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Maru-a-Pula School

Child Protection Handbook

Introduction

Maru-a-Pula School (MaP) aims to ensure that all members of its community work together to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and staff. The policy outlines the procedures and processes to be followed in cases of suspected child abuse. The term "child" refers to a person under the care of MaP. The term "community" includes all staff, students, parents and relevant stakeholders.

MaP plays a vital role in the community as protectors of children, aiming to ensure that all children in it's care are afforded a safe and secure environment to grow and develop. MaP recognises that:

- the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance
- the education of all members of the MaP community is critical for the implementation of this child protection policy, in alignment with the Children's Act (2009)
- maintaining policies and procedures will ensure safe practice that minimises the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children. These must be kept up to date and accessible to the community.
- the adopting of procedures will protect staff from conduct which may leave them open to accusations of abuse or neglect
- we need to develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in ensuring the protection of their children
- we must always fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters, subject to reporting requirements
- we will always fully cooperate with the relevant authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters
- mandatory reporting is fundamental to child protection and the implementation of the Children's Act (2009)

[Part 3 Bill of Child Rights, Section 25]

This policy is based on the accepted practices and procedures in schools. MaP endorses the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNRC), of which Botswana is a signatory and seeks to be a safe haven for students, who may be experiencing abuse or neglect. The policy further seeks to comply with Botswana Children's Act (2009).

Definition of Neglect

Neglect is failure to provide for a child's basic needs within their own environment. The definitions below have been developed from the Botswana Children's Act (2009), Section 56:2 'Neglect or ill-treatment of children'

Neglect may be:

Physical, this is the failure to provide necessary food, shelter or appropriate supervision. This includes failure to provide proper adult guardianship, such as leaving children unsupervised at home for any extended period of time. This also includes extended absences of parents resulting in the need for others to care for the child's physical needs.

[Section 56:2 (a) unreasonably fails to provide or pay for adequate food, clothing or housing for the child;

Medical, the failure to provide necessary and timely medical or mental health treatment. This includes extended absences of parents resulting in the need for others to medically care for the child's needs.

[Section 56:2 (b) unreasonably fails to make adequate provision for the proper health and care of the child]

Emotional, this is a pattern of actions such as: inattention to a child's emotional needs, failure to provide psychological care, permitting the child to use alcohol or other drugs, refusing to acknowledge the presence of a child, violent threats. This includes extended absences of parents resulting in the need for others to care for the child's emotional needs.

[Section 56:2 (c) unreasonably leaves the child in the care of any person or institution without showing any further interest in the child; or (d) exposes the child to conditions or circumstances which are likely to cause that child physical, mental or psychological distress or harm]

In alignment with the Children's Act (2009), MaP recognises that failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any of the above descriptors, is defined as neglect.

Definition of Abuse

Abuse is: Inflicting physical harm on a child by other than accidental means, causing skin bruising, burns, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function. This also includes death and/or creating a substantial risk of physical harm to a child's bodily functioning, and/or committing acts that are cruel or inhumane, regardless of observable injury, including instances of extreme discipline, demonstrating a disregard for the child's pain or mental suffering. Finally, abuse also extends to assaulting or criminally mistreating a child. *This is not an exhaustive list.*

[Section 27] - respect the child's dignity and refrain from administering discipline which violates such dignity or adversely affects the physical, emotional or psychological well-being of the child or any other child living in the household;

Definition of Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is committing, or allowing to be committed, any sexual offense against a child as defined in either the Children's Act 2009, other parts of the criminal code of

Botswana, or approved school policy. At MaP, sexual abuse is defined as intentionally touching either directly or through clothing, the genitals, anus or breasts of a child for other than hygienic or child care purposes. Sexual abuse is also any act that forces or entices a child to participate in sexual activities. Some non-contact activities which are considered sexual abuse include: encouraging a child to behave sexually inappropriately, taking or sharing sexual pictures of children or sharing sexual pictures or videos with children.

MaP recognises that failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any of the above, is also defined as abuse.

