



5 Steps Academy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Last Updated: 6 December 2024

Approved by: 5 Steps Academy Core Safeguarding Team



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Policy Statement

This policy recognizes the right of every member of our school community to feel safe and comfortable at all times. At 5 Steps Academy, we are dedicated to helping children grow into knowledgeable, self-confident, and caring young professionals. In line with our values of courage, kindness, and discipline, we are committed to protecting the physical and emotional welfare of every child.

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard our students from various forms of abuse, provide the school community with essential information on how to respond to concerns and clarify roles and responsibilities to help keep children safe.

The 5 Steps Academy Safeguarding and Child Protection policy aligns with the principles and standards set by the:

- United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Singapore's Children and Young Persons Act 1993 (2020 Revised Edition)
- International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC)

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated regularly to reflect changes in the school's operation, environment, legislation, or associated policies (listed below).



Definitions

To ensure clarity and a shared understanding across our school community, we have defined key terms related to child protection and safeguarding.

- **Safeguarding:** As defined by [ChildSafeguarding.org](https://www.childsafeguarding.org/), Safeguarding “is the prevention of impairment to children’s physical and psychological health and wellbeing while providing circumstances that enable healthy development.”
- **Child Protection:** Child protection is an element of safeguarding that focuses on measures and actions taken to ensure the safety and well-being of children, protecting them from harm such as abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- **Staff:** This encompasses all members of the 5 Steps Academy community who have a role in supporting the safety and well-being of students. For this policy, the term “staff” includes teachers, administrators, bus drivers, cleaners, volunteers, and any other individual working in the school.
- **Child:** Under the [Singapore Children and Young Persons Act](#) (amended 2001), a child is below the age of 14 years, and a young person is aged 14-16 years. However, the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy applies to all students in our care, regardless of age.
- **Types of Abuse**
 - **Physical Abuse:** Physical abuse involves the deliberate use of force against a child that results in injury or causes harm. These are non-accidental actions such as forceful shaking, slapping, and hitting. This also includes excessive discipline or physical punishment.
 - **Sexual Abuse:** Sexual abuse involves exploitation or any sexual activities including both contact and non-contact activities. This can occur between an adult and a child, as well as between children particularly when there is a significant age difference or when one child uses coercion or manipulation. This includes sexual contact, exposure to sexually explicit material, and inappropriate conversations about sexual acts.
 - **Emotional/Psychological Abuse:** Psychological abuse involves the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child causing adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. These actions such as hostility or rejecting behaviors, isolation, coercion, blaming, and overall conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate can cause impairment of social, emotional, cognitive, and intellectual development.
 - **Neglect:** Neglect involves the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs. This is likely to result in the impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect can include failing to provide food, shelter, clothing, medical care, and supervision.
- **Peer Abuse:** It is recognized that children and young people can be exploited, bullied, and/or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age.



Safeguarding Roles

All adults in the 5 Steps Academy school community are involved in promoting a culture of child protection.

Core Safeguarding Team

- **Headmaster** (alex@5steps.academy)
 - Acts as the **primary contact and Head of Child Protection** for safeguarding concerns and liaises with external agencies.
 - Ensures policy implementation and recording of safeguarding responsibilities.
 - Ensures all allegations are managed appropriately.
 - Oversees **annual reviews and audits** of safeguarding policies.
- **Student Welfare Officer (SWO)**: (swo@5steps.academy)
 - At this time, the Student Welfare Officer role also holds the position of **Designated Safeguarding Lead**.
 - Monitors and supports student welfare, providing direct support as needed.
 - Ensures that Safeguarding is effectively implemented throughout the school.
 - Manages the recording and maintenance of safeguarding records
- **Board of Directors**:
 - Oversees the quality of child protection policies and procedures.
 - Ensures safeguarding procedures are comprehensive, up-to-date, and aligned with best practices.

Wider Safeguarding Team

- **Lead Teacher**:
 - Supervises Health Education and integrates Social and Emotional Learning (SEL).
 - Ensures staff receive regular safeguarding training
 - Guides teachers on maintaining a safe classroom environment.
 - Responsible for conducting **annual reviews and audits** of safeguarding policies.
- **Admin Officer**:
 - Supports the **recording and reporting** of safeguarding issues.
 - Maintains hygiene standards and a safe environment.
 - Assists in secure storage of safeguarding records.
- **School Staff**:
 - Recognize, respond to, and report any student safety concerns, foster a safe environment, and comply with safeguarding policies.
 - Participate in training and follow safeguarding procedures.



Supporting Students and Reporting Issues

5 Steps Academy is committed to upholding the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which sets out the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of children. Key principles of the UNCRC that inform our policy include:

- **Best Interests of the Child:** All actions concerning children shall take full account of their best interests.
- **Right to Survival and Development:** Children have the right to survive and develop healthily.
- **Non-Discrimination:** All children have the same rights regardless of race, religion, or abilities.
- **Participation:** Children have the right to express their views in matters affecting them and have those views taken into account.

Reporters must focus on the impact of behavior on the child and ask, "Does this cause or threaten significant harm?" Cultural practices should not minimize or dismiss the significance of harm.

Recognizing Abuse

A fundamental aspect of safeguarding is equipping the school community to recognize signs of abuse. Abuse and neglect are serious harms that may involve inflicting or failing to prevent harm. Abuse can occur in various settings, such as at home, in school, or online, and perpetrators may be known to the child or strangers. Children can experience abuse at the hands of adults or peers, regardless of the perpetrator's gender. The Sector-Specific Screening Guide (SSSG) provides detailed indicators to help staff identify and respond appropriately. Key signs include:

- **Physical Abuse:**
 - Look for bruising patterns inconsistent with common childhood injuries, such as bruises on the soft tissue of the cheeks or linear marks that suggest the use of an object. Staff should consult the SSSG when injuries cannot be explained or when a child's behavior changes alongside visible injuries
- **Emotional Abuse:**
 - Be alert to sudden, significant changes in a child's emotional state, such as extreme withdrawal, hopelessness, or severe anxiety. The SSSG outlines how such changes may necessitate consultation if they persist or worsen without explanation
- **Neglect:**
 - Persistent signs of neglect include malnourishment, inappropriate clothing for the weather, or lack of medical care. The SSSG emphasizes reporting when a child consistently shows signs of neglect that impact their health or safety

All adults who become aware of safeguarding issues—whether through a student disclosure or observation—must treat the matter with the utmost seriousness and adhere to the [SSSG](#)



[reporting and recording guidelines](#). It is not the responsibility of staff to diagnose abuse but to recognize and report concerns promptly.

Please review **Appendix D** for more information from the CARG on when to report.

Staff are obligated to report concerns about abuse directly to the Headmaster or the Student Welfare Officer (SWO). Both the Headmaster and the SWO use the Sector-Specific Screening Guide (SSSG) and the Child Abuse Reporting Guide (CARG) to assess the situation. When necessary, they will determine if the case should be reported to the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) Child Protective Service (CPS) or escalate the matter to the police immediately.

Training and Recognition

All faculty members in contact with students will receive training in both recognizing a student who is at risk and responding to a student's disclosure of abuse or neglect. Members of 5 Steps Academy are trained in the Sector-Specific Screening Guide (SSSG).

The Headmaster and Student Welfare Officer undergo advanced training, such as the Child Abuse Reporting Guide (CARG), provided by the Singapore Ministry of Social and Family Development ([MSE](#)).

Regular refresher sessions are conducted in the Professional Development Schedule to keep staff updated on policies and procedures.



What are SSSG and CARG?



