



APPLE VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stand No. 16817 Strathcona Chinhoyi
Tel : +263 772 972 320 / 0712 685 496/ 0781 506 329
Email : info@applevalley.co.zw

Child Protection Policy

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1. Introduction

Apple Valley Primary School is devoted to the total protection of Children, Minors and Vulnerable persons from all forms of harm, abuse and rights violation. We are passionate about creating and maintaining a safe environment for all our children and staff. Our desire for safe environments is further extended to the protection of all our partners, communities and all children, minors and vulnerable persons that visit or do business with our school. This Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is a practical tool and mechanism for the full implementation of Child Protection and Safeguarding Practice at our institution. In addition to the guidelines from the United Nations (UN) and the Constitution of Zimbabwe we have the Social Teachings of christianity which further emphasise for us the sacredness of life and the full dignity of the human being. Various religious documents (encyclicals) remind us of our roles in helping children and all vulnerable people to receive the proclamation of faith as well as our commitment towards a faith that serves justice. Our school, therefore forms a community of Grace, Prayer, Human Virtue and Unhu/ubuntu.



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All members of Apple Valley Community are therefore encouraged, to priorities faith and justice in their work and take the provisions of this policy seriously to make our school a safe space for growing, learning and working.

2. Underlying Principles

This Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is guided by three underlying principles which are the Christian Values, best practices in Child protection from the UN and the Law of the state of Zimbabwe and Safeguarding and the professional commitment of all working for the institution.

2.1. In the best interest of Children, Minors and Vulnerable people

All activities, decisions and actions towards the provision of Child Protection and Safeguarding are made in the best interest of Children, Minors and Vulnerable people.

2.2. The equal protection of all Children, Minors and Vulnerable people

All Children, Minors and Vulnerable people have the right to equal protection from all forms of abuse regardless of their race, gender, cultural background, social class, religion or denomination.

2.3. A Written Policy for Apple Valley Primary School.

A written policy is in place at Apple Valley Primary School. The policy gives clear guidelines and directions on the implementation of best Child Protection and Safeguarding practices in the school according to the context.

2.4. The professional duty to care for Children, Minors and Vulnerable People

All adults working at Apple Valley acknowledge that it is part of their professional duty and an inclusion in the minimal standards for their professional practice to care for and protect Children, Minors and Vulnerable people from all forms of abuse.

2.5. Fully Implementing the Standards for Child Protection and Safeguarding

Apple Valley recognise and fully adopt the minimum standards for universal Child Protection and Safeguarding practice and commit to always fully implement these standards.

3. Minimum Standards for Child Protection and Safeguarding Practice for Apple Valley

This set of Child Protection and Safeguarding Standards define what needs to be in place at Apple Valley to keep children, minors and vulnerable people safe. Standards also list criteria for measurement and evaluation of effective Child Protection and Safeguarding Practice. APPLE VALLEY commits to the standards for Child Protection and Safeguarding outlined below. These



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standards are recommended by best practice, and show the expected level of performance that all who govern, lead, provide services, work, study or volunteer at APPLE VALLEY.

Standards:

3.1. Written Safeguarding Policy is in force at APPLE VALLEY

There is a written commitment to put the policy into practice and this commitment is on display at the SCHOOL.

There are clear procedures showing how to report and respond to any suspected or alleged violation or abuse that may happen at APPLE VALLEY.

There are written guidelines on safe and protective behaviours towards children, minors and vulnerable people.

There are arrangements in place for the recruitment, induction, ongoing training and education of all staff adults and children on Child Protection and the safeguarding of minors and vulnerable people.

A variety of methods to communicate this Child Safeguarding Policy are in place.

Advice and support on Child Protection and Safeguarding is available to all those who need it.

Standards are made to work, and are regularly checked to see if they are working.

Safeguarding Standards are met in different locations within and outside the school.

Equal rights to protection are accorded to all irrevocably.

The school works with various partners to meet these Safeguarding Standards.

4. Provisions of The APPLE VALLEY Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

This Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is guided by various documents including the United Nations publications on Child Safeguarding and the Constitution of the State of Zimbabwe.

4.1. Written Policy

This Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy shall be available at APPLE VALLEY as a hard copy and soft copy which can also be accessed on school website.



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All staff, employees, volunteers, parents, partners, service providers and relevant stakeholders in contact with the institution shall have access to a hard copy/soft copy of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for their use and reference during their tenure at the school.

4.1.2. The written policy shall be used as a reference and a guide for the effective implementation of Child Protection and Safeguarding Practices at the school.

4.1.3. The written Policy shall be reviewed by the school every year.

4.2. Recruitment and Selection

To minimise the risk of recruiting unsuitable people who may make the Institution (APPLE VALLEY) unsafe for Children, Minors and vulnerable people, the school shall in addition to the already existing recruitment procedures include:

4. 2.1 Police criminal offences Clearance of any Child Protection violation and abuse of Minors and Vulnerable people for the incumbent.

4.2.2. Clearance from other legal and recognised Child Protection and related Registers locally and elsewhere.

4.2.3. Interviews in person for the incumbent which include a direct question if they have any convictions relating to the abuse of Children, Minors or Vulnerable persons.