Definition of Child Labour

Child Labour is defined by MaP as harm in relation to a child, it includes work that is harmful to the child because it is economically exploitative, hazardous, interferes with the child's education, or is harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development;

Training

MaP will deliver mandatory staff training to ensure that all staff members are knowledgeable and up to date about the signs of potential abuse, how to recognise harmful behavior and the mandatory reporting policy and procedures. In addition, there will be an age appropriate educational programme for students, focusing on identifying abusive behaviors and how to effectively deal with such, amongst other issues.

Mandatory Reporters

When there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has/is being mistreated or abused – physically, emotionally or sexually – or is neglected, a report must be made. This report includes all abuse and/or neglect seen and/or reported at school.

This policy mandates that all adults, any individual over the age of 18, must report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to a member of the MaP response team. At MaP, the school counselors fulfill a role on the response team. The mandatory reporter requirement applies to any person who knows about child abuse or has a good faith reason to suspect that someone has committed/is committing child abuse. This means any member of the school's community, including all faculty or staff employed in any full or part time position and all school volunteers. Any failure of a mandatory reporter to make a report, will be reported to the police and may result in disciplinary action.

This mandatory reporting is in alignment with Section 43:1 of the Botswana Children's Act (2009).

[43.1 Where any person has reasonable cause to believe that a child is in need of protection, that person shall immediately make a report...]

Cases of suspected child abuse or neglect will be reported to the police. In the case of a non-citizen, suspected child abuse or neglect will also be reported to the respective consulate/high commission in Gaborone. Additionally cases of suspected child abuse or neglect may be reported to the relevant community leader who shall have a duty to receive and have discussed in *kgotla* or similar gatherings matters that may be affecting or may affect the common well-being of children.

Rights of Mandated Reporters

Mandated reporters are entitled to immunity with regards to any report of child abuse or neglect, as long as the report is made in good faith. MaP will fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters. Any anonymous calls/reports of sexual harassment, shall be considered as an unofficial report of any such event. Any reports requesting anonymity, will also be considered as an unofficial means to inform the school that a sexual harassment incident may have occurred.

The Schools' Response Team (Child Protection Committee)

The schools' response team will look into the accuracy of any report of child abuse or neglect. The schools will fully cooperate with any relevant authorities when evaluating the accuracy of all reports of abuse or neglect. The duty to examine, evaluate the validity of an accusation and take any action is not imposed on the reporter, but rather on the school's response team.

By enrolling the child at MaP, the parents or guardians give permission for the relevant school's response team to conduct the evaluation. The parents or guardians also agree to fully cooperate.

As mandated in Section 33 of the Children's Act (2009), every community must establish a Village Child protection committee. The MaP school's response team undertakes the responsibilities of this committee for the Maruapula school community.

[Section 33. (1) There is hereby established, for every community, a committee to be known as a Village Child Protection Committee]

Vetting of Prospective Staff

All staff, both employed and voluntary, will be vetted in accordance with accepted practices. From 2021, the School administration will require that a police clearance certificate be provided from the last country of residence and/or that a criminal background check be completed. The most thorough level of background check for each employee will be required and will be stated by the administration. In addition, as part of the employment process, all employees and volunteers will be required to disclose any criminal child abuse convictions as part of the application and employment process. Failure to provide this information will be grounds for dismissal.

Vetting of Current Staff

The school reserves the right to request from all current staff, both employed and voluntary, a police clearance certificate. Failure to cooperate with this request may result in dismissal.

Confidentiality

MaP will fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

Safeguarding Procedures

MaP seeks to be a safe haven for all students and as such has adopted the following comprehensive child protection programme and procedures, which it will communicate annually to all staff, parents and new applicants. The MaP Child Protection Policy defines the various forms of child abuse, as seen above.