The Sector-Specific Screening Guide (SSSG) and Child Abuse Reporting Guide (CARG) are part of the Structured Decision Making (SDM) System. They support a range of responses along the continuum of child protection concerns. They guide the user towards the most appropriate call of action through user friendly instruction and use of professional judgement.



What is SSSG?

SSSG is a resource to help you decide whether concerns should be raised with the internal expert. It provides a list of situational description with colour-coded recommended actions.

Who uses SSSG?

Frontline professionals who have contact with children on a regular basis.



SSSG Outcomes

Immediate consultation with internal expert within 2 hours

Consultation with internal expert within 24 hours

No consultation



What is CARG?

CARG will guide your decision on whether to report the concerns to Child Protective Service of the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF).

Who uses CARG?

Trained professionals managing child protection issues.



CARG Outcomes

Immediate report to CPS

Report to CPS

Consult Child Protection Community Agencies

Refer to Community Agencies

Refer, follow, redo

Document and continue relationship

Why SSSG and CARG?



Guide professionals to think through relevant issues at each decision point



Identify the levels of intervention needed and agencies to be involved



Provide common language and lens on child protection and consistency in how issues are assessed and decisions are made by professionals across the child protection system.



For more information on SSSG and CARG, please go to www.msf.gov.sg/sssgcarg.



Processes, Recording, and Reporting

A structured system is in place at 5 Steps Academy for recording, managing, and reporting child protection concerns to ensure that all safeguarding practices are transparent, well-documented, and accessible to appropriate members of the school community.

Initial Reporting of Concerns

- 1. Reviewing with SSSG:** Before submitting a report, staff should consult the [Sector-Specific Screening Guide](#) (SSSG) to verify indicators of abuse and evaluate if the observed concerns meet reporting thresholds. The SSSG provides guidance on identifying various types of abuse and helps ensure consistency in reporting. There are three outcomes when reviewing the SSSG. This includes:
 - a. Green (Proceed Normally):** Cases where concerns are mild, such as isolated incidents of a child missing a meal or minor behavior changes that are not persistent. Staff should continue to monitor the situation and be prepared to escalate if necessary
 - b. Yellow (Consult Within 24 Hours with the Headmaster or SWO):** Concerns such as consistent neglect (e.g., lack of necessary medical care or supervision), new injuries that do not require immediate medical attention but suggest possible abuse, or persistent behavioral changes that may indicate emotional harm
 - c. Red (Immediate Consultation):** Situations such as suspected sexual abuse, significant physical injury without an accidental cause, or extreme emotional distress that requires consultation with an internal expert (Headmaster or Student Welfare Officer) within two hours. Staff may also report directly to Child Protective Services (CPS) if appropriate
- 2. Recording Concerns:** Staff must use the [5 Steps Academy Staff Safeguarding Recording Form](#) to document any initial concerns about a student's welfare. The form is restricted where only members of the Senior Leadership Team are able to view responds.
- 3. Reporting to Leadership:** After completing the form, please inform the Headmaster or the Student Welfare Officer (SWO).
- 4. Escalation of Concerns:** Upon reviewing the report, the Headmaster will inform and liaise with the Singapore Child Protection Service (CPS), following the Child Abuse Reporting Guide ([CARG](#)). In cases of imminent danger, the Headmaster or SWO will contact the police immediately.

Handling Disclosures from Students

A disclosure from a student can be verbal, behavioral, or situational. When a student discloses sensitive information that may indicate abuse, staff should adhere to the following guidelines to support the child and maintain accurate records:

- **Stay Calm:** Remain composed to help the child feel secure and comfortable in sharing their experience.



- **Listen Carefully:** Provide the child with your full attention, refraining from interrupting or rushing them. Repeat back what the child says in their own words to ensure clarity.
- **No Secrets:** Inform the child that while you are there to help, you cannot keep their disclosure a secret, as it must be shared with someone who can offer further support.
- **Continue at the Child's Pace:** Allow the child to talk at their own speed without pressing for more details. Ask only clarifying questions and avoid leading questions that might influence their account.
- **Reassure the Child:** Let the child know they are not to blame and that you are glad they felt comfortable telling you.
- **Explain What Will Happen Next:** Inform the child that their bravery in speaking up is valued, and reassure them that steps will be taken to support them safely.

Avoid the Following:

- Displaying shock or disbelief.
- Asking excessive or probing questions.
- Making assumptions or guesses.
- Displaying skepticism or implying that they might be fabricating details.
- Making any promises about outcomes.
- Agreeing to keep the disclosure confidential.

Documentation and Record-Keeping

1. **Comprehensive Records:** All records related to child protection concerns, including initial reports, notes on allegations, decisions, and outcomes, will be securely maintained by the Headmaster, Student Welfare Officer (SWO), and Admin Officer.
2. **Clear Documentation:** Records should distinguish between factual observations and subjective opinions. All details must be accurate, clear, and consistently updated.
3. **Availability of Resources:** Child protection information and resources, including policies and reporting forms, are available to all school staff and the wider community through the school website and on request.



Annual Audits and Reviews:

In addition to regular training, 5 Steps Academy conducts **annual audits and reviews** of all safeguarding policies and practices. These audits are designed to evaluate the effectiveness of our training programs, the implementation of safeguarding procedures, and the overall safety and well-being of our students. The findings from these audits are used to inform continuous improvement in safeguarding practices and to ensure that all staff remain compliant with the latest standards and regulations.

Regular refresher sessions are conducted as part of the Professional Development Schedule to keep staff updated on policies and procedures.

Safeguarding Education for Students

At 5 Steps Academy, we are committed to equipping our students with the knowledge and skills they need to keep themselves and others safe. We work to empower students to recognize, respond to, and report any concerns they may have.

- The Headmaster and Student Welfare Officer provide direct instruction to students on complaint procedures, ensuring they understand how to report concerns about peers or adults. This guidance is reinforced through information provided in the Student Handbook.
- Students are taught essential **cyber safety skills** through coding classes and other digital literacy lessons. These classes cover topics such as protecting personal information online, recognizing unsafe online interactions such as cyber-bullying, and understanding the impact of digital behavior.
- Monthly [Health Education Days](#) serve to educate students at age-appropriate levels on how to keep themselves and others safe. These topics include:
 - **Healthy and Respectful Relationships:** Understanding how to build and maintain positive relationships based on respect and empathy.
 - **Boundaries and Consent:** Learning the importance of personal boundaries, how to give and receive consent, and recognizing inappropriate behavior.
 - **Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence:** Developing a strong sense of self-worth and confidence to make safe and responsible decisions.
 - **Safety and Accident Prevention:** Identifying potential hazards and learning strategies to prevent accidents and stay safe in various environments.
- In addition, students are expected to adhere to the School's Code of Conduct, which outlines the standards of behavior that promote a safe and respectful school environment. The Code of Conduct reinforces the values of accountability, respect, and responsibility.



Professional Conduct and Online Safety

At 5 Steps Academy, all staff members are expected to maintain a high standard of professional conduct in both their in-person and online interactions with students, colleagues, and parents. This section outlines the expectations for behavior and communication, ensuring a safe and respectful environment for everyone.

Teacher-Student Relationships

- **Professional Boundaries:** Teachers are expected to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students at all times. This includes refraining from using materials or language that may be offensive or biased and avoiding personal relationships with students.
- **Communication:** Teachers should only use school-approved platforms for communication with students. Personal contact details should not be shared. If recording any audio or video conference, all participants must be informed beforehand.
- **Confidentiality:** Teachers must maintain the confidentiality of student information in all forms of communication, both in-person and online.

