

Muhammadiyah Australia College

CHILD SAFETY - MANDATORY AND OTHER REPORTING OBLIGATIONS POLICY & PROCEDURES



Endorsed on:	April 2026
Endorsed by:	Board of Directors
Next Review:	April 2027

Rationale

Muhammadiyah Australia College is committed to protecting the children and young people under our care. The College has developed this policy as a guide to all staff and employees in meeting their responsibilities in this area. College staff and employees are required to report, and respond to any concerns about, or incidents of, child abuse or neglect towards children or young people to whom services are provided. They are required to respond to abuse or neglect perpetrated by adults within our organisation or by other persons.

Muhammadiyah Australia College takes seriously its responsibility to deliver an educational environment that is caring, nurturing and safe. The College's Child Safety Statement of Commitment to Child Safety clearly articulates our commitment to establish and maintain an environment where the safety of every child is paramount.

This policy is based on the legislated requirements of **Ministerial Order 1359 - Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools and school boarding premises** (Ministerial Order 1359) which provides the framework for child safety in schools and school boarding premises.

This document applies to all aspects of the College programs. The application of this policy/procedure incorporates school activities and all other external activities including sporting events, camps and excursions, as well as special events that are conducted, organised or attended by the College.

Purpose

This policy will ensure that all College teachers and non-teaching staff, volunteers, board members and members of the Muhammadiyah Australia College community understand their roles and legal responsibilities in protecting children and young people from child abuse and harm and to take appropriate action in accordance with the law.

College staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers and College Board members must:

- understand their various legal obligations to report which apply to allegations or incidents of child abuse;
- take other reasonable steps to discharge the duty of care that may be owed to the child or young person;
- make a report about a child or young person who has been, is being, or is at risk of being abused to the appropriate reporting authorities.

Scope

At Muhammadiyah Australia College, all staff (teachers and non-teaching staff), volunteers, contractors and other service providers must understand and abide by their professional and legal obligations to implement child abuse and child safety policies, protocols and practices.

This includes understanding their obligations to respond to and report to relevant authorities on any matters relating to child abuse and child neglect. It encompasses obligations of mandated reporters to report their concerns to the appropriate authorities and for all adults to meet the reporting requirements relating to failure to disclose, failure to protect and the grooming offence.

This policy also addresses the responsibility of the College Board and Principal to make a report under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

1. Mandatory Reporting

Mandatory reporting refers to the legal requirement of certain professional groups (mandatory reporters) to report a **reasonable belief** of child **physical or sexual abuse** to child protection authorities.

Mandatory reporters within the College include, but are not limited to, the Principal, all registered teachers, school counsellors and people of religious ministry.

A full list of Mandatory Reporters is included in Appendix 1.

When a mandatory report must be made

A mandatory report must be made if – during their professional work or carrying out the duties of their office, position or employment – a mandatory reporter:

- forms ‘a belief on reasonable grounds’ that:

A child aged 17 or younger is ‘in need of protection’ because:

- the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm because of physical injury or sexual abuse, and
- the child’s parents have not protected or are unlikely to protect the child from that harm.

Forming a belief on reasonable grounds

The concept of a “belief on reasonable grounds” requires a person to consider whether another person, when faced with similar information, would also draw the same conclusion. It is a low threshold.

A person may have a belief on reasonable grounds, such that a mandatory report should be made, if:

- the person witnesses the physical or sexual abuse of a child;
- a child says that they have been physically or sexually abused;
- a child shows physical or behavioural signs of being physically or sexually abused;
- a child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused;
- someone who knows the child says that the child has been physically or sexually abused.

Where a staff member is unsure of the reasonable belief threshold having been met, they must seek guidance from the Principal.

Child in need of protection

A child may need protection if they have experienced or are at risk of significant harm, and their parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect them from that harm. Significant harm may relate to:

- physical injury
- sexual abuse
- emotional or intellectual development
- physical development or health
- abandonment or parental incapacity.

Mandatory reporters are required to report in relation to significant harm as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse. They may also choose to report in relation to other types of significant harm.

Mandatory reporters must make a report to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Child Protection (Child Protection), 'as soon as practicable', after they have formed a belief on reasonable grounds.

Indications of child abuse

Child abuse includes:

- any act committed against a child involving a sexual offence or grooming;
- inflicting on a child any physical violence or serious emotional or psychological harm and serious neglect of a child.

Further information about recognising different types of child abuse can be accessed at this [link](#).

Making a mandatory report

A mandatory reporter should make a report to Child Protection as soon as practicable after forming a belief. A report should be made on each occasion a reporter becomes aware of any reasonable grounds for their belief.

It is a criminal offence not to report in these circumstances and may result in the mandatory reporter being prosecuted and a court imposing a fine.

College mandatory reporters must also inform the Principal of their intention to make a report. This will enable the Principal to provide appropriate support to the affected student and their family, where appropriate.

If the Principal does not wish to make a mandatory report, this does not discharge the mandated staff member's obligation to make a report if he or she has formed a reasonable belief that abuse may have occurred. If the mandated staff member's concerns continue, even after consultation with the Principal, that staff member is still legally obliged to make a mandatory report of his or her concerns.