The safeguarding procedures aim to outline the processes at MaP and the school's requirements for:

- Mandated reporters and procedures for reporting,
- Screening and selecting staff, faculty, and volunteers,
- Maintaining a child protection team,
- Training and education about child sexual abuse prevention for staff and students,
- A code of conduct that guides interactions between adults and children

Mandated Reporters and Procedures for Reporting

MaP maintains that all school employees are mandated reporters of child abuse, neglect and/or harassment. If any employee of MaP has reasonable cause to suspect that a student is being mistreated in any way, he/she is to report the suspicion to the school counselor immediately. Failure to report may result in the termination of the employment contract and/or legal accountability. Reporting and follow-up of all suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect will proceed in accordance with the guidelines in this handbook. In the case of a staff member reported as an alleged offender, MaP will conduct a full inquiry following a carefully designed course of due process, keeping the safety of the child at the highest priority. Cases of suspected child abuse or neglect may be reported by the school to the local authorities, or the respective consulate and/or high commission in Botswana

Procedure for Reporting Suspected Cases of Child Abuse or Neglect

Step 1

When a child reports abuse or there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse is occurring, the teacher will seek advice from the counsellor within 48 hours. The counsellor will take initial steps to gather information regarding the reported incident, and if reasonable cause is determined, will form the school-based response team (Child Protection Committee) to address the report. The response team usually includes the school nurse, counsellor, deputy principals, and any other individuals that the Principal sees fit. In all cases, follow up activities are conducted in a manner that ensures that information is documented factually and that strict confidentiality is maintained. The following procedure will be used:

- Interview staff members as necessary and document information relative to the case
- Consult school personnel to review the child's history at the school
- Report the status of the case to the Principal
- Determine the course of follow-up actions

Step 2

Based on acquired information, a plan of action will be developed to assist the child and family. Actions that may take place are:

- Discussion between the child and counsellor in order to gain more information
- Depending upon the age of the child, these discussions may include drawing pictures to elicit more information as to what may have occurred
- In-class observations of the child by a teacher, counsellor, or deputy principal
- Meetings with the family to present the school's concerns
- Referral of the student and family to external professional counselling
- Consultation with the consulate/high commission of the country of the involved family, if applicable
- Consultation with the school attorney or other legal professional
- Consultation with local authorities

Intervention steps for many cases of suspected abuse or neglect will be handled by the school counsellor, such as those involving:

- Parenting skills related to disciplining children at home
- Student-parent relationships
- Student relationship with peers
- Mental health issues such as depression, low self-esteem, grieving

Some cases will be referred to outside resources, for example:

- Mental health issues such as depression, psychosis, dissociation, and suicide ideation

Cases typically reported for investigation and outside resources include:

- Severe and ongoing physical abuse or neglect
- Sexual abuse and incest

In extreme cases when families do not stop the abuse or concerns remain about the safety of the child, reports could be made to:

- The consulate/high commission
- The local authorities

Step 3

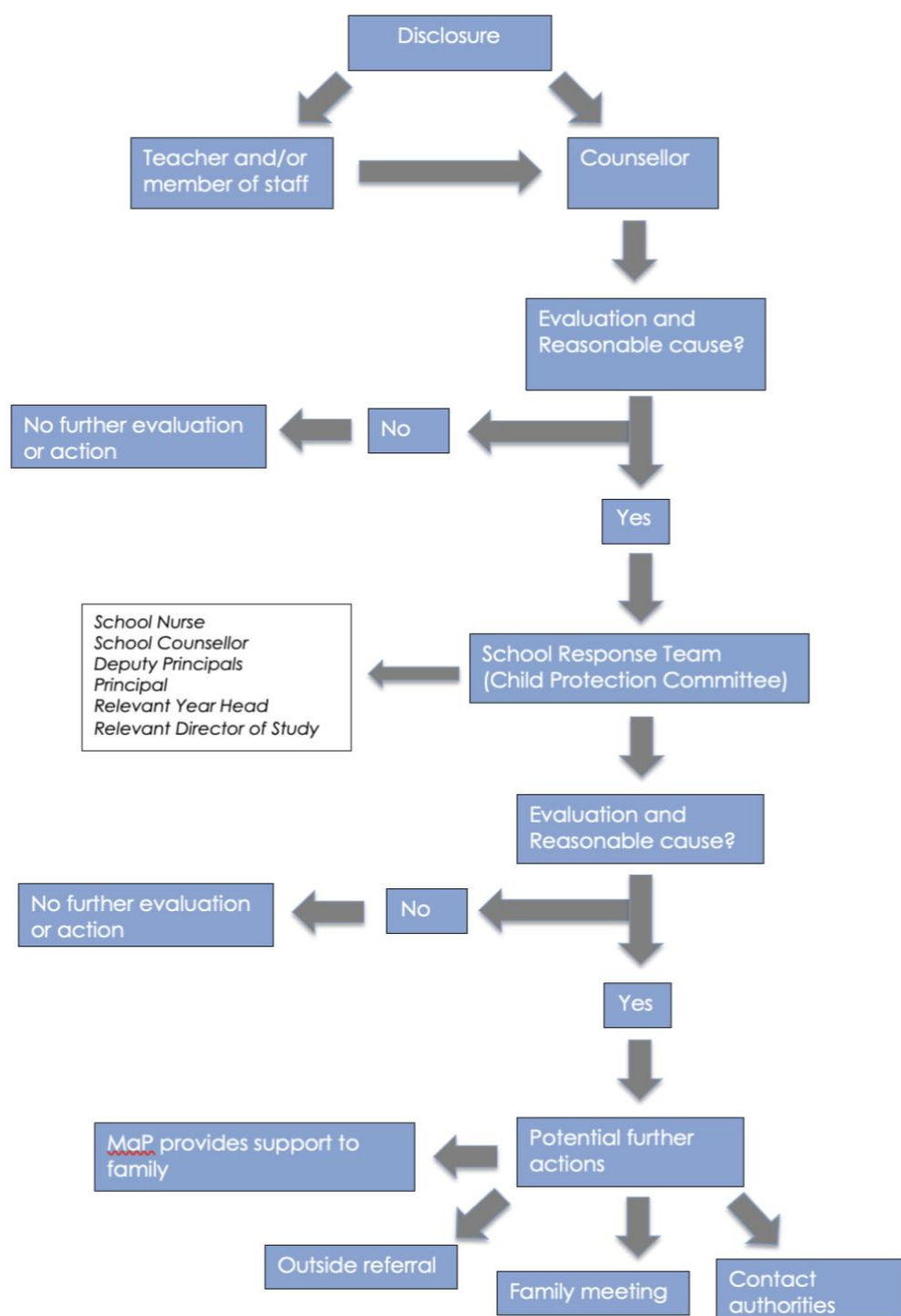
Subsequent to a reported and/or substantiated case of child abuse or neglect:

- The counsellor will maintain contact with the child and family to provide support as appropriate
- The counsellor will attempt to maintain contact with outside therapists (if used) to update the progress of the child in school
- Documentation of the investigation will be kept in the child's school confidential records file. Records sent to schools to which the student may transfer will be flagged to let the receiving school know there is a confidential file for the child. MaP will attempt to share this information to protect the child.

If the suspected perpetrator is the parent, or if the parents do not act in the best interest of protecting their child, the school maintains the right to contact the relevant legal authorities and/or mandate professional counseling.

If the suspected perpetrator is a school employee and their continued employment is determined to put children at further risk, the school maintains the right to contact legal authorities and /or the employee's embassy, mandate professional counseling and/or terminate the employment contract at MaP.

Follow-up services will be provided by the school counsellor as needed. Please see below for the MaP reporting flow chart.



Screening and Selecting Staff, Faculty, and Volunteers:

At MaP, we are committed to making sure that our staff, faculty and volunteers have been properly and rigorously screened before working with children. MaP requires the following screening and criminal background checks from all faculty and staff:

- Written application/statement of suitability
- Personal interview
- Credential check
- Reference checks
- Criminal history background check (*for new staff from 2021*)

All staff members are required to attend training on child protection as part of the orientation process during which there will also be a review of this handbook. A similar training will be conducted with relevant staff in Setswana as well.