(Regardless of the response, Registers and references to be checked).

4.2.4. Reference checks to be made with a specific question if there were convictions, accusations, suspicions, or doubts relating to the incumbent's abuse of Children, Minors and Vulnerable people and to receive responses in writing.

With regard to Teachers/Educators, the Parent Education Ministries (MoPSE and MHTE) to be contacted to make sure there are no previous or current complaints against the incumbent.

4.2.7. All employees, staff, volunteers, partners, associates, service providers, parents shall sign the Child Protection and Safeguarding Self - Declaration Form as their commitment towards upholding and meeting all the provisions of the Institution's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

4.3. Induction, Training and Ongoing Education

4.3.1 APPLE VALLEY shall have clear and standing arrangements for the induction, training and ongoing education of all personnel, partners and learners in Child Protection and Safeguarding. The induction, training and ongoing education programme will have provisions for:



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A budget line in the school budgets for the Induction, Training and On Going Education programme at the school.

4.3.2. An induction, Training and On Going Education plan for parents, governors, staff, volunteers and learners.

4.3.3. Suitable people to train in Child Protection and Safeguarding.

4.3.5. Working with other experienced partners in Child Protection and Safeguarding Training and Education.

4.3.6. Records, registers and reports of all training and all who attend the training.

4.4. Communicating the Keeping Children Safe and Safeguarding Message to all APPLE VALLEY will ensure that all people (including the minors themselves) stake holders and agencies involved in the school know about the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the school or institution's commitment to the safety of Children, Minors and Vulnerable People.

4. 4.1A statement of commitment towards the protection of Children, Minors and Vulnerable people will be displayed in suitable public places throughout the school.

4.4. 2.To ensure that people know about this policy, both formal and informal and informal communication methods will be used to include Briefings and Meetings, Newsletters, Posters, Memos, Discussions, Campaigns, workshops, training, Sharing of documents and information, open displays, with provisions for those with and/or special needs.

4.5. Advice and Support for those who need it

4.5.1. The school or institution will ensure that children, minors and vulnerable people seeking or in need of help, support and advice on matters of protection and safeguarding will know where they can go.

4.5.2. Specialist advice on Child Protection and Safeguarding Issues, from appropriate providers, will be made available to anyone who needs it.

4.5.3. .The school or institution will openly display in public and accessible places, lists of services, authorities and organisations with (contact details) that can help those who need help.



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4.5.4. These lists will be available to all staff and volunteers so that they know what services are available in order to respond to, help and offer support those who need help.

4.5.5. The School or Institution will ensure that alleged perpetrator(s) of any abuse are able to receive suitable support to include the clear communication to them that they too have a right to seek legal support and advice.

4.6. Code of Conduct and Behaviour Protocols

In the spirit of encouraging a culture of safety for Children, Minors and Vulnerable people, APPLE VALLEY will advance clear and concise guidelines of what is and is not acceptable behaviour and practices when working with Children, Minors and Vulnerable people. Such protocols will be adopted in addition to any existing Codes of Conduct in operation at the school to include:

- 4.6.1. Total respect of Children, Minors and Vulnerable people's privacy and boundaries; including total refrain from sleeping in the same room or bed as Children, Minors or Vulnerable people they are working with.
- 4.6.2. Visibility to others - Adults and Children alike - when working with Children, Minors and Vulnerable people.
- 4.6.3. Total prohibition of the use of Corporal Punishment to any Child, Minor or Vulnerable person.
- 4.6.4. Non-discriminatory behaviours and practices to all children, Minors and Vulnerable persons, whatever the circumstance.
- 4.6.5. Abstaining from taking part in behaviour which is illegal, unsafe or abusive with Children, Minors and Vulnerable people; or, allowing them to take part in such behaviours or practices.
- 4.6.6. Never act or behave in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, minors and vulnerable people.
- 4.6.7. At no time compromising the safety, care and wellbeing of children, minors and vulnerable people at any time, at the school or elsewhere.

4.7. Regular Risk Elimination and Appropriateness

APPLE VALLEY shall have clear guidelines on what to do to keep Children, Minors and Vulnerable people safe before, during and after every activity. A risk assessment will be carried out on a termly



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basis and strategies will be worked out to deal with any identified risks. Standard Risk elimination for the institution will include the acknowledgement and general understanding of inappropriateness that:

4.7.1. It is inappropriate to act in ways that may be abusive or may place children, minors and vulnerable people at risk of abuse.

4.7.2. It is inappropriate to expose Children, Minors and Vulnerable people to personal privacy as well as private boundaries and spaces such as homes, personal, living and domestic spaces.

4.7.3. It is inappropriate to interact with Children, Minors and Vulnerable people outside of the school or institution's ordinary context and, without the written consent of the parents, guardians and that of vulnerable people.

4.7.4. It is inappropriate to develop relationships with Children, Minors and Vulnerable people, which could be considered to be exploitative or abusive.

4.7.5. It is inappropriate to do things (of a personal nature) for children, minors and vulnerable people that they can do for themselves.

4.7.6. It is inappropriate to expose children, minors and vulnerable people to what could be considered unsafe, unsuitable and/or abusive.

