



MANDATORY REPORTING POLICY PROCEDURES

RATIONALE:

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

AIMS:

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

IMPLEMENTATION:

- All members of the Teaching Service are mandated by law to report signs or risks of harm, disclosures of abuse or neglect, or a reasonable belief a student is subjected to sexual abuse or physical harm.
- New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures as part of their induction procedure.
- Staff will be reminded of mandatory responsibilities annually.
- All concerns must be reported immediately to the Principal, or in his/her absence, the Assistant Principal.
- The Principal will keep a record of all discussions about a student with whom there is a concern.
- If a belief has been formed by a staff member that a mandatory report must be made, a "Mandatory Reporting Information Sheet" available from the Principal must be completed and filed in the Principal's office.
- The teacher and/or the Principal class officer will contact the Department of Human Services by telephone as soon as possible to make an official notification on:
 - **03) 9479 6222 or after school hours crisis line 131278**
 - **North-Western Region on 9488 488**
- In the case of international students, the principal must notify the International Education Division of the Department on (03) 9637 2990 to ensure that appropriate support is arranged for the student.
- The police must be contacted when allegations of physical assault, sexual assault or sexual harassment occur.
- Members of 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.
- All "Mandatory Reporting Information Sheets" remain filed in the Principal's office.
- All reports, information sheets and subsequent discussions and information are to be recorded and remain strictly confidential.
- All incidents to be monitored, and any subsequent signs or indications of abuse are also to be reported.
- While only mandated by law to report incidents of physical and sexual abuse, and neglect; teachers are also encouraged to report incidents of emotional abuse or neglect.
- Students, who disclose to staff a desire to harm themselves or others, must be reported by staff to the principal.
- Mandatory Reporting Modules & PD
- Legal Obligations – see Appendix A

EVALUATION:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year cycle, next review

This policy was ratified by school council on the

Reference: School Policy & Advisory Guide –Mandatory reporting

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

Appendix A: Legal obligations

Type of Reporting	By Whom	To Whom
<p><i>Mandatory Reporting</i></p> <p>Mandatory reporters must make a report as soon as practicable if, in the course of practising their profession or carrying out their duties, they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection, as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse, and the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.</p>	<p><i>Mandatory reporters</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers registered to teach or who have permission to teach pursuant to the <i>Education and Training Reform Act 2006</i> (Vic) • Principals of government and non-government schools • Registered medical practitioners • Nurses • All members of the police force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS Child Protection
<p><i>Child in need of protection</i></p> <p>Any person may make a report if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection for any of the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child has been abandoned and there is no other suitable person who is willing and able to care for the child. • The child's parents are dead or incapacitated and there is no other suitable person who is willing and able to care for the child. • The child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of physical injury and the parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child. • The child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of sexual abuse and their parents are unable or unwilling to protect 	<p><i>Any Person</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS Child Protection • Victoria Police

<p>the child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child has suffered or is likely to suffer emotional or psychological harm and the parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child. • The child's physical development or health has been, or is likely to be significantly harmed and the parents are unable or unwilling to provide basic care, or effective medical or other remedial care. 		
<p><i>Child in need of therapeutic treatment</i></p> <p>Any person may make a report if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child who is 10 years of age or over, but under 15 years of age, is in need of therapeutic treatment because he or she has exhibited sexually-abusive behaviours.</p>	<p><i>Any Person</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS Child Protection
<p><i>Significant concerns about wellbeing of a child</i></p> <p>Any person may make a report if they have significant concerns for the wellbeing of a child.</p>	<p><i>Any Person</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS Child Protection • Child FIRST

Making a report – further details refer to:

School Policy & Advisory Guide

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