Teacher-Colleague-Administrator Relationships

- **Respect and Collaboration:** Teachers are expected to maintain professional and respectful working relationships with colleagues and administrators. Online communications and social media profiles should be managed carefully to uphold the confidence and respect of the school community.
- **Work-Related Communication:** Work-related matters should be conducted through 5 Steps Academy email and Chat wherever possible. The use of other platforms should be limited to urgent matters and confined to working hours to respect others' privacy and work-life balance.

Teacher-Parent Relationships

- **Conflict of Interest:** Staff members who are also parents of students at 5 Steps Academy must avoid any conflict of interest. They must maintain professional conduct and confidentiality in all exchanges with other parents.
- **Confidentiality:** All communications with parents, whether through email, phone, or in person, must maintain the confidentiality of school, staff, and student matters.

Student-Student Relationships

- **Preventing Peer Abuse:** All staff members should be vigilant in recognizing and addressing peer abuse, including bullying, physical abuse, and sexual harassment. It is crucial to approach peer abuse immediately and sensitively, ensuring that students are educated on how to file a complaint against another student.

Reporting Concerns



- **Procedure:** When a teacher has concerns about a student's academic progress, they should communicate with the parents and collaborate in support of the child, keeping the Headmaster informed. If the concern relates to student welfare or safeguarding, the teacher must report it using the 5 Steps Academy Reporting Form available in the Staff Handbook on Google Spaces.
- **Raising Concerns About Colleagues:** Staff members are responsible for bringing any concerns regarding a colleague or administrator who is seen to be adversely affecting the welfare or safety of any student to the attention of the Headmaster.



Allegations Against an Adult in Our Community

Staff have the responsibility to provide a safe environment for the children of our school. Safeguarding our students begins with hiring safe teaching and non-teaching staff. The Headmaster will ensure that background checks are thorough and confidential references are obtained from school-based referees. Specific attention must be paid to previous employers' responses to any cause for concern when working with children.

Staff must sign a self-declaration during their onboarding saying: they are not and have never been under criminal investigation and if they have ever been known under a different name.

All staff are responsible for bringing to the attention of the Headmaster any concern regarding a colleague or manager who is seen to be adversely affecting the welfare or safety of any student.

The Headmaster will examine the evidence provided and act accordingly and in relation to the [Staff Code of Conduct](#) for teachers and provisions for dismissal in the staff contract, should that be warranted.

Interactions with non-5 Steps Academy Personnel

- All visitors to 5 Steps Academy must be approved by the Headmaster. The visitor must be chaperoned by a 5 Steps Academy staff member at all times.
- All third-party providers will sign the School Code of Conduct



Security at School

A range of procedures are well-established at the school to ensure the physical safety of our community, including:

- Monitoring of transportation under the supervision of the Admin Officer
- CCTV monitoring of classrooms, lift lobbies, and other key areas.
- Annual evacuation drills and reviews of efficiency and effectiveness.
- Safeguarding and child protection training (SSSG) for all staff members including updates through emails and professional development staff meetings.

Security Off-Site

All trips off-campus such as [field trips](#) must ensure the safety of all those attending in compliance with the following guidelines:

- staff ratio (max 1:20)
- risk assessment for all the elements of the planned activities
- parental permission
- participants' medical information and first aid supplies
- no unauthorized change to approved destination(s)

Policy Communication

At 5 Steps Academy, ensuring that our safeguarding and child protection policies are accessible and well-understood by all members of our school community is a priority. The following channels are used to communicate these policies effectively:

1. **Student and Staff Handbooks:** The comprehensive details of our safeguarding and child protection policies are included in the Student and Staff Handbooks. These handbooks are updated regularly and are accessible through the Parent and Staff Portals.
2. **School Website:** Key aspects of our safeguarding and child protection policies, including the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, are made available on the 5 Steps Academy website. This ensures that parents, guardians, and the broader school community can easily access and review our commitment to student welfare.
3. **Parent and Staff Portals:** The Parent and Staff Portals serve as central hubs for all policy-related documents. These portals ensure that parents and staff have continuous access to the latest versions of all relevant policies, including safeguarding and child protection.



Safety and Hygiene

At 5 Steps Academy, the safety and hygiene of our students, staff, and community are paramount. We have established comprehensive measures to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment.

Fire and Safety Drills

- **Regular Drills:** We conduct fire and safety drills twice a year to ensure that all students and staff are familiar with the procedure. These drills are overseen by the Student Welfare Officer, who ensures that they are carried out efficiently and effectively.
- **Supervision:** During these drills and at all times on campus, our staff is vigilant in supervising students to maintain their safety. No student is permitted to leave the campus without explicit permission from their parents or guardians.

Hygiene Standards

- **Monitoring and Responsibility:** Our administrative team closely monitors the hygiene standards at 5 Steps Academy. The Admin Officer is responsible for ensuring that all hygiene protocols are strictly followed, maintaining a clean and safe environment throughout the school.
- **Environmental Sanitation:** Our [Environmental Sanitation Policy and Procedure document](#) outlines the specific standards and practices we adhere to. This includes regular cleaning and sanitization of classrooms, common areas, and bathrooms.
- **Safe Use of Cleaning Supplies:** All cleaning supplies and chemicals are stored securely, away from students, to prevent any accidental exposure or harm.

These measures reflect our commitment to creating a secure and healthy environment where students can learn and thrive.



Appendix A: Safeguarding Responsibilities

All teaching and non-teaching staff are responsible for ensuring the safety of our students. Staff are required to attend Sector-Specific Screening Guide ([SSSG](#)) training and participate in refresher sessions to:

- **Recognize emerging problems** that may affect a student's well-being.
- **Respond reassuringly** to any disclosure made by a student.
- **Understand the flowchart of responsibilities** for reporting and handling safeguarding concerns.
- **Report to the appropriate person** promptly and accurately.

Staff must use the Safeguarding Recording Form and consult the SSSG when documenting concerns. This documentation should be completed promptly and submitted directly to the designated safeguarding lead, the Student Welfare Officer, or the headmaster. Staff are expected to maintain confidentiality, involving only the necessary safeguarding leads.

The initial Safeguarding Recording Form is for recording observations and empathetic listening, not conducting an investigation. The Admin Officer will document all subsequent actions, maintaining secure, well-organized records. The Admin Officer will keep the Headmaster updated on any immediate concerns and proposed responses. The Headmaster will review the situation with senior administrators and determine the best course of action, ensuring compliance with the Child Abuse Reporting Guide ([CARG](#)). If necessary, the Headmaster will escalate the matter to the relevant authorities



Appendix B: Professional Conduct – In-Person and Online

All staff at 5 Steps Academy are expected to maintain a professional and responsible demeanor in all their interactions, whether in person, at work, or online.

A. Teacher-Student Relationships

Teachers must always preserve a professional relationship with students, even when building rapport. They should:

- **Use appropriate language and materials:** Avoid content that may be offensive, discriminatory, or biased.
- **Maintain professional boundaries:** This includes refraining from sharing personal problems with students, discussing private matters, or engaging in social activities outside of school contexts.
- **Ensure the relationship does not become personal:** Never seek to develop inappropriate or overly familiar connections with students.
- **Use only school-approved platforms for communication:** Teachers must not share personal contact information with students. All interactions should be on school-approved platforms, as outlined in the communication policies.
- **Inform participants before recording:** If any audio or video conferencing needs to be recorded, all participants must be notified in advance and given a clear explanation of why the recording is taking place.

Teachers are expected to uphold the highest level of professionalism in every interaction, ensuring that the teacher-student dynamic remains respectful and focused on educational outcomes.

Teacher-Student: Maintain professional relationships and boundaries, and use only school-sanctioned communication methods.

Teacher-Colleague-Administrator: Foster constructive and respectful interactions, carefully manage online communications, and report any concerns to the Safeguarding Lead.

