degree of control reasonably necessary to maintain order, protect property, protect the health and safety of students, and maintain proper and appropriate conditions conducive to learning
4. Physical pain or discomfort caused by athletic competition or other such recreational activity voluntarily engaged in by a student (Education Code 49001)
5. Homelessness or classification as an unaccompanied minor (Penal Code 11165.15)

“Mandated reporters” include, but are not limited to: teachers; instructional aides; teacher’s aides or assistants; classified employees; certificated pupil personnel employees; administrative officers or supervisors of child attendance; athletic coaches, administrators, and directors; administrators and employees of a licensed child day care facility; Head Start teachers; school security officers; licensed nurses or health care providers; and administrators, presenters, and counselors of a child abuse prevention program. (Penal Code 11165.7)

“Reasonable suspicion” means that it is objectively reasonable for a person to entertain a suspicion, based upon facts that could cause a reasonable person in a like position, drawing when appropriate on his/her training and experience, to suspect child abuse or neglect. However, reasonable suspicion does not require certainty that child abuse or neglect has occurred, nor does it require a specific medical indication of child abuse or neglect. (Penal Code 11166)

Notifications

The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall provide to all new employees who are mandated reporters a statement that informs them of their status as mandated reporters, their reporting obligations under Penal Code 11166, and their confidentiality rights under Penal Code 11167. Da Vinci Schools also shall provide these new employees with a copy of Penal Code 11165.7, 11166, and 11167. (Penal Code 11165.7, 11166.5)

Before beginning employment, any person who will be a mandated reporter by virtue of his/her position shall sign a statement indicating that he/she has knowledge of the reporting obligations under Penal Code 11166 and will comply with those provisions. The signed statement shall be retained by the Chief Executive Officer or designee. (Penal Code 11166.5)

Employees who work with dependent adults shall be notified of legal responsibilities and reporting procedures pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code 15630-15637.

Mandated Reporter Training

Within the first six weeks of each school year, the Chief Executive Officer or designee shall provide training on mandated reporting requirements to employees of Da Vinci Schools and persons working on their behalf who are mandated reporters. Any school personnel hired during the school year shall receive such training within the first six weeks of employment. Proof of each mandated reporter's completion of the training shall be maintained by the Chief Executive Officer or designee. (Education Code 44691; Penal Code 11165.7)

The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall use the training module provided by the California Department of Social Services. (Education Code 44691)

The training shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, training in identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect. In addition, the training shall include information that failure to report an incident of known or reasonably suspected child abuse or neglect as required by law is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment and/or a fine as specified. (Education Code 44691; Penal Code 11165.7)

Reportable Offenses

A mandated reporter shall make a report using the established procedures whenever, in his/her professional capacity or within the scope of his/her employment, he/she has knowledge of or observes a child whom the mandated reporter knows, or reasonably suspects, has been the victim of child abuse or neglect. (Penal Code 11166)

Any mandated reporter who has knowledge of or who reasonably suspects that a child is suffering serious emotional damage or is at a substantial risk of suffering serious emotional damage, based on evidence of severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, or untoward aggressive behavior toward self or others, may make a report to the appropriate agency. (Penal Code 11166.05, 11167)

Any employee of Da Vinci Schools who reasonably believes that he/she has observed the commission of a murder, rape, or lewd or lascivious act by use of force, violence, duress, menace, or fear of immediate and unlawful bodily injury against a victim who is a child under age 14 shall notify a peace officer. (Penal Code 152.3, 288)

Reporting Responsibility and Liability

The reporting duties of mandated reporters are individual and cannot be delegated to another person. (Penal Code 11166)

When two or more mandated reporters jointly have knowledge of a known or suspected instance of child abuse or neglect, the report may be made by a member of the team selected by mutual agreement and a single report may be made and signed by the selected member of the reporting

team. Any member who has knowledge that the member designated to report has failed to do so shall thereafter make the report. (Penal Code 11166)

No supervisor or administrator shall impede or inhibit a mandated reporter from making a report. (Penal Code 11166)

Any person not identified as a mandated reporter who has knowledge of or observes a child whom he/she knows or reasonably suspects has been a victim of child abuse or neglect may report the known or suspected instance of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate agency. No employee shall be subject to any sanction by Da Vinci Schools for making a report unless it can be shown that he/she knowingly made a false report or made a report with reckless disregard of the truth or falsity of the report. (Penal Code 11166)

No mandated reporter shall be civilly or criminally liable for filing a report of known or suspected child abuse as required or authorized by law. Any other person making a report shall not incur civil or criminal liability unless it can be proven that he/she knowingly made a false report or made a report with reckless disregard of the truth or falsity of the report. (Penal Code 11172)

Reporting Procedures

Reports of known or suspected child abuse or neglect may be filed with any police department (excluding the charter school security department), sheriff's department, county probation department if designated by the county to receive such reports, or county welfare department. (Penal Code 11165.9, 11166)

1. Initial Telephone Report

Immediately or as soon as practicable after knowing or observing suspected child abuse or neglect, a mandated reporter shall make an initial report by telephone to the appropriate department of child and family services (e.g., LA County Department of Child and Family Services).

