

MANDATORY REPORTING

1. Rationale

1.1 All children have a right to feel safe, and to be safe at school. As teachers, we have a legal and moral responsibility to respond to serious incidences involving abuse and neglect of the children with whom we have contact, and to report instances that we believe involve physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect.

2. Aims

2.1 To ensure that children's rights to be safe are maintained and each child is protected against physical and sexual abuse, and neglect.

3. Implementation

3.1 Principal Class members and Teaching Staff are deemed Mandatory reporters.

3.2 Mandatory reporters, who believe on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse, must report their concerns to Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Child Protection.

3.3 All other school staff members who form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person:

- is in need of protection, should report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police.
- is displaying sexually abusive behaviours and is in need of therapeutic treatment should report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection.

3.4 To make a mandatory report, to report child abuse or child protection concerns staff should follow the steps listed in Appendix 1.

3.5 If staff have significant concerns for the wellbeing of a child or young person they should report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection or Child FIRST.

3.5 In cases where staff have concerns about a child or young person, they should also discuss their concerns with the principal or a member of the school leadership team

3.6 Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 must disclose that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence, except in limited circumstances such as where the information has already been reported to DHHS Child Protection.

3.7 New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures as part of their induction procedure.

3.8 Staff will be reminded of mandatory responsibilities annually and will complete the DET eLearning module *Protecting Children – Mandatory and other Reporting Obligations*

4 Evaluation

4.1 This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the school's three-year review cycle. This policy was ratified by School Council on 19th October 2015.

APPENDIX 1

This table describes how to make a mandatory report, to report child abuse or child protection concerns.

| Step | Description |
|------|--|
| 1 | <p>In case of emergency or if a child is in immediate danger contact Triple Zero (000) or the local police station.</p> <p>Alternatively, to report concerns about the immediate safety of a child within their family unit to DHHS Child Protection, call the Child Protection Crisis Line on 13 12 78 (24 hours 7 days, toll free)</p> |
| 2 | <p>Keep comprehensive notes that are dated and include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ information that has led to concerns about the child's safety (e.g. physical injuries, student behaviour) ▪ the source of this information (e.g. observation of behaviour, report from child or another person) ▪ the actions taken as a result of the concerns (e.g. consultation with principal, report to DHHS Child Protection etc.). |
| 3 | <p>Discuss any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of students with the principal or a member of the school leadership team. The individual staff member should then make their own assessment about whether they should make a report about the child or young person and to whom the report should be made.</p> |
| 4 | <p>Gather the relevant information necessary to make the report. This should include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ full name, date of birth, and residential address of the child or young person ▪ the details of the concerns and the reasons for those concerns ▪ the individual staff member's involvement with the child and young person ▪ details of any other agencies who may be involved with the child or young person, if known. |
| 5 | <p>Make a report to the relevant agency</p> <p>To report concerns that are life threatening phone 000 or the local police station. To find the nearest Victoria Police Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team contact your local police station or click here)</p> <p>To report concerns about the immediate safety of a child within their family unit to DHHS Child Protection, call the Child Protection Crisis Line on 13 12 78 (24 hrs 7 days, toll free)</p> <p>To report concerns to DHHS Child Protection, contact your local child protection office.</p> |
| 6 | <p>Make a written record of the report which includes the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the date and time of the report and a summary of what was reported ▪ the name and position of the person who made the report and the person who received the report. |
| 7 | <p>Notify relevant school staff and/or Department staff of a report to DHHS Child Protection or Child FIRST. For Victorian government schools, the allegations must be reported to the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ principal or member of the school leadership team ▪ Department's Security Services Unit on (03) 9589 6266 ▪ relevant Regional Office ▪ Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit on (03) 9637 2934 or (03) 9637 2487. <p>In the case of international students, the principal must notify the International Education Division on (03) 9637 2990 to ensure that appropriate support is arranged for the student.</p> <p>In the case of Koorie students, the principal must notify the Regional Office to ensure that the regional Koorie support officer can arrange appropriate support for the student.</p> |