Teacher-Parent: Practice confidentiality and maintain professional decorum in all parent interactions, whether in school settings or social scenarios.

Student-Student: Address any incidents of peer abuse immediately and with sensitivity. Educate students on how to report such incidents appropriately.

Reporting

- **Academic Concerns:** If a teacher has concerns about a student's academic performance, they must communicate with parents and work collaboratively to support the student. The teacher should also copy the Headmaster on all email communications and follow up with written summaries of any phone conversations to ensure documentation.
- **Welfare Concerns:** For any concerns related to a student's welfare, teachers must use the 5 Steps Academy email to notify the Headmaster. All safeguarding concerns



must be recorded on the 5 Steps Academy Reporting Form, accessible in the Staff Handbook, and submitted promptly.

- **Concerns About Colleagues:** Staff members must report any inappropriate behavior, language, harassment, or bullying by a colleague to the Headmaster. If the issue involves an administrator, staff may also report this directly to the Headmaster.

B. Teacher-Colleague-Administrator Relationships

Staff must maintain professional, respectful relationships with colleagues and administrators. Expectations include:

- **Courteous and constructive communication:** Ensure all in-person and online interactions are polite, respectful, and aligned with the school's values.
- **Manage online profiles responsibly:** Social media profiles and communications must reflect the professionalism of the school community.
- **Transparency in communication:** Use 5 Steps Academy email for work-related matters to protect both the sender and the recipient. Urgent communications on other platforms should only occur when necessary and during reasonable hours to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Staff must report any concerning behavior or breaches of conduct to the Headmaster.

C. Teacher-Parent Relationships

Staff who are also parents of students at 5 Steps Academy must avoid any conflict of interest. They should:

- **Maintain professional boundaries:** Even in social situations, staff must not discuss confidential school or student matters with other parents.
- **Keep communications professional:** All contact with parents, whether in person, over the phone, or through school communication tools, must adhere to confidentiality and respect school policies.

D. Student-Student Relationships

Peer abuse is a serious concern that must be addressed immediately. Staff must be vigilant and proactive in identifying and intervening in cases of peer abuse, which can include:

- **Bullying:** Physical, verbal, or cyberbullying incidents must be managed promptly and sensitively.
- **Physical abuse:** Harmful actions such as hitting, kicking, or physical aggression should be stopped and reported immediately.
- **Sexual violence and harassment:** Any inappropriate or non-consensual behavior must be addressed, with students receiving guidance on how to report incidents.

Students are educated on recognizing and reporting peer abuse, ensuring a safe and supportive school environment.



Appendix C: Early Identification and Support

Staff at 5 Steps Academy are responsible for early identification of concerns and must follow safeguarding procedures to report issues to the administration or Headmaster. Prompt intervention can significantly impact a child's well-being and prevent concerns from escalating. Situations where early help may be required include:

- **Disabilities or health conditions:** Children with physical or learning disabilities may need additional support and monitoring.
- **Special education needs:** Students with specific educational requirements may display signs of struggle that require early intervention.
- **Mental health concerns:** Any signs of anxiety, depression, or other mental health issues should be documented and addressed with appropriate resources.
- **Antisocial or criminal behavior:** If a child is showing signs of being drawn into problematic behavior, staff must act to redirect and support them.
- **Frequent absences:** Regularly missing school may be a sign of deeper issues at home or in the child's life. These concerns should be reported and monitored.
- **Challenging family circumstances:** Children dealing with family issues such as substance abuse, parental mental health challenges, or domestic violence may require additional support and intervention.

Staff must also be aware of general indicators of abuse or neglect. These may include:

- **Physical signs:** Unexplained injuries, consistent lack of hygiene, or signs of malnutrition.
- **Behavioral changes:** Withdrawal, aggression, or sudden changes in academic performance.
- **Emotional distress:** Symptoms such as persistent sadness, fearfulness, or high anxiety.

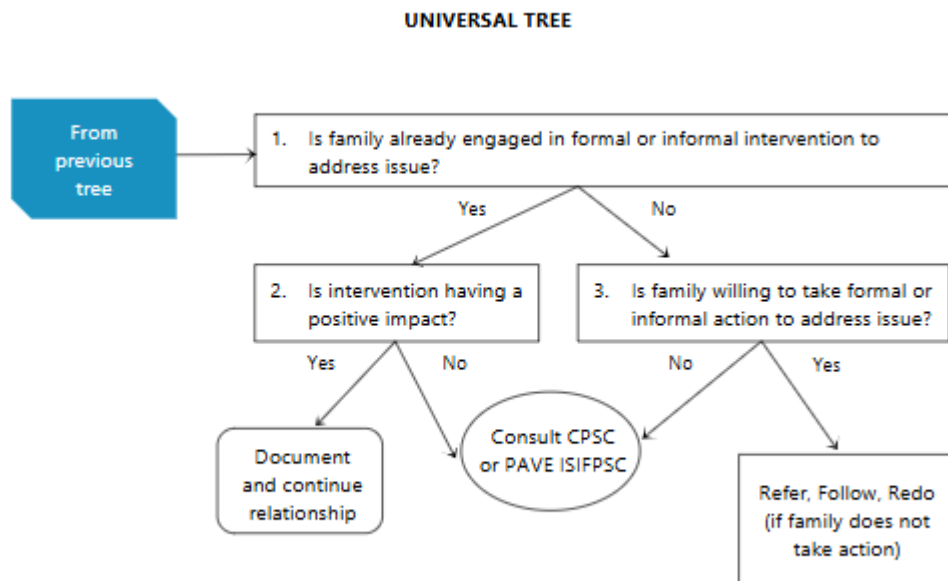
If staff are unsure about the severity of a concern, they should always consult the Safeguarding Lead for guidance. This approach ensures that no concern is overlooked and that every child receives the necessary support



Appendix D: Reporting Trees

Please note that the Child Abuse Reporting Guide (CARG) uses the acronym CYP to refer to Child/Young Persons.

