**OBIYE ACADEMY**

**137 ABULOMA ROAD, PORT HARCOURT**

**(www.obiyeacademy.com)**

**Child Protection Policy**

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**1. Introduction**

The story of child protection is a pathetic one. Across the world, children remain vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Increasing number of children are at the mercy of individuals with intent to harm them; and those individuals are often at the heart of institutions working with children.

**2.0**Introducing Child Protection Policy

**2.1** What is Policy?

Definition and Meaning

Policies are clear simple statements of how an organisation intends to conduct its services, actions or business. They provide a set of guiding principles to help with decision making.

**2.2** What is Child’s Protection?

Definition and Meaning

Child Protection is the process of protecting children (collectively and severally) identified as either suffering or likely to suffer significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect. It involves measures and structures designed to prevent and respond to abuse and neglect.

Therefore, combining these two definitions a Child Protection Policy provides guidelines for organisations and their staff to create safe environment for children.

**3.0 General Policy Statement.**

1. Obiye Academy has a moral duty to ensure that it functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students.

Throughout these policies and procedures, reference is made to “children and young people”. This term is used to mean “the learners and students of Obiye Academy”. The school Management recognise that some adults (staff) are also vulnerable to abuse, accordingly, the procedures may be applied (with appropriate adaptations) to allegations of abuse and the protection of vulnerable adults.

The School Management / trustees is/are committed to ensuring that the school:

* Provides a safe environment for children and young people.
* Identifies children and young people who are suffering.
* Take(s) appropriate action to see that such children and young people are kept safe from harm.

In pursuit of these aims, the School Management will approve and annually review policies and procedures with the aim of:

* Raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people and the promotion of a safe environment for the children and young people.
* providing procedures for reporting concerns.
* Establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff.
* Ensuring the recruitment of responsible staff.
1. The School Management has nominated Mr Ibrahim Moses, the Positive Behavioural Support Team Chairman (PBST) as the lead person with special responsibility for child protection issues for the Academic year 2021/2022.
2. Staff and volunteers working with the students will receive periodic training adequate to familiarise them with child protection issues and responsibilities and the school’s procedures and policies.
3. An annual report will be required from the designated senior member of staff with lead responsibility for child protection which reviews how the duties have been discharged.
4. **The School recognises the following as definitions of abuse:**
	1. **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse causes harm to a child’s person. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may be done deliberately or recklessly, or be the result of a deliberate failure to prevent injury occurring.

**ii. Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent or severe failure to meet a child or young person’s basic physical and/or psychological needs. It will result in serious impairment of the child’s health or development. E.g. Constant hunger, poor personal hygiene, emaciated, poor state of clothing, frequent lateness or non-attendance at school, untreated medical problems and low self-esteem.

**iii. Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves a child or young person being forced or coerced into participating in or watching sexual activity. It is not necessary for the child to be aware that the activity is sexual and the apparent consent of the child is irrelevant. Some signs of sexually abused persons are; over familiarity with adults or provocative behaviour and displaying sexual knowledge beyond age group.

**iv. Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse occurs where there is persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection. It causes severe and adverse effects on the child’s or young person’s behaviour and emotional development, resulting in low self-worth. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse.

**4.0 Designated Staff with Responsibility for Child Protection i.e. Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility**

1. The designated senior member of staff with lead responsibility for child protection issues is

*Name: Mr Ibrahim Moses*

*Job title: Chairman PBST*

*Contact details*;

08055182976

1. He has a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness within the school of issues relating to the welfare of students and the promotion of a safe environment.
2. He will have responsibility for making new staff aware of the existing child protection policy.
3. He will be the main contact point for Child Protection issues and will have contact details of relevant organisations available for employees and volunteers. This list will usually include contact details of relevant individuals and child protection unit.

**5.0 Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse and Procedure for Reporting Concerns.**

If a child or young person tells a member of staff about possible abuse:

* Listen carefully and stay calm.
* Do not interview the child, but question normally and without pressure, in order to be sure that you understand what the child is telling you.
* Do not put words into the child’s mouth.
* Reassure the child that by telling you, they have done the right thing.
* Inform the child that you must pass the information on, but that only those that need to know about it will be told. Inform them of, to whom you will report the matter.,
* Note the main points carefully.
* Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what the child said, did and your questions, etc.
* Staff should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves, but should report them immediately to the Designated Person.

**6.0 Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Members of Staff***.*

The procedures apply to all staff, whether trustees, administrative, management or support, as well as to volunteers. The word “staff” is used for ease of description.

1. Obiye Academy recognises that an allegation of child abuse made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and those investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.

1. The Organisation recognises that the Children Act states that the welfare of the child is the paramount concern. It is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual’s reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within the institution will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way.

**7.0 Checklist for ensuring Safer Recruitment and Selection Procedure.**

Obiye Academy has recruitment and selection procedures that takes account of the following:

* The procedures apply to staff and volunteers who may work with children.
* The posts or roles are clearly defined.
* The key selection criteria for the post or role are identified.
* Vacancies are advertised widely in order to ensure a diversity of applicants.
* Professional and character references are requested.
* Previous employment history are verified.
* A variety of selection techniques (eg. qualifications, previous experience, interview, reference checks)are used.