The Schools Response Team (Child Protection Committee):

The purpose of the response team is to ensure that the child protection guidelines are being implemented and to monitor and review the effectiveness of the programme. The team ensures that the child protection curriculum is taught and assessed annually. The team will also ensure professional development and training for all staff and volunteers and parents.

Most importantly, the team will serve as a group in working with cases requiring child protection (ie. assist in reporting suspected cases of abuse and/or neglect, follow-up disclosures to the senior leadership team or appropriate authorities).

The Schools Response Team at MaP consists of:

- School Counsellor
- Nurse
- Relevant Director of Study and Year Head
- Deputy Principals
- Principal

The counsellor, in partnership with the response team have developed the Health & Wellness curriculum for schoolwide personal social education programmes to include specific child protection content. This curriculum will define abuse, neglect and harassment, provide prevention and reporting strategies, and instill in our students an overall understanding that no child deserves to be abused, neglected nor harassed. Purposeful instruction in child protection will help to create a school environment in which students feel safe and protected, and whereby students are encouraged and empowered to report abuse, neglect or harassment to a trusted adult, knowing they

will receive comprehensive support. The PHSE curriculum will be taught at the appropriate age level and developmental level of the students.

Staff/Student Boundaries

In their day-to-day interaction with the young people entrusted to their care, staff are expected to foster positive relations with their students. Within this context, it is obviously important that staff and students interact within boundaries which protect students and staff from situations which might constitute or create an impropriety or appearance of impropriety.

Staff have a significant influence over the lives of young people, and boundary invasions have the potential to abuse the students and the staff/student relationship.

The guiding principles in the setting of Boundaries for Staff/Student Interaction are the notion of a Duty of Care, which protects the students, and Professional Boundaries, which protect the staff. Please refer to **Appendix 1: Staff/Student boundaries**.

Indicators of neglect and abuse

MaP follows the definitions of neglect, physical abuse and sexual abuse as defined in this handbook.

***Possible indicators of neglect:**

- Child is unwashed or hungry
- Parents are uninterested in their child's academic performance
- Parents do not respond to repeated communications from the school
- The child does not want to go home
- Both parents or legal guardian are absent from home for 24 hours or greater
- Parents cannot be reached in the case of an emergency

***Possible indicators of physical abuse:**

- Unexplained bruises or welts on any part of the body
- Injuries reflecting the shape of an object used (electric cord, belt, buckle, ping pong paddle, hand, etc.)
- Injuries that regularly appear after an absence or vacation
- Unexplained burns, especially to soles, palms, back, or buttocks
- Burns with a pattern from an electric burner, iron, or cigarette
- Rope burns on arms, legs, neck, or torso
- Injuries inconsistent with information offered by the child
- Unexplained lacerations, abrasions, or fractures
- Immersion burns with a distinct boundary line

Possible Indicators of sexual abuse:

- Sexual knowledge, behavior, or use of language not appropriate to the age level
- Unusual interpersonal relationship patterns
- Venereal disease in a child of any age
- Evidence of physical trauma or bleeding to the oral, genital, or anal areas
- Difficulty in walking or sitting

- Refusing to change into PE clothes, or fear of bathrooms
- Child running away from home and not giving any specific complaint
- Not wanting to be alone with an individual
- Pregnancy at a young age
- Extremely protective parenting

****Behavioral indicators in and of themselves do not constitute abuse or neglect.***

What should a teacher do when there is reasonable cause to believe that there has been abuse?

The indicators of abuse and neglect will be used by staff members as guidelines for reporting to the counsellor, who will determine if the case needs further attention. A report must be made when a staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect. All reports made are confidential.

What happens after suspected abuse or neglect is reported?

Where there is cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, it is the responsibility of the staff member to report their suspicions to the counsellor, or if he/she is unavailable, to the Deputy Principal or Principal.