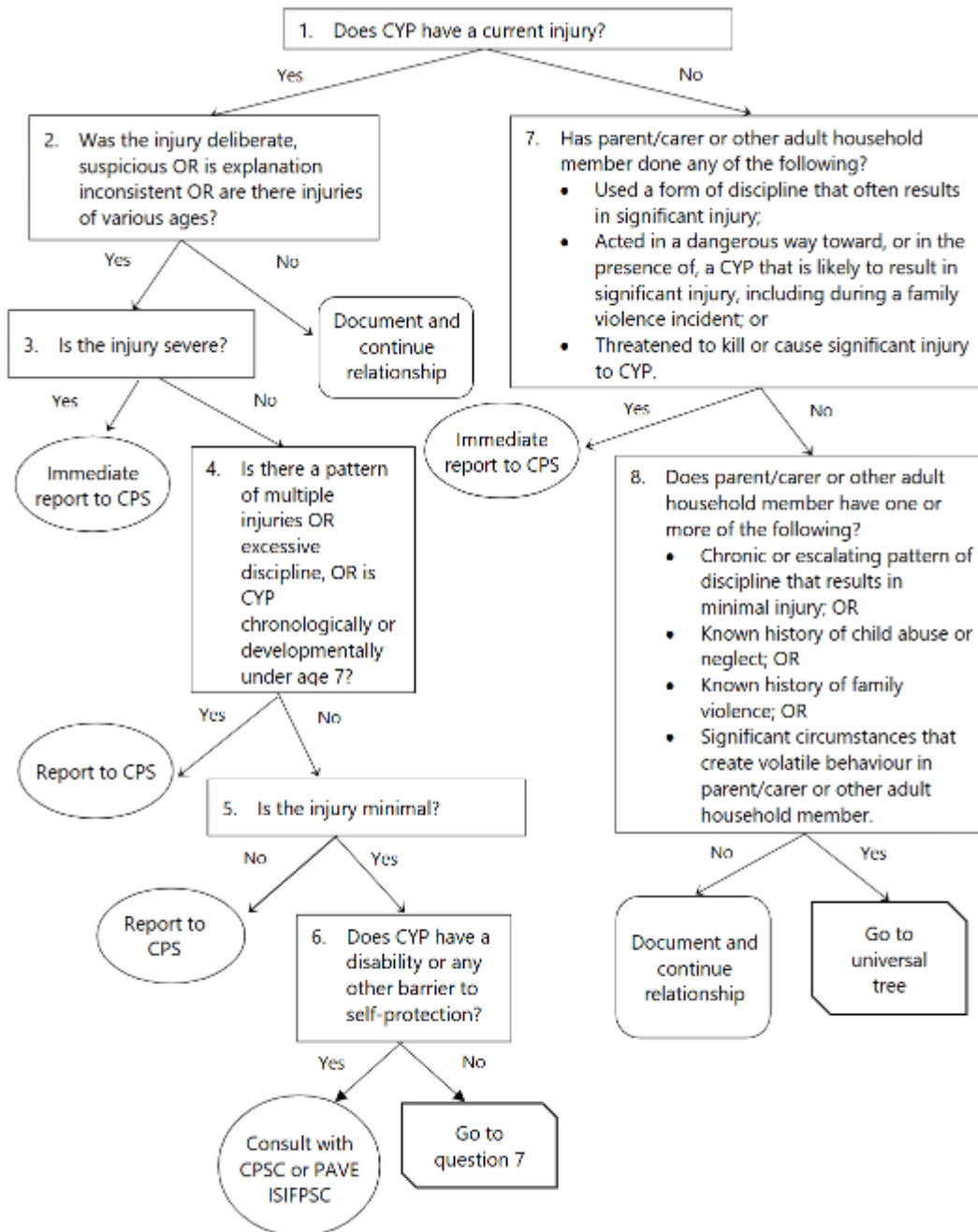
Universal Tree





Physical Abuse

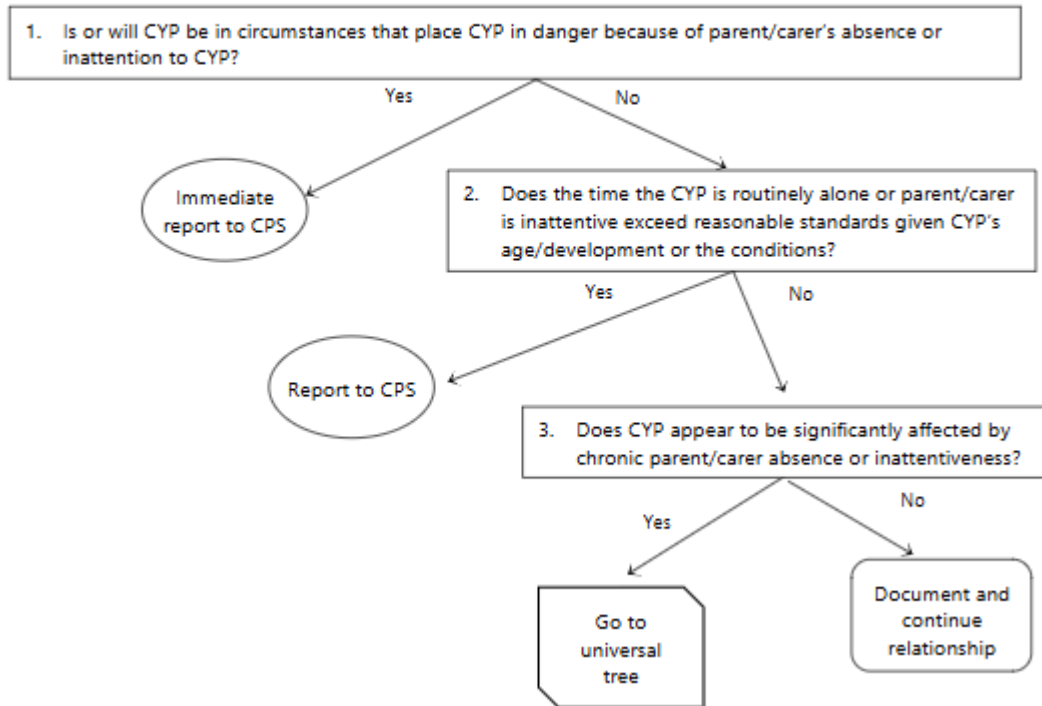
PHYSICAL ABUSE



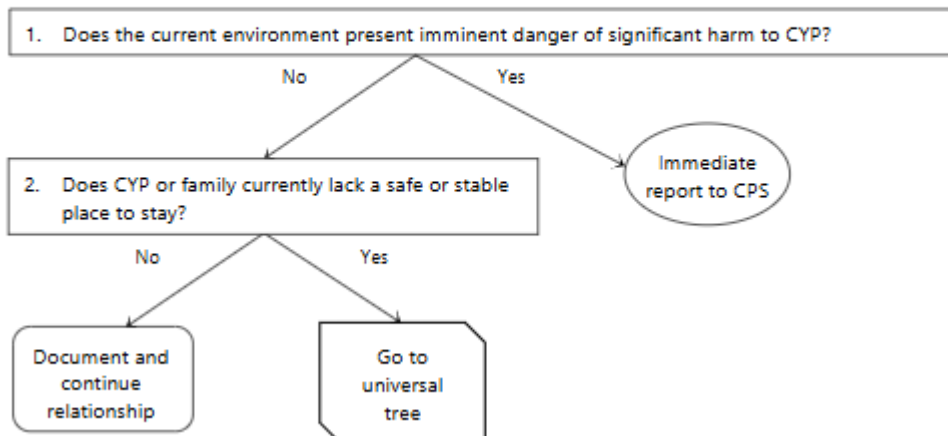


Neglect

NEGLECT: SUPERVISION

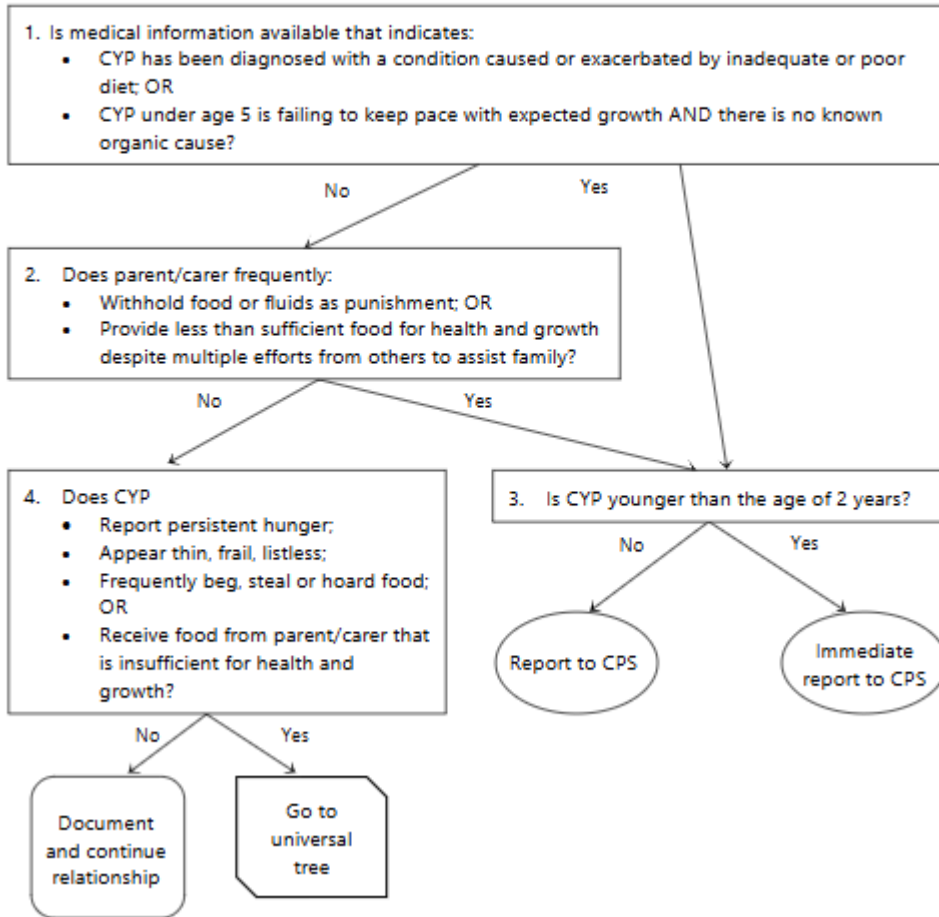


NEGLECT: PHYSICAL SHELTER/ENVIRONMENT

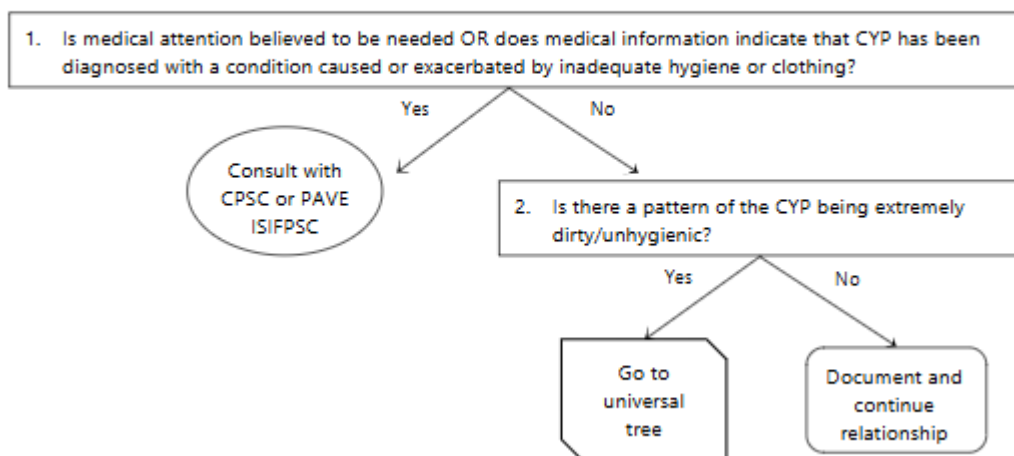




