

MANDATORY REPORTING

SCHOOL SPECIFIC POLICY

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 childrens' 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 of physical and/or sexual abuse, and neglect.
- 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.
- All other school staff members who form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person:
is in need of protection, must 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.
- Any staff member 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.
- New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures.
- Staff will be reminded of mandatory responsibilities regularly.
- 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 sexual or physical abuse or neglect has taken place a record of this disclosure must be recorded using the school's leadership communication format.
- The teacher and/or the principal class officer will contact the DHHS by telephone as soon as possible to make an official notification on:
1300 360 391 or after school hours crisis line 131278
- Members of the DHHS, 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 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.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

August, 2016