



## Mandatory Reporting Policy

### Background

All children have a right to feel safe and to be safe. Staff 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.

### Purpose

To:

- Ensure that children's rights to be safe are maintained and each child is protected against physical and sexual abuse, and neglect.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of school staff in protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- Enable staff to identify the indicators of a child or young person who may be in need of protection.
- Make a report of a child or young person who may be in need of protection.
- Comply with reporting obligations under child protection law and criminal law.
- Follow DET Policy on Mandatory Reporting which can be found at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/childprotection.aspx>

### Implementation

- All members of the Teaching Service 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 Human Services (DHS) Child Protection.
- All other school staff who believe on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection or therapeutic treatment or have significant concerns, are encouraged to report their concerns to DHS Child Protection, Victoria Police or Child FIRST.
- **All adults** will be required to report to police if they know or reasonably believe that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16. It will be a criminal offence to fail to comply with this obligation.
- In cases where staff have concerns about a child or young person, they should discuss their concerns with the Principal, Assistant Principal or a member of the school Leadership Team.
- The Principal or Assistant Principal will keep a record of all discussions about a student with whom there is a concern. Staff are also encouraged to keep their own notes. If appropriate staff can put an entry on GradeXpert.
- All reports, notes, discussions and information will be kept confidential.
- New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures.
- Staff will be reminded of their mandatory reporting responsibilities and must complete the annual online training as per DET requirements and give their certificate of completion to the Assistant Principal.
- Types of child abuse include physical, sexual and emotional abuse; neglect and medical neglect; family violence and human trafficking (including forced marriage). Other reports to DHS Child Protection may be needed for risk-taking behavior, female genital mutilation, risk to unborn child or a child or young person exhibiting sexually-abusive behaviours.
- If staff form a 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' (this is not the same as having proof but is more than mere rumour or speculation) that a child is being abused then they should make a report to the Department of Human Services (DHS).



- Staff should consult the Step by Step Guide to Making a Report to Child Protection or Child FIRST:  
[http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/Flowchart\\_Mandatory\\_Reporting\\_Sep\\_2010.pdf](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/Flowchart_Mandatory_Reporting_Sep_2010.pdf) to assist them with making a report.
- The school will comply with any visits/interviews requested by DHS.
- Members of the Department of Human Services, or associated support or intervention services that visit the school following a notification, will interview staff and children only in the presence of a Principal class member or his/her nominee.
- The school will continue to monitor students who are at risk or have had a mandatory report made.

## Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every three years as part of the school's cyclic review.

## Certification

This policy was endorsed by School Council at the meeting held on 19 May 2015.

Signed.....

*Principal*

Signed.....

*School Council President*