

Child abuse

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PROTOCOL FOR INTERVENTION IN CASES OF SUSPECTED/EVIDENT CHILD ABUSE

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this protocol is to establish clear, immediate and coordinated action in response to any suspicion, indication, disclosure or evidence of a possible situation of abuse of an underage pupil, guaranteeing their protection, avoiding secondary victimisation and ensuring that the competent bodies are informed and, where appropriate, that the case is notified to the Unified Child Abuse Register (RUMI). The school adopts Instruction 38/2024 of the Balearic Islands Regional Ministry of Education as its technical reference.

General principles:

- Best interests and immediate protection of the child: their safety and wellbeing will take precedence in all decisions.
- Confidentiality and minimum disclosure: information will be limited to the professionals who need to intervene and will be kept securely.
- Duty to report: absolute certainty is not required; a reasonable suspicion or the presence of indicators requires the procedure to be activated and the corresponding report to be made. Action will be taken promptly, avoiding duplicate interviews or unnecessary actions.

BASIC ASPECTS

Child Abuse:

A non-accidental action, omission or negligent treatment that deprives the child of their rights and wellbeing, that interferes with and/or threatens their physical, psychological or social development, and whose perpetrators may be individuals, institutions or society itself.

Indicators of abuse:

The reference indicators will be those set out in the Guide for the detection and notification of child abuse in the educational setting and in the current RUMI instruments of the Balearic Islands. The presence of a single indicator does not in itself confirm a situation of abuse; all the available information must be assessed, without the school carrying out an investigation.

Physical, emotional, behavioural, family, social or school indicators may appear. School staff will record observable facts, dates and relevant statements objectively, avoiding diagnostic interpretations or conclusions that are the responsibility of the competent services.

Types of abuse:

1. According to the perpetrators:

- *Within the family*: the perpetrators are relatives of the child, mainly first-degree: parents (biological or not), grandparents, siblings, uncles and aunts, etc.
- *Outside the family*: the perpetrators are not relatives of the child, or the relationship is very distant (second-degree relatives) and there are no family ties.
- *Institutional*: abuse caused by any legislation, programme, service, action or procedure of public or private authorities and their actions when they violate the basic rights of the victim.
- *Social*: when there is no specific person responsible for the abuse, but a series of circumstances external to the lives of the parents and the child make adequate care of the child impossible.

1. According to intensity:

- *Mild and/or moderate abuse*: these situations are not considered urgent, as there are physical, psychological and/or social indicators of abuse that can be addressed within the child's social and family environment.
- *Serious or urgent abuse*: these situations arise when physical, psychological and/or social indicators of abuse are detected that endanger the child's integrity and wellbeing.

1. According to the specific actions or omissions that constitute the abuse inflicted:

- *Physical abuse*: a deliberate physical action that causes or may cause physical injury to the child.
- *Neglect*:
 - Physical neglect: when the basic needs related to the child's health and physical wellbeing are not adequately met. This includes situations such as continued lack of personal hygiene, clothing unsuitable for the weather, insufficient or unhealthy food, absence of necessary medical check-ups, lack of adequate rest or sleep, unsafe housing conditions or a lack of adult supervision appropriate to the child's age.
 - Emotional neglect: occurs when the child does not receive the affection, emotional support or protection necessary for their psychological development. It may manifest itself through indifference to their emotional needs, lack of affection, failure to respond to situations of distress, continued exposure to family conflict or lack of interest in their emotional and social wellbeing.
 - Educational neglect: failing to guarantee the child's right to education and academic development. This includes repeated unjustified absence from school, failure to follow up on their schooling, lack of cooperation with the school, not providing basic school materials or neglecting specific educational support needs once they have been identified.

- Neglect of supervision and protection: arises when those responsible do not provide supervision appropriate to the child's age and maturity, exposing them to situations of physical, social or emotional risk. For example, leaving the child alone for long periods without appropriate supervision, allowing dangerous behaviour or failing to protect them from situations of violence or abuse.
- *Emotional abuse*: any action, usually verbal, or attitude towards a child that causes or may cause psychological harm.
- *Sexual abuse/assault*: any behaviour in which a child is used by an adult or another minor as a means of obtaining sexual stimulation or gratification. This definition includes all offences against sexual freedom and integrity.

1. Description of possible situations:

- *Suspected abuse*: cases in which there are indications of abuse based on statements by third parties but without verified data, or about which there are doubts regarding the indicators present in the child's history.
- *Evident abuse*: the criteria for evident abuse are physical and psychological injuries, disclosure by the child themselves or a report by a family member or professional.
- *Serious or urgent abuse*: *there is a danger to the child's integrity or wellbeing and an immediate protection measure may be necessary. Situations of sexual abuse or assault, sexual exploitation or trafficking, including suspicion thereof, will be treated as serious or urgent and the corresponding specific regional protocol will also be applied.*
- *Mild or moderate abuse*: *there are indicators that require intervention and follow-up, but no immediate need for protection is apparent. This classification guides the notification process and does not exempt the school from reporting the case.*

ACTION PROCEDURE

PREVENTION

The school promotes safe and caring environments through emotional and relationships and sex education, violence prevention, staff training, guidance for families and coordination with community resources. These actions will be integrated into the school's documents and plans and reviewed periodically.