NEGLECT: FOOD



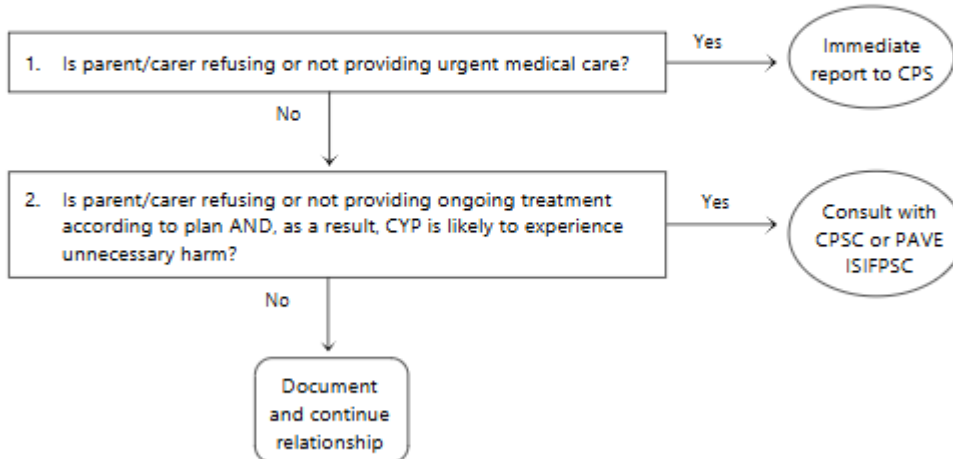
NEGLECT: HYGIENE/CLOTHING



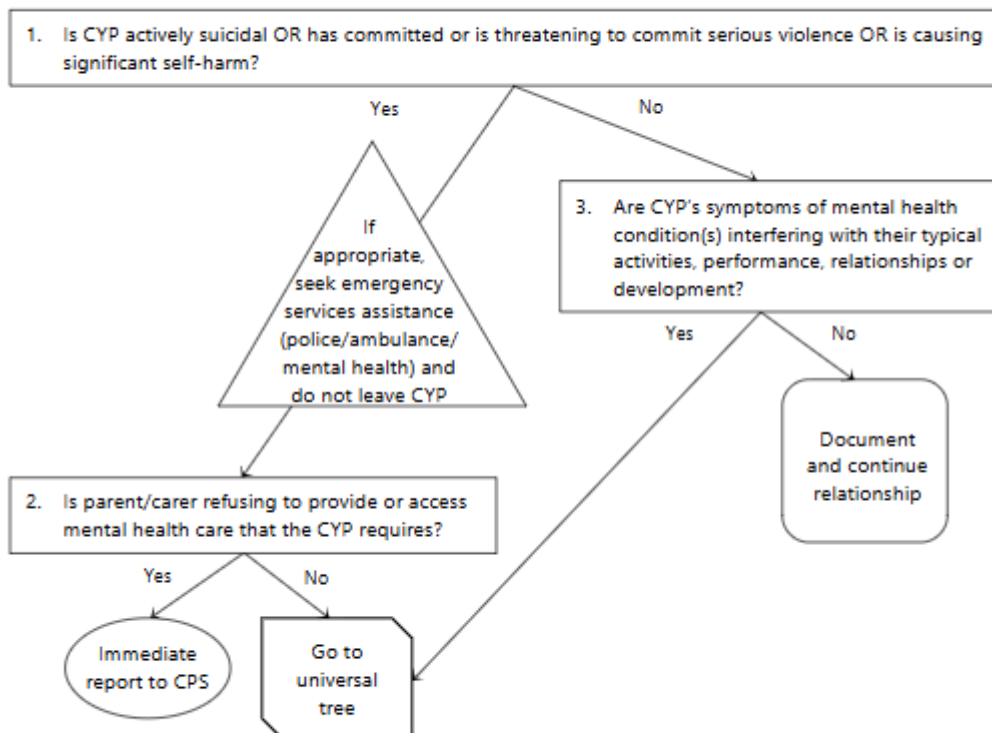


NEGLECT: MEDICAL CARE—MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

(A medical professional is a person qualified to make a diagnosis and/or treat the condition being reported.)