Similarly, where two mandatory reporters have both formed a belief about the same student on the same occasion, it is sufficient for only one of the mandatory reporters to make a report. The other staff member is obliged to ensure that the report has been made, and that all of the grounds for that staff member's own belief were included in the report made by the other staff member.

A mandatory reporter must make a report or ensure that a report is made.

Mandatory reporters must follow steps outlined in the Making a mandatory report at Appendix 2.

Staff are advised to document any incident, disclosure or suspicion that a child has been, or is at risk of being abused using PROTECT: Responding to Suspected Child Abuse: A Template for all Victorian Schools in Appendix 3.

Four Critical Actions

Mandatory reporters and other staff must follow the [Four Critical Actions](#) when responding to an incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse. These are summarised as follows:

1. Respond to an Emergency: If a student is at immediate risk of harm staff must ensure their safety.

2. Report to Authorities/Refer to Services: As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed you must report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures as soon as possible.
3. Contact Parents or Carers: The Principal must consult with Child Protection and/or Victoria Police to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers.
4. Provide Ongoing Support: Ongoing support for students impacted by abuse (in some instances this may include peers of the relevant student). This is an essential part of our duty of care to our students and staff.

A full version of the Four Critical Actions is available at Appendix 4. A poster style version which can be displayed around the College is in Appendix 5.

Advising parents and guardians

Staff members do not require the permission of parents or guardians to make a report to or undertake an interview with Child Protection, nor are they required to tell parents or guardians that they have done so. It is the responsibility of Child Protection to advise parents or guardians as soon as possible of any interview. This should occur by the time the child arrives home, or before this time.

The role of Child Protection

Once a mandatory report has been made Child Protection will decide when follow up is required and how to classify the report. They may determine to provide advice to the reporter, progress the matter to an investigation, refer the family to support services in the community, or take no further action.

To make a report, the reporter should contact the Child Protection intake service covering the local government area (LGA) where the child normally resides.

Telephone numbers to make a report during business hours (8.45am-5.00pm) Monday to Friday, are listed on the DFFH website accessible [here](#). The After Hours Child Protection Emergency Service can be contacted on 13 12 78 outside normal business hours.

If a mandatory reporter has concerns that the child needs urgent assistance, they must contact Victoria Police on 000 immediately.

Mandatory Reporting Training

All College mandatory reporters including VIT registered teachers must complete annually the [Protecting Children: Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations Non-government Schools](#) online training provided by the Victorian government.

The Principal must ensure that each mandatory reporter has completed the required training and receive a copy of their Certificate of Completion issued on the successful completion of the course. Information about training will be recorded on the College's Employment Hero management system.

Training will be completed by new staff during the staff induction process and undertaken at the beginning of the academic year by continuing staff.

Concerns about a child's wellbeing – referral to The Orange Door

If a mandatory reporter is worried about a student's wellbeing but do not believe they need protection, they may make a referral to [The Orange Door](#) (formerly Child First).

The Orange Door is the access point for families who need assistance with the care and wellbeing of children, including those experiencing family violence, for services they need to be safe and supported.

A referral may be appropriate where a mandatory reporter holds significant concerns for the wellbeing of a child but does not believe they are at risk of significant harm, and where the immediate safety of the child will not be compromised.

A referral to The Orange Door is appropriate where families are experiencing:

- significant parenting problems that may be affecting the child's development
- family conflict, including family breakdown;
- pressure due to a family member's physical or mental illness, substance abuse, disability or bereavement;
- significant social or economic disadvantage that may adversely impact on a child's care or development.

Confidentiality of reports or referrals

The identity of a reporter to Child Protection or a referrer to The Orange Door must remain confidential unless:

- the reporter or referrer chooses to inform the child or family of the report or referral;
- the reporter or referrer consents in writing to their identity as the reporter being disclosed;
- a court or tribunal decides it needs this information to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child;
- a court or tribunal decides that in the interests of justice the evidence needs to be given.

The Principal or the mandatory reporter who has made the report should inform the family that a report or referral has been made, where appropriate, considering the circumstances of the child concerned or their family. Staff should inform the Principal of their intention to advise the family of the report so that the Principal can manage any response or provide further assistance to the family or mandatory reporter.

Note, in addition, that if a report is made in good faith:

- it does not constitute unprofessional conduct or a breach of professional ethics on the part of the reporter;
- the reporter cannot be held legally liable in respect of the report; and,
- it is the responsibility of Child Protection, The Orange Door or the Police to investigate the matters reported.

In many instances transparency about concerns or reports to Child Protection or referral to The Orange Door can be beneficial for the child, the family and other relationships. However, in some circumstances, discussing concerns may increase risk of harm for a child, or may compromise a child protection or police investigation.

Therefore, the College's mandatory reporters should discuss with the Principal if a disclosure of a report to the family should be made at the time of making the report or referral.

2. Other Reportable Offences

There are several reporting obligations that the College Board and College staff must meet to fulfil their legal responsibilities under Victorian law and to meet the requirements of the Ministerial Order 1359 (Child Safe Standards).