All staff, faculty, and administrators are mandated to report incidents of abuse and neglect. All MaP employees are also required to report suspicion of abuse or neglect. All reports of abuse and neglect must be made within 48 hours. Staff who fail to report incidents of abuse and neglect are subject to administrative discipline.

Code of Conduct that Guides Interactions between Adults and Children:

MaP requires that all staff, faculty, volunteers and anyone working with children at MaP demonstrate responsibility in maintaining appropriate boundaries and professionalism at all times. All personnel are required to read and sign the Code of Conduct.

It is the adult's responsibility to set and respect boundaries. When a child attempts to involve an adult in inappropriate behavior, the adult must reject the overture. Please refer to **Appendix 1: Staff/Student boundaries.**

Code of Conduct

I, _____, agree to follow the guidelines in **Appendix 1: Staff/Student boundaries** and Child Protection Handbook where,

I will:

- Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition or comparison when working with students.
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries at all times and touch students – when necessary – only in ways that are appropriate.
- Comply with the mandatory reporting regulations of this handbook.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of any children and/or students.

I will not:

- Touch or speak to a student in an inappropriate manner.
- Inflict any physical or emotional abuse such as striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, humiliating, ridiculing, threatening or degrading a student(s).
- Smoke or use tobacco products with children, or possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while working with students.
- Give a student who is not my own a ride home alone without permission of their parent/guardian or the school.
- Accept gifts from or give gifts students without the knowledge of their parents or guardians*

**Employees should not receive or accept gifts, fees, hospitality or other rewards which influences the way in which duties are carried out.*

Low level "thank you" gifts from parents or children e.g. homemade gifts, flowers, chocolates, biscuits etc., are permitted with or without making the school aware.

In all cases a professional judgment should be made around what is acceptable, proportionate and appropriate. If in doubt the employee should seek guidance from the School Psychologist.

- Engage in private communications with students via text messaging, email, Facebook, Twitter or similar forms of electronic or social media except for activities strictly involving school business.
- Use profanity in the presence of students at any time.

My signature confirms that I have read the **Appendix 1: Staff/Student boundaries** and Child Protection Handbook. I agree to follow these standards.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 1: Staff/Student Boundaries

In their day-to-day interaction with the young people entrusted to their care, staff are expected to foster positive relations with their students. Within this context, it is obviously important that staff and students interact within boundaries which protect students and staff from situations which might constitute or create an impropriety or appearance of impropriety. Staff have a significant influence over the lives of young people, and boundary invasions have the potential to abuse the students and the staff/student relationship.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles in the setting of Boundaries for Staff/Student Interaction are the notion of a Duty of Care, which protects the students, and Professional Boundaries, which protect the staff.

Duty of Care:

"In the Education and Care Context, *Duty of Care* is a common law concept that refers to the responsibility of staff to provide children and young people with an adequate level of protection against harm."

"In their relationships with children and young people, staff are required to ensure that the physical and emotional welfare of children is safeguarded, and that their own behaviour is guided by this duty of care, both within and beyond the education and care setting."

(Ref: Protective Practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people © Government of South Australia Department of Education and Children's Services)

This makes it extremely important that staff understand how to foster relationships in ways that do not compromise children's and young people's welfare.

A useful and informative pamphlet published in the USA by the Human Resources Department of the Greater Albany Public Schools expresses the concept thus:

"Appropriate interactions are those that create a safe environment in which students may grow, learn, seek help in solving conflicts and develop social skills.

Inappropriate interactions cross the boundaries separating student from adult needs and could create an atmosphere that becomes peer-to-peer rather than adult-to-child."