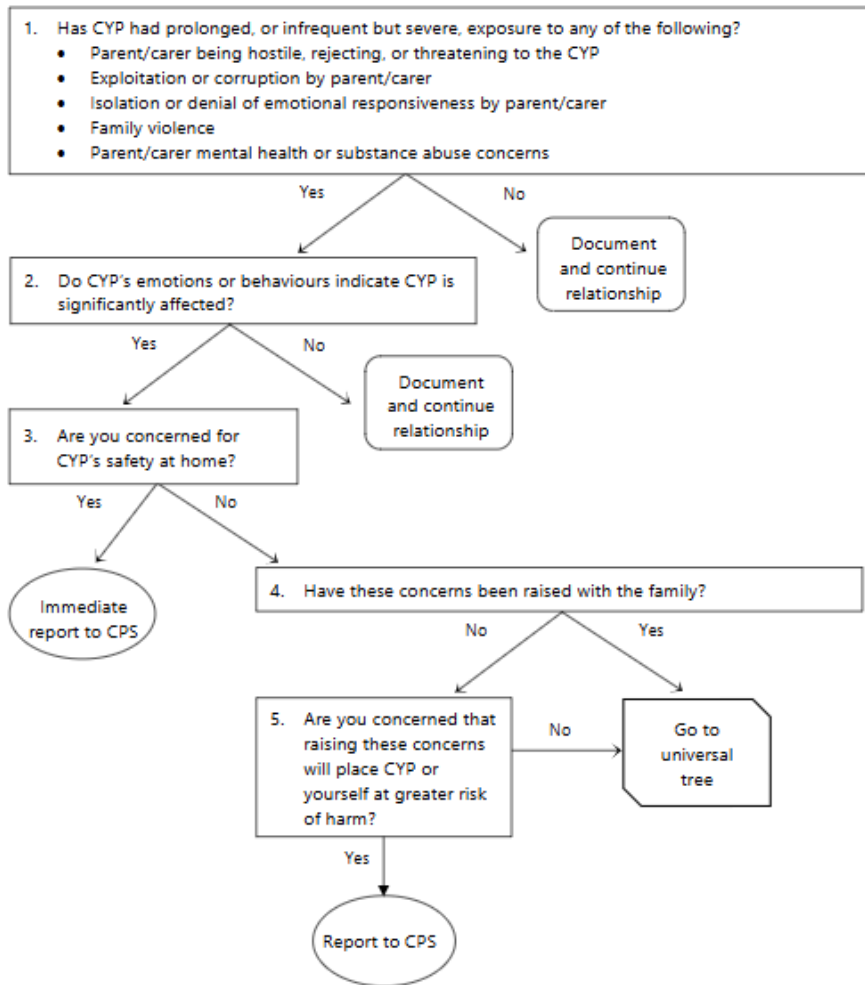


NEGLECT: MENTAL HEALTH CARE



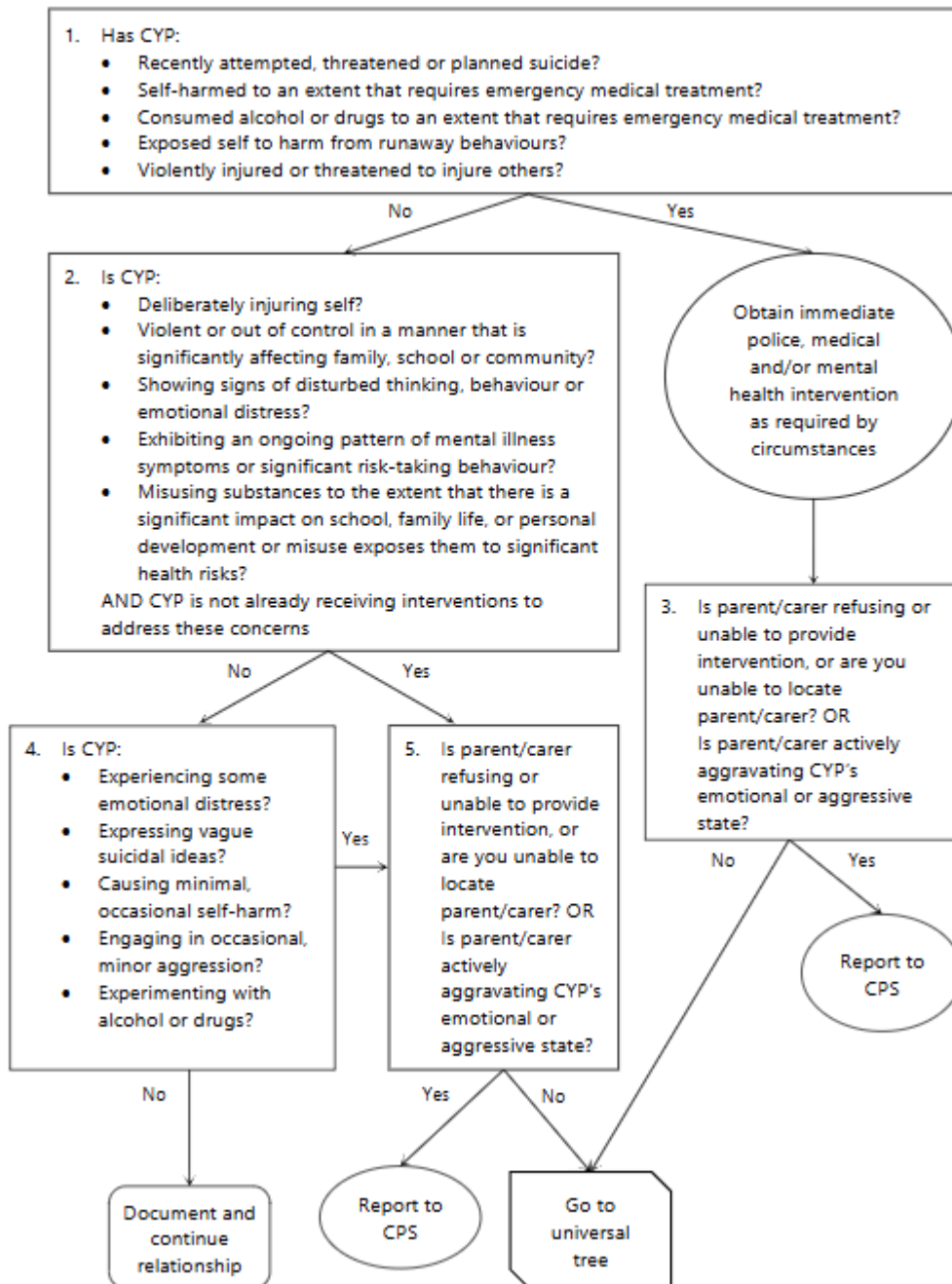


PSYCHOLOGICAL/EMOTIONAL HARM



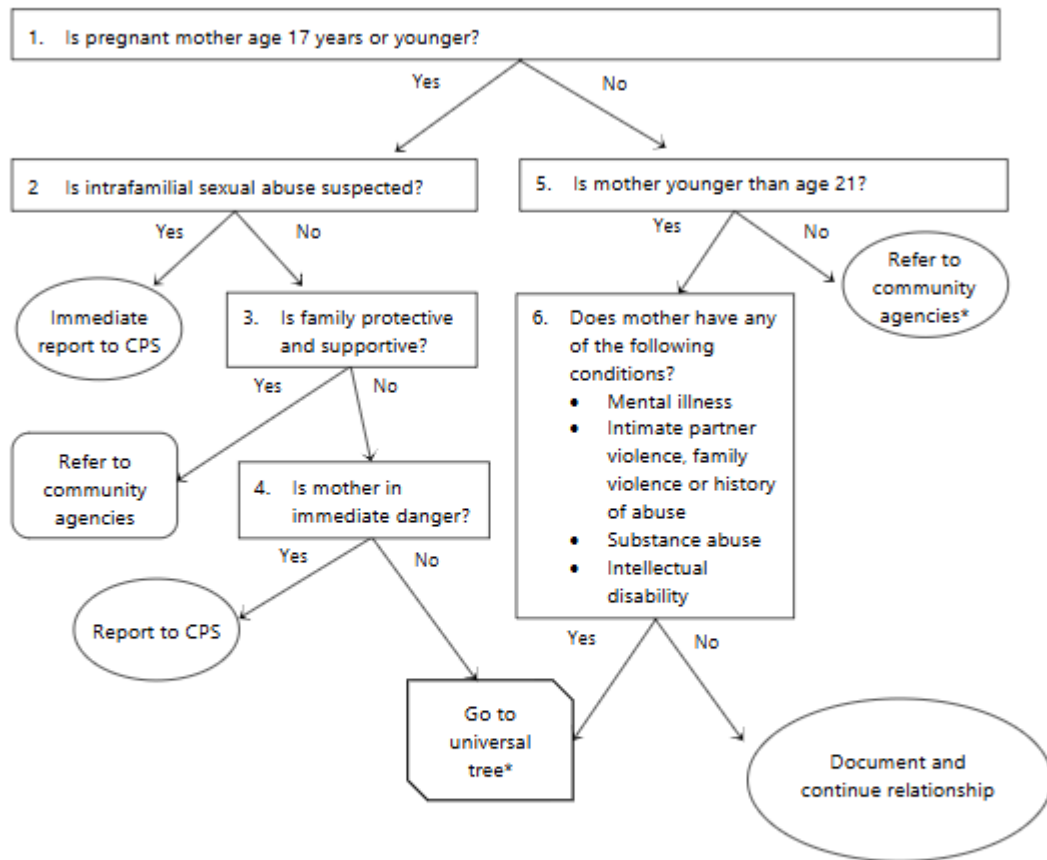


CYP IS A DANGER TO SELF OR OTHERS





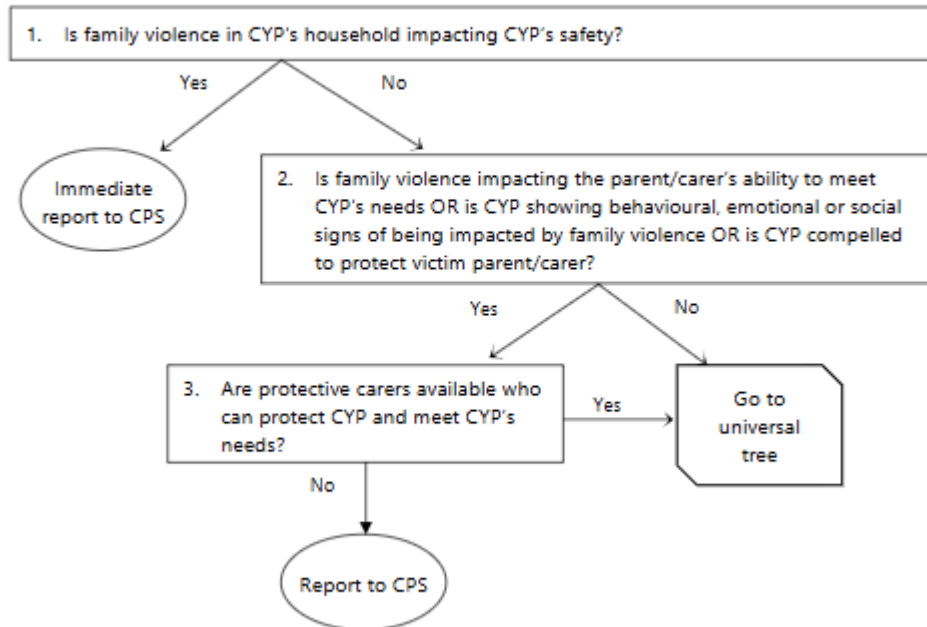
NEONATAL



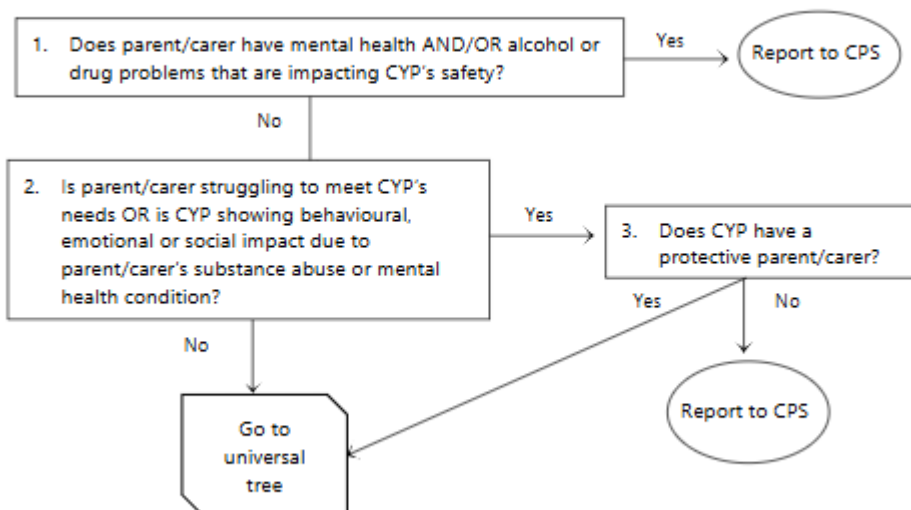
*If there is a concern about drug use, report to CNB.



PARENT/CARER CONCERNS: FAMILY VIOLENCE



PARENT/CARER CONCERNS: SUBSTANCE ABUSE/MENTAL HEALTH





Related Policies and Documents

- [Sector-Specific Screening Guide](#)
- [Child Abuse Reporting Guide](#)
- [Communication Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Data and Information Policy](#)
- [Confidentiality And Security Policy](#)
- [Survey And Feedback Management Policy And Procedure](#)
- [Critical Incident Management Handbook](#)
- [Security Manual](#)
- [Emergency External Threat Procedure](#)
- [Emergency Evacuation Procedures](#)
- [Environmental Sanitation Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Student Support And Monitoring Policy](#)
- [Student Behaviour And Disciplinary Policy And Procedure](#)
- [Code Of Conduct For Students](#)
- [Student Transportation Policy](#)
- [Safe Use Of Technology Policy](#)
- [Anti-Bullying Policy](#)
- [Student Complaint and Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Health & Safety Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Field Trip Policy](#)
- [Staff Code of Conduct](#)
- [HR Policy](#)
- [Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Staff Policy](#)
