

**NEW SALEM/WENDELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
PROTOCOL AND PROCEDURES ON  
REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

All staff paid to work with and oversee children are mandated reporters and therefore legally obligated to report suspected child neglect or abuse to the Department of Children and Families. At Swift River School reports are made to the Principal who is the Designated Reporter. In the event the Principal or the Psychologist is unavailable, the head teacher and the nurse will consult with the Superintendent.

The Principal, the reporting staff member and other relevant personnel will confer and decide whether or not to report the situation to DCF. Once the Principal contacts DCF, the Principal shall file within 48-hours of the discovery of the suspected child abuse or neglect.

All staff involved in the report shall keep the report confidential. The principal shall have discretion whether to notify the parents/guardians that a report has been filed. All Swift River staff shall follow DCF protocol.

**DEFINITION OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

Abuse means deliberate infliction of physical or emotional injury which causes a substantial risk of death, of protracted impairment or serious physical or emotional disability or the loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ or the commission of a sex offense against a child as defined in the criminal laws of Massachusetts.\*\* (a list of specific injury definitions is available in the Principal's Office.).

Neglect means a condition in which a caretaker for a child deliberately or by extraordinary inattentiveness permits the child to experience avoidable suffering by failing to provide one or more of the ingredients deemed essential for developing a person's physical, intellectual and emotional capacities, such as adequate food, clothing, shelter, education or medical care or by failing to provide proper supervision or guardianship.\*\*

\*Chapter 119, Section 51A of the Massachusetts General Laws

\*\*Department of Children and Families Regulations, Chapter 4.21 (screening)

\*\*\*Chapter 119, Section 51B of the Massachusetts General Laws

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