Professional Boundaries

Along with the concept of "Duty of Care", staff should always be mindful of their professional integrity and the possibility of students calling this into question. Since boundary violations in staff-student relations which affect the welfare of a student can result in disciplinary action, up to dismissal, depending on the seriousness of the violation, it is important for teachers to have a clear understanding of where the lines should be drawn. Professional Boundaries are therefore set in the interests of both staff and students. The South Australian Guidelines for Teachers recognise Seven Professional Boundaries, which will inform this document. These are:

+ Communication + Personal Disclosure

+ Physical Contact + Place

+ Targeting individual children and young people

+ Role + Possessions

These are spelled out in more detail, providing clear and specific guidelines for staff, which have been adapted slightly to fit the Maru-a-Pula context:

Communication	☐ Inappropriate comments about a child/young person's appearance, including excessive flattering comments or comments which have the appearance of impropriety ☐ Inappropriate conversation or enquiries of a sexual nature (e.g. questions about a young person's sexuality and/or his/her sexual relationships with others) ☐ Use of inappropriate pet names ☐ Vilification or humiliation ☐ Jokes or innuendo of a sexual nature ☐ Obscene gestures or language ☐ Facilitating/permitting access to sexually explicit material that is not part of the endorsed curriculum ☐ Correspondence of a personal nature via any medium (e.g. Internet postings, sms) that is unrelated to the staff member's role ☐ A separate Facebook account for communication between a teacher and the class is appropriate. Communicating via private accounts is not
Personal Disclosure	☐ Discussing personal lifestyle, details of self, other staff or children and young people, unless directly relevant to the learning topic and with the individual's consent
Physical Contact	☐ Unwarranted or unwanted touching of a child, personally or with objects e.g. rulers ☐ Corporal punishment ☐ Initiating or permitting inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact (e.g. massage, tickling games, kisses) or facilitating situations which result in unnecessarily close physical contact ☐ Hugging outside of appropriate situations like grief support or sports victory ☐ Inappropriate use of physical restraint

Place	☐ Inviting or encouraging young people to visit the staff member's home (With obvious exceptions related to school functions and role, or friends of staff children, students should not enter staff accommodation) ☐ Allowing students access to a staff member's personal internet locations/social networking sites. (Homework/worksheets sent or submitted via e-mail are an obvious exception.) ☐ Being alone with a student outside of your staff responsibilities ☐ Being alone in a room with a student with the door closed, especially after hours ☐ Entering change rooms or toilets set aside for students when you are not required to in a supervisory role ☐ Transporting a student unaccompanied (unless your position requires this, e.g. transporting a student in your role as nurse/GBBH parent/duty person)
Targeting individual students	☐ Giving personal gifts or special favours ☐ Singling the same student out for special duties and responsibilities
Role	☐ Adopting an ongoing welfare role that is beyond the scope of your position or that is the responsibility of another staff member (e.g. the counsellor) or external professional, without the permission of senior staff ☐ Photographing/filming students when not authorised by the school/part of a school activity or project
Possessions	☐ Correspondence or communication (e.g. letters, e-mails) to or from student/s where a violation of professional boundaries is indicated and where this has not been reported to a senior member of staff ☐ Photos or recordings of students kept/displayed in personal locations e.g. car/home without this being an authorised part of your position ☐ Uploading of images of students to public locations without authorisation from school admin or parent/guardian.

Drawing the line

Understanding the principles and specifics of Professional Boundaries allows staff to draw a line in situations such as the following:

What if:

- A student asked you for a gift?
- A student asked you on a date?
- A student came to your office after hours when no other staff members were around?
- A student repeatedly came to your office after hours when no other staff members were around?

Staff who have a clear understanding of the duty of care and professional boundaries principles have a clearer understanding of what the appropriate response is, in each case.

A frank and informative article on staff student boundaries entitled "Avoiding the question: 'What were you thinking?'" gives the following example:

- Boundary: Don't allow conversations about student alcohol use, drug use, partying or inappropriate activities to continue in your presence. Silence is validation.
- Response: "Knock it off" or "That's not appropriate talk for here" will work.

Sharing Concerns about Impropriety

An important aspect of implementing Professional Boundaries and of the principle of Duty of Care is that staff should act appropriately when they feel that a student is attempting to blur the boundaries with staff. This will usually mean not only drawing a line unequivocally for the student, but also sharing the concern about the student with an appropriate member of staff, usually the school counsellor or administrative staff. This is important both for the welfare of the student and the professional integrity of the member of staff.