- [Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Staff Complaints and Grievance procedure](#)
- [School Volunteer Policy](#)
- [Staff Handbook \(Policy and Operations Manual\)](#)
- [Recruitment Agent Selection, Monitoring And Evaluation Policy And Procedure](#)



Summary of Changes (Annual Review)

December 2024

1. **Restructuring:** Updated the table of contents to improve navigation and organization.
2. **Reporting Form:** Changed the reporting form into a restricted Google Form
3. **Policy Statement Revisions:** Made minor modifications for clarity, ensuring alignment with the school's mission and values.
4. **Expanded Definitions:** Added and clarified definitions, including:
 - The term "Safeguarding" and its distinction from "Child Protection"
 - Definitions of "Staff" and "Peer Abuse"
5. **Clarification of Roles:** Specified that the Student Welfare Officer (SWO) serves as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
6. **Recognizing Abuse:** Included a new section detailing how to recognize signs of abuse.
7. **Enhanced Processes Section:** Broke down "Processes, Recording, and Reporting" into clear subsections:
 - Initial reporting of concerns
 - Handling disclosures
 - Documentation and record-keeping practices
8. **Safeguarding Education:** Expanded on the education provided to students, detailing specific programs and strategies.
9. **Related Policies:** Added references to related policies for comprehensive understanding and coherence.
10. **Appendix:** Changed the format of Appendix A, B, and C for a more cohesive flow.