4.8. Reporting Procedures

APPLE VALLEY Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy acknowledges existing Reporting Procedures and Protocols as guided by MOPSE (2022), The Public Service Commission Procedures for Allegations of Misconduct as guided by parent Ministries of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) and Higher and Tertiary Education (MHTE).

In addition to the existing Reporting Procedures and Protocols in the school, APPLE VALLEY will develop:

4.8.1. Clear and safe reporting structures for Children and minors:

Children and Minors should know who to report to should they have any concerns of Child Protection and Safeguarding violations.

4.8.2. Clear and safe reporting structures for all personnel under authority:

Lay personnel under authority should know who to talk to should they have a concern about violations of Child Protection and Safeguarding at the school or institution.

4.8.3. Clear and Safe procedures for those in authority:



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Authorities, such as Head, Deputy Head, TIC and Responsible Authorities are guided accordingly by the existing reporting protocols from the parent Ministries.

4.4. Structures for effective Child Protection and Safeguarding Practices

APPLE VALLEY will establish the following structures for the effective implementation of Child Protection and Safeguarding Practices:

4.4.1. A Child Protection and Safeguarding Committee:

This committee will advance Child Protection and Safeguarding practice through:

- 4.4.1.1. Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation of Child Protection and Safeguarding activities at the school or institution.
- 4.4.1.2. Facilitating training and education in Child Protection and Safeguarding for every one involved with the school or institution.
- 4.4.1.3. Assists the Child Protection and Safeguarding Coordinator with the management of the internal reporting process and referral procedures.
- 4.4.1.4. Facilitating Child Protection and Safeguarding Self Assessments, Evaluations and Reflections for the school or institution.
- 4.4.1.5. Supporting the work and function of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Coordinator.
- 4.4.1.6. Championing the effective implementation of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy at the school.

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Coordinator:

APPLE VALLEY has a named designated person as the Child Protection and Safeguarding Coordinator who is responsible for making sure that the child protection and safeguarding policy is implemented and followed. This role should reflect the nature and structure of the organisation and the person is senior enough, and have enough support, to carry out the role. The Child Protection and Safeguarding



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Coordinator's roles and responsibilities will, in addition to those reasonably assigned by the Responsible Authority and Head include:

- 4.8.3.1. Acting as a focal point to receive information about Child Protection and safeguarding issues in and around the school or institution.
- 4.8.3.2. Chairing of the Child Protection and Safe Guarding Committee.
- 4.8.3.3. Coordinating activities of The Child Protection and Safeguarding Committee.

Receiving and managing all reports on Child Protection and Safeguarding matters at the school.

- 4.4.1.1. In consultation with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Committee manages the internal reporting protocol and referral procedures, and offers advice to the Head and Responsible Authority for purposes of external reporting and referral procedures.
- 4.4.1.2. Participating in various management functions of the school or institution to serve the interests of Child Protection and Safeguarding.
- 4.4.1.3. Regularly updating and informing the Responsible Authority and Head on all matters concerning Child Protection and Safeguarding at the school.
- 4.4.1.4. Working and liaising with Heads of other departments and various organs of the school or institution to streamline Child Protection and Safeguarding practices.

4.9.2.9. Developing networks and partnerships and successfully managing these for the efficiency of Child Protection and Safeguarding practices at the school.

4.9.2.10. In consultation with the Responsible Authority and Head, arranges for expert and / or professional help when needed at the school to support Child Protection and Safeguarding Practice.

School Governing Board

On the Board of Governors, a Board Seat shall be reserved for a Governor whose interests include the school governance's matters of Child Protection and Safeguarding.

4.4.2. School Development Committee



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A seat to be reserved for a committee member who has an interest in the school in matters of Child Protection and Safeguarding.

4.9.5. Workers Council/Workers Committee

A seat to be reserved for a committee member who has an interest in the school in matters of Child Protection and Safeguarding.

4.9.6. Teachers and Volunteers Council

A seat to be reserved for a committee member with an interest in the school in matters of Child Protection and Safeguarding.

4.9.7. **Child Participation and Inclusive Practices**

APPLE VALLEY will ensure that Children, Minors and Vulnerable people are included and participate in decisions and activities that pertain to their protection and safeguarding.

4.10. Ramifications of Misconduct

4.10.1. Where an allegation of Child Protection and Safeguarding violation is made, the accused person(s) will be immediately removed from all school or institutional activities and programs pending the outcome of all investigations. Similarly, where it is deemed expedient, the child or victim may also be removed temporarily to allow for a fair process.

4.10.2. Any disclosures by a child, minor or vulnerable person and, any reports of suspected abuse or violation and, all details of the subsequent investigation will be documented promptly.

4.10.3. All documentation of reports, of abuse, suspected abuse, investigations and outcomes of investigations will be held in a secure location at the school where a breach of privacy cannot occur.

4.10.4. Where there is a disclosure or report of an allegation of Child Protection and/or Safeguarding violation, APPLE VALLEY reserves the right to carry out disciplinary procedures and actions in accordance with the Laws and Constitution of Zimbabwe.



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