Some teachers (particularly younger teachers) may find themselves in a situation where a student develops romantic feelings towards them. These may sometimes be misplaced attempts for attention or affection. The Greater Albany Public Schools Pamphlet referred to earlier gives the following advice: "Students who believe no one listens to them often transfer feelings of affection to the staff member. Refer students in these situations to the school counsellor or school administrator."

Similarly, the Australian guidelines referred to earlier conclude with the following statement: "Some children and young people may actively seek a relationship with a staff member that would constitute an inappropriate relationship. In such circumstances, staff are advised to immediately report the information ... and seek assistance from a senior staff member, school counsellor or pastoral care co-ordinator to actively manage the situation in a way that *respects the emotional wellbeing of the child or young person and provides support to the staff member*"

It is important for staff to know that they are not required to handle difficult situations such as these on their own, and for staff to remember that in all cases the welfare of the student and the staff members' professionalism dictate the appropriate action.

References:

- **Protective Practices for Staff in their Interactions with Children and Young People** © 2011 Government of South Australia Department of Education and Children's Services
- **Maintaining Appropriate Staff-Student Boundaries**

Guidelines to Avoid the Appearance of Impropriety

© Greater Albany Public Schools Human Resources Department

- **All Staff Boundaries**

Using Common Sense in Your Daily Work

Essential Reminders about Employment Expectations while Working with Students and Others and Avoiding the Question "What were you thinking?"

www.arps.org/files/BoundariesListpdf

- **Maintaining Professional Staff/Student Boundaries**

www.ycs.wednet.edu/vanhonsd.org.studentstaffboundaries.pdf

Appendix 2: Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool

**Brook sexual behaviours traffic light tool adapted from Family Planning Queensland. (2012). Traffic Lights guide to sexual behaviours. Brisbane: Family Planning Queensland, Australia.*

Behaviours: age 13 to 17

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary.

What is a green behaviour?

Green behaviours reflect safe and healthy sexual development. They are:

- displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability
- reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices

What can you do?

Green behaviours provide opportunities to give positive feedback and additional information.

Green behaviours

- solitary masturbation
- sexually explicit conversations with peers
- obscenities and jokes within the current cultural norm
- interest in erotica/pornography
- use of internet/e-media to chat online
- having sexual or non-sexual relationships
- sexual activity including hugging, kissing, holding hands
- consenting oral and/or penetrative sex with others of the same or opposite gender who are of similar age and developmental ability
- choosing not to be sexually active

What is an amber behaviour?

Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:

- of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences
- of potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur

What can you do?

Amber behaviours signal the need to take notice and gather information to assess the appropriate action.

Amber behaviours

- accessing exploitative or violent pornography
- uncharacteristic and risk-related behaviour, e.g. sudden and/or provocative changes in dress, withdrawal from friends, mixing with new or older people, having more or less money than usual, going missing
- concern about body image
- taking and sending naked or sexually provocative images of self or others
- single occurrence of peeping, exposing, mooning or obscene gestures
- giving out contact details online
- joining adult-only social networking sites and giving false personal information
- arranging a face to face meeting with an online contact alone

What is a red behaviour?

Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:

- excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening
- involving significant age, developmental, or power differences
- of concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur

What can you do?

Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action.

Red behaviours

- exposing genitals or masturbating in public
- preoccupation with sex, which interferes with daily function
- sexual degradation/humiliation of self or others
- attempting/forcing others to expose genitals
- sexually aggressive/exploitative behaviour
- sexually explicit talk with younger children
- sexual harassment
- non-consensual sexual activity
- use of/acceptance of power and control in sexual relationships
- genital injury to self or others
- sexual contact with others where there is a big difference in age or ability
- sexual activity with someone in authority and in a position of trust
- sexual activity with family members
- involvement in sexual exploitation and/or trafficking
- sexual contact with animals
- receipt of gifts or money in exchange for sex