

Ellington Christian Nursery School
Abuse/ Neglect Policy

Policy Statement

The Ellington Christian Nursery School has a no tolerance approach to abuse and/or neglect. We believe that children are a gift from God and need to be treated with tenderness, respect, and love. With God's help, the staff of ECNS will do all that we can to ensure the safety and well-being of each precious child in our care.

Definitions

The following are definitions of abuse and neglect as stated in Connecticut's General Statutes 46b-120.

Child Abuse is defined as: a child who has had non-accidental physical injury(ies) inflicted upon him, or has injuries which are at variance with the history given of them, or is in a condition which is the result of maltreatment, such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment.

Child Neglect is defined as: a child who has been abandoned, is being denied proper care and attention physically, educationally, emotionally, or morally, or is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to his well-being.

Suspected Abuse at Home

If the staff of ECNS has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child in our care has been abused and/or neglected by a person responsible for the child's health, welfare or care, or by a person given access to the child by the responsible person, we are mandated by the Connecticut General Statutes, Section 17a-101 to file a

report. Oral reports to DCF (1-800-842-2288) or a law enforcement agency must be made within 12 hours of suspicion of abuse or neglect (Public Acts 02-106 and 02-138). Within 48 hours of making an oral report, a written report must then be made to DCF. Any staff providing information related to a report of abuse and neglect will be protected from discrimination or retaliation according to Connecticut General Statutes, Section 17a-101e.

Suspected Abuse at School

Anyone that believes that a child has been abused or neglected by one of our staff members must report directly to DCF or police, and also notify the Director of our Nursery School. The director will immediately suspend the staff member from the classroom with pay until the investigation is complete. The Director will then immediately notify the child's parent (or other person responsible for the child's care) and the ECNS Board of Administration that a report has been made. Our Pastor will then offer support and guidance to the family. While an investigation is begin conducted by DCF, the ECNS Board will conduct its own investigation by interviewing and observing staff, parents, and/or children. If, after the two investigations are complete, there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused by one of our staff, the suspension of the individual will remain in effect until the ECNS Board of Administration takes action.

Protection of Children during an Investigation

During any investigation of abuse and neglect, we will do all that we can to ensure the protection and anonymity of all children involved. If in the event that a child is in need of medical services due to abuse and neglect, the Director, Head Teacher, or a member of the ECNS Board will either accompany the child to a local medical facility or contact the medical consultant to discuss an appropriate course of action. DCF, the law enforcement agency, and/or the

ECNS Board will coordinate activities to minimize interviews with any child. Consent of the parent, guardian, or person responsible for the child's care will be obtained for any interview, unless there is strong reason to believe that such person or member of the child's household is the alleged perpetrator. When such consent is not required, ECNS will do all it can, to conduct the interview in the presence of a "disinterested adult" (typically, a person who is impartial and has no self-interest in the case).

Staff Awareness and Training

The above Discipline Policies will be reviewed annually, and then as needed, during Teacher In-Service meetings. Also reviewed will be indicators of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect.

Parent Awareness

A brief statement regarding the adoption of these policies for our facility and a brief discussion of the components will be discussed with all new and returning parents during an annual Open House in September. A written copy of the policy will be made available to all parents in the E.C.N.S. handbook.

Reviewed June, 2009