ACTION WHEN IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE IS NEEDED

If there are injuries, evidence of physical or sexual assault, a current risk to the child's integrity or a need for urgent medical care, the Management—or the person to whom it delegates— will prioritise immediate protection: it will contact the police or the school liaison police officer where appropriate, call 061 if medical assistance is required and follow their instructions for transfer and accompaniment. The RUMI notification will also be made without delay. If it is suspected that a

family member may be responsible, who should be informed and how will be assessed together with the competent services.

Detection and notification:

Detection must be as early as possible. Any professional who observes indicators, receives a disclosure or learns of facts consistent with a possible situation of abuse must act without waiting to confirm the facts themselves.

Notification:

Notification is a legal and professional duty. Absolute certainty is not required: a reasonable suspicion is sufficient. The person who detects the case must report it immediately to the Management and may seek the advice of the Guidance Department to make the notification and organise the school's response.

- In the event of a suspicion, indication, disclosure or evidence, the person who detects it will immediately inform the Management and the responsible school counsellor. If the child makes a spontaneous disclosure, they will be listened to calmly, without questioning, without asking them to repeat their account unnecessarily and without asking leading questions. Where necessary, their words will be recorded as literally as possible, and judgements, promises of secrecy or confrontations with the alleged perpetrator will be avoided.
- The person who detected the case will make the notification through RUMI, with the advice of the Guidance Department if needed. A copy of the document generated will be given to the Management and an internal record of the actions taken will be kept. The school will not delay notification in order to carry out its own checks or investigations.
- The RUMI application forwards the notification to the competent service according to its seriousness. When the situation requires immediate protection or assistance, the emergency services and/or the police will also be contacted and their instructions followed.
- **IMAS** – Child Protection Service of Mallorca.

Telephone: 971 763 325.

- **Directorate General for Children, Youth and Families** (Government of the Balearic Islands)

Telephone: 971 177 155

Unified Child Abuse Register (RUMI):

Notification will be made using the RUMI form for the educational setting, describing facts and indicators objectively and providing only the relevant information available.

The seriousness will be indicated according to the current criteria: mild/moderate or serious/urgent. If in doubt, the protection of the child will take priority and advice will be sought without delaying the report.

Notification will be processed through the current official RUMI channel. Once completed, the system refers the case to the competent service according to the seriousness indicated.

For as long as the current RUMI instruction remains in force, after making the notification an email will be sent to rumi@dgmenors.caib.es with the subject «Nueva notificación RUMI» (New RUMI notification), without including any personal data of the child in the message. rumi@dgmenors.caib.es

Referral according to seriousness:

In mild or moderate situations, the RUMI notification is sent to the basic community social services, which will assess the case and coordinate the necessary actions.

In serious or urgent situations, the notification is sent to the specialised child protection services. In cases of sexual abuse or assault, sexual exploitation or trafficking, including suspicion thereof, the specific regional protocol will also be applied and no examinations or investigative interviews will be carried out by the school.

Informing the family:

As a general rule, the family will be informed of the indicators observed, the notification made and the support procedure. The family will not be informed beforehand when doing so could increase the risk to the child, provoke an aggressive response, jeopardise an investigation or hinder protective action. In these cases, the instructions of the competent services will be followed.

CASE MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

When necessary, the Management will call a case management meeting with the Management, the Guidance Department, the form tutor, the person who detected the situation and, where appropriate, external professionals. The available information, the agreed actions, those responsible and the Guidance professional in charge of follow-up will be recorded in writing. When required or useful for the assessment, the school will provide the corresponding socio-educational report to the competent administration.

FOLLOW-UP

No member of the school should investigate the facts or question the child, the family or the alleged perpetrator. The school's role is to detect, protect, report, cooperate with the competent services and maintain educational and emotional support.

Efforts will be made to ensure that the child has a safe adult of reference at school (for example, the form tutor, school counsellor or a member of the senior leadership team), so that they do not have to repeat their account to different professionals. Their pace, privacy and emotional needs will be respected.

After notification, the school will continue to observe and record only relevant information: new indicators, emotional, physical, academic or behavioural changes, absences and significant events. Records must contain specific dates and details, distinguishing observed facts from information reported by third parties.

Records and communications will be kept confidential, with access restricted to those who need to intervene. The information will not be shared through informal communication channels or disseminated to the teaching team as a whole beyond what is strictly necessary for the protection and educational care of the pupil.

The Management and the Guidance Department will cooperate with community social services, specialised child protection services, the police, the Public Prosecutor's Office or other competent bodies when they request information or coordination, providing relevant and objective school information within the applicable legal framework.

The Guidance Department will coordinate internal follow-up and, together with the form tutor and the teaching team, will assess the need for temporary educational support measures, organisational adjustments or emotional support. These measures will not replace protective action or the intervention of external services.

CHANGE LOG

Revision	Change	Date
0	Initial edition of the document. No changes	18/06/26