



MANDATORY REPORTING

POLICY

Rationale:

The challenge of protecting children is everyone's responsibility: parents, schools, communities, governments and businesses. The Department strongly encourages all school staff to protect and preserve the safety, health and wellbeing of all children and young people.

Aims:

To protect children and young people from abuse and neglect by ensuring school staff under section 184 of the *Children Youth and Families Act 2005* (CYFA):

- understand their mandatory reporting responsibilities and duty of care obligations to protect children and young people from child abuse including physical and sexual abuse
- know how to make a mandatory report to the Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Protection when they have formed a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm
- are able to identify and be aware of the indicators of abuse.

Implementation:

- Any person who is registered as a teacher under the *Education and Training Reform Act (2006)*, or any person who has been granted to teach under the Act, including principals, is mandated to make a report to the Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Protection.
- School staff should discuss any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of students with the school principal or member of the school leadership team, especially if they have a suspicion of possible abuse but have not formed a belief at that time. If a principal or member of the school leadership team does not believe that a mandatory report is warranted, this does not discharge the teacher of their obligation to do so if they have formed a reasonable belief that abuse may have occurred. If the teacher's concerns continue, even after consultation with the principal, that teacher is still legally obliged to make a mandatory report of their concerns.
- Non-mandated staff members who believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection are encouraged to speak to their principal as well as being able to make a report to DHS Child Protection.
- School staff who have concerns about a child or young person because they have been made aware of possible harm via their involvement in the community external to their professional role may make a (protective) report to DHS Child Protection.
- The challenge of protecting children is everyone's responsibility: parents, schools, communities, governments and businesses. The Department strongly encourages all school staff to protect and preserve the safety, health and wellbeing of all children and young people.

This policy should be read in conjunction with relevant legislation and the DEECD Policy and Advisory Guide: sections relating to *but not limited to*:

- Child Protection -Mandatory Reporting
- Concurrent Duty of Care Types of child abuse Indicators of harm
- Making a mandatory report
- Investigation
- Duty of care
- Police and DHS Interviews
- Responding to Student Sexual Assault

DEECD Policy and Advisory Guide:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/spag/safety/protection/childprotection.htm>

Evaluation:

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

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

2014