These obligations relate to specific offences: the Failure to Disclose, the Failure to Protect and the Grooming offence. In addition, the College Board must ensure it reports allegations of reportable conduct by employees and volunteers to the Commission for Children and Young People.

Failure to Disclose

The *Crimes Act 1958* requires all adults (any person aged over 18 years of age) who forms a *reasonable belief* that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 to disclose that information to Victoria Police.

This means that any College employee, volunteer, College Board member or adult member of the College community is obliged to disclose that information to Victoria Police as soon as it is practicable to do so, except in limited circumstances such as where the information has already been reported to Child Protection.

Failure to disclose the information to Victoria Police is a criminal offence and applies to all adults in Victoria, not just professionals who work with children, unless a person has a *reasonable excuse* or exemption from reporting.

Reasonable belief is not the same as having proof. A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. For example, a reasonable belief might be formed when:

- a child states that they have been sexually abused;
- a child states that they know someone who has been sexually abused (as the child may be talking about themselves);
- someone who knows a child states that the child has been sexually abused;
- professional observations of the child's behaviour or development lead a mandatory reporter to form a belief that the child has been sexually abused;
- signs of sexual abuse lead to a belief that the child has been sexually abused.

Reasonable excuse is defined by law and includes:

- the person reasonably fears for the safety of any person (other than the alleged perpetrator of the offence) if the Police were informed;
- the person reasonably believes that the Police have already been informed about the information;
- the information came from the victim when he or she was over 16 years of age, and the victim requested that the information not be disclosed (except if the victim had an intellectual disability and did not have the capacity to make an informed decision);
- where the information was a confidential communication from the victim to a registered medical practitioner or counsellor who is treating the victim for an emotional or psychological condition.

A person who makes a report to the Police in good faith will not be liable in any way for making the disclosure and their identity will be confidential, unless they disclose their identity themselves or consent to it being disclosed or a Court considers it necessary for them to be identified.

Failure to Protect

The *Crimes Act* has strengthened laws to protect a child from sexual abuse and exposure to sexual offenders.

The failure to protect offence applies where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation (i.e. the College) will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation.

A person in a position of authority in the organisation will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk but negligently fail to do so.

Whether someone is considered to be a person in authority depends on the degree of supervision, power or responsibility the person has to remove or reduce the substantial risk posed by an adult associated with the organisation. People in authority will usually have the ability to make management level decisions, such as assigning and directing work, ensuring compliance with the organisation's volunteer policy and other operational arrangements.

People in authority at Muhammadiyah Australia College include College Board members and the Principal. This means that any College board member or the Principal must take appropriate action to reduce or remove the risk of abuse as soon as a risk is identified.

The College implements rigorous employment and screening and selection practices for staff and volunteers in order to reduce or remove a known substantial risk to students from an adult associated with the College.

The College assesses and monitors the performance of staff and volunteers addressing any concerns, to ensure they remain suitable to work with children and young people. Staff and volunteers are appropriately trained in child safety matters including mandatory reporting and reporting concerns to Child Protection or Victoria Police.

The College has a range of Child Safe policies and practices including a Child Safe Recruitment Policy and a Child Safe Risk Management Register designed to identify, minimise and remove risks to student safety and wellbeing.

Grooming Offence

The *Crimes Amendment (Grooming) Act 2014* introduced the offence of grooming which relates to predatory conduct undertaken by an adult (any person over 18 years of age) to prepare or 'groom' a child (under 16 years of age) for sexual activity at a later time.

Grooming may not involve any sexual activity or discussion of sexual activity; it may be intended to establish a relationship with the child or their parent, carer or guardian with the purpose of facilitating sexual activity at a later time.

The offence applies when an adult communicates by words or conduct, with a child (or with a person who has care, supervision or authority for the child) with the intention of facilitating sexual activity.

Communication may include, but is not limited to, direct in person contact, or through phone conversations, social media, web forums or email. It may involve exposing the child to pornographic or indecent material or providing them with an intoxicating substance.

The grooming offence can be committed by any person aged 18 years or over. However, the offence does not apply to communication between people who are both under 18 years of age e.g. between two students who are 16 or 17 years old.

Sexual conduct must constitute an indictable offence, i.e. it includes offences such as sexual penetration of a child, indecent assault or an indecent act performed in front of a child.

If staff member or any person over 18 years connected with the College forms a reasonable belief that a child or young person is being groomed or sexually abused or exploited, they must report their belief to Child Protection and Victoria Police. The Principal and/or the College Board should also be advised.

Reportable Conduct Scheme

The Reportable Conduct Scheme was created under the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* and requires the head of an entity (i.e. of the governing authority) to notify the Social Services Regulator (SSR) (formerly the Commission for Children and Young People) if a reportable allegation is made against one of its employees.

The Principal is considered the head of entity for Muhammadiyah Australia College and is the individual with primary responsibility for engaging, managing and terminating the engagement of College employees and volunteers.

Reportable conduct is defined as:

- a sexual offence, sexual misconduct or physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of a child (a person under the age of 18 years);
- any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child, or
- significant neglect of a child.

Reportable allegation means any information that leads a person to