**Child Protection guidelines checklist**

Designated liason person: Monseiur Jean Bankole -Students Affairs Officer

Deputy designated liason person: Any member of the PBST

If a child discloses information to you ,

* Listen
* Do not ask leading question.
* Offer reassurance but do not promise not to tell.
* Explain that other adults may needs to be told.
* Do not stop the child speaking.
* Do not over react or comment.
* Inform DLP-If you have reasonable suspicion or reasonable grounds for concern that a child is at risk or has suffered abuse, the DLP should contact the health officers for advice.
* At the earliest opportunity record accurately what the child has said – using the child’s own words, record date/time and contest of the disclosure. Use child’s registration number NOT child’s name.
* Facts only.
* Sketch signs of physical injury if appropriate.
* Retain records for period of 5 years.

The following should also be reported to the DLP;

* An account from a person who saw a child being abused.
* Injury consistent with abuse.
* Dysfunctional behaviour.
* Implausible explanation for injury or behaviour.

 **CONSISTENT EVIDENCE OVER PERIOD OF TIME THAT A CHILD IS BEING EMOTIONALLY OR PHYSICALLY NEGLECTED.**

* School is asked to monitor the situation.
* Formal report is requested, sent by DLP and on receipt, case is allocated to a social worker.
* Preliminary inquiry – Screening process.

**Possible outcomes**

* Case closed.
* Family support.
* Child Protection Plan.

**8.0 Child Protection and Disciplinary measure in Obiye Academy.**

We are all aware of children misconduct in school which causes distraction to their peers and contributes to negative effects on children’s academic performance in school environments.

The question is to know whether the child protection policy eradicates disciplinary measures in a school system.

Well the reality **seems** to have to do with ethnicity where our cultural, social, ancestral and national experiences are quite different.

As stated in our Disciplinary Policy, Obiye Academy is committed to the “Every Child Matters” agenda, to provide the equality of opportunity for all staff and students regardless of colour, ethnic, origin, sex or ability.

**The aims of the Disciplinary Policy are to:**

* To foster an environment in which everyone is treated fairly.
* To create an environment where good behaviour is encouraged and reinforced.
* To define acceptable standards of behaviour.
* To encourage consistency of response to both positive and unacceptable behaviour.
* To encourage self-esteem and self-discipline.
* To ensure that the school’s expectations and strategies are widely known and understood.

Students have Rights and Responsibilities and we are poised to protect these Rights and encourage Responsibilities. There are rules which apply to every part of school life: inside and outside the classroom, in corridors, hallways, playground, students’ hostels, the school pool, sport arena, dinning room, etc.

(kindly refer to school’s **Code** of **Conduct** and **Disciplinary Procedure.**)

**8.2Examination Malpractice/ Disciplinary Measures**

Generally speaking, examination is a process through which students are evaluated or tested to find out the quality or knowledge they have acquired within a specific time. This examination may be internal or external.

Examination malpractice could be defined as cheating at examination or any act intended to benefit or give undue advantage to oneself or another by deceit or fraud before,

during and after examination.

**Details of Examination Malpractices/Misconduct and Disciplinary Measures.**

Disciplinary actions as prescribed by Obiye Academy will be taken against any staff, student or candidate found guilty of Examination Malpractice or Misconduct. Such Malpractices and Penalties are as follows according to Examination Malpractice Act, Cap E15 Laws of Federation of Nigeria, 2004.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| S/N | MALPRACTICE | PROPOSED PENALTIES |
| 1. | Bringing into the examination hall materials relating to the examination. | i. cancellation of that particular paper.ii. Cancellation of all of candidates for the particular examination**.****iii.** Suspension for two diets. |
| 2. | Receiving or giving assistance from/ to another candidate on matters relating to the paper during the cause of the examination without permission. | i. As in (i), (ii) and (iii) above |
| 3. | Receiving or giving assistance not necessarily relating to the examination without permission. | i. Cancellation of score relating to the particular person. |
| 4. | Copying from another candidate without the candidate’s knowledge. | i. Cancellation of all papers of candidate for the particular examination.ii. Suspension for two diets. |
| 5. | Receiving assistance from invigilators on matters relating to the examination.  | i. Cancellation of that particular paper.ii. Invigilator to be referred to the investigating panel. |
| 6. | Taking away answer script. | i. Written warning.ii. Cancellation of that paper. |
| 7 | Being rude to the invigilator as first offender. | i. Written warning. |
| 8. | Presentation of forged result/document to register for or write the examination. | Backlisting of the candidate. |
| 9. | Noise making or disturbing other candidates during exams. | Candidate to remain standing for between 10 -20 minutes. |
| 10. | Submitting answer script with prepared one. | Blacklisting of the candidate. |
| 11. | Bringing in mobile phone or any communication aid to the examination hall. | Candidate to be barred from continuing a particular paper. |
| 12. | Leaving the examination hall without permission. | Barred from continuing the examination. |
| 13. | Candidate caught cheating while outside or in the toilet. | Cancellation of the particular paper. |
| 14. | Being rude to the invigilator as a second offender. | i. Written warning.ii. Barred from the examination for one diet. |
| 15. | Candidates coming late for more than 30 minutes. | i. The candidate should be prevented from entering the examination hall. |