When the initial telephone report is made, the mandated reporter shall note the name of the official contacted, the date and time contacted, and any instructions or advice received.

2. Written Report

Within 36 hours of knowing or observing the information concerning the incident, the mandated reporter shall prepare and either send, fax, or electronically submit to the appropriate agency a written follow-up report, which includes a completed Department of Justice form (SS 8572). (Penal Code 11166, 11168)

The Department of Children and Family Services has created the Suspected Child Abuse Reporting (SCAR) System that enables mandated reporters to complete their written report online at <https://mandreptla.org/>. To utilize the SCAR System, the mandated reporter must have obtained a referral number when making the initial telephone report.

Form SS 8572 may also be accessed through the State of California Department of Justice website at http://ag.ca.gov/childabuse/pdf/ss_8572.pdf.

Reports of suspected child abuse or neglect shall include, if known: (Penal Code 11167)

- a. The name, business address, and telephone number of the person making the report and the capacity that makes the person a mandated reporter
- b. The student's name and address, present location, and, where applicable, school, grade, and class
- c. The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the student's parents/guardians
- d. The name, address, telephone number, and other relevant personal information about the person who might have abused or neglected the student
- e. The information that gave rise to the reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect and the source(s) of that information

The mandated reporter shall make a report even if some of this information is not known or is uncertain to him/her. (Penal Code 11167)

The mandated reporter may give to an investigator from an agency investigating the case, including a licensing agency, any information relevant to an incident of child abuse or neglect or to a report made for serious emotional damage pursuant to Penal Code 11166.05. (Penal Code 11167)

3. Internal Reporting

The mandated reporter shall not be required to disclose his/her identity to his/her supervisor, the principal, or the Chief Executive Officer or designee. (Penal Code 11166)

However, employees reporting child abuse or neglect to an appropriate agency are encouraged, but not required, to notify the principal as soon as possible after the initial telephone report to the appropriate agency. When so notified, the principal shall inform the Chief Executive Officer or designee.

The principal so notified shall provide the mandated reporter with any assistance necessary to ensure that reporting procedures are carried out in accordance with law, Board policy, and administrative regulation. At the mandated reporter's request, the principal may assist in completing and filing the necessary forms.

Reporting the information to an employer, supervisor, principal, school counselor, co-worker, or other person shall not be a substitute for making a mandated report to the appropriate agency. (Penal Code 11166)

Complaint of Child Abuse Committed at a School Site

Upon request, the Chief Executive Officer or designee shall provide parents/guardians with procedures for reporting suspected child abuse occurring at a school site to appropriate agencies. For parents/guardians whose primary language is not English, such procedures shall be in their primary language and, when communicating orally regarding those procedures, an interpreter shall be provided. (Education Code 48987)

To file a complaint against an employee of Da Vinci Schools or other person suspected of child abuse or neglect at a school site, parents/guardians may file a report by telephone, in person, or in writing with any appropriate agency identified above under "Reporting Procedures." If a parent/guardian makes a complaint about an employee to any other employee, the employee receiving the information shall notify the parent/guardian of procedures for filing a complaint with the appropriate agency. The employee also is obligated pursuant to Penal Code 11166 to file a report himself/herself using the procedures described above for mandated reporters.

In addition, if the child is enrolled in special education, a separate complaint may be filed with the California Department of Education pursuant to 5 CCR 4650.

Interview of Student by an Agency Representative

Whenever a representative of police, sheriff's, or county welfare department is investigating suspected child abuse or neglect that occurred within the student's home or out-of-home care facility, the student may be interviewed by an agency representative during school hours, on school premises. The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall give the student the choice of being interviewed in private or in the presence of any adult school employee or volunteer aide selected by the student. (Penal Code 11174.3)

A staff member or volunteer aide selected by a student may decline to be present at the interview. If the selected person accepts, the principal or designee shall inform him/her of the following requirements: (Penal Code 11174.3)

1. The purpose of the selected person's presence at the interview is to lend support to the student and enable him/her to be as comfortable as possible.
2. The selected person shall not participate in the interview.
3. The selected person shall not discuss the facts or circumstances of the case with the student.
4. The selected person is subject to the confidentiality requirements of the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act, a violation of which is punishable as specified in Penal Code 11167.5.

If a staff member agrees to be present, the interview shall be held at a time during school hours when it does not involve an expense to the school. (Penal Code 11174.3)

Release of Student to Peace Officer

When a student is released to a peace officer and taken into custody as a victim of suspected child abuse or neglect, the peace officer shall be provided with the address and telephone number of the child's parent/guardian. No employee of Da Vinci Schools shall notify the parent/guardian of the student's release to the peace officer; it is the responsibility of the peace officer to notify the parent/guardian of the situation.

Adopted: July 31, 2018