

CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING

PURPOSE

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the DET Child Protection - Reporting Obligations policy.

SCOPE

To define the roles and responsibilities of school staff in protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and to enable staff to:

- identify indicators that a child or young person may be in need of protection.
- make a report about a child or young person who may be in need of protection
- comply with reporting obligations under child protection law and criminal law and fulfil their duty of care.

GUIDELINES

1. All staff who are Victorian Institute of Teaching (**VIT**) registered teachers (including principals) or who have been granted permission to teach by the VIT are 'mandatory reporters'. This means that in the course of undertaking their professional duties, they must report to the Department of Health and Human Services (**DHHS**) Child Protection a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from significant harm as a result of sexual abuse or physical injury and the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child. They must report as soon as practicable after forming the belief.
2. Any person, including non-mandated school staff, is required to make a report to Child Protection or Victoria Police when they believe that a child or young person is at risk of harm and in need of protection, and the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.
3. School staff have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to protect the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care. If a staff member has concerns about the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care, it is important to take immediate action. In the case of a child who may be in need of protection or therapeutic treatment, or where there are significant concerns about the wellbeing of a child, school staff can discharge this duty of care by taking action which includes the following:
 - Reporting their concerns to Child Protection, Victoria Police or another appropriate agency
 - Notifying the principal or a member of the school leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns.
4. As part of their initial induction and ongoing employment training, staff will be informed of child protection reporting requirements and Department policy and will be provided with supporting documentation in their staff handbook. Staff will be updated regularly as to their reporting obligations.

ACHIEVEMENT MEASURES

VIT registration of teachers

100% completion of staff online training modules as provided by the Department.

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was ratified by school council on 22nd May, 2019 and is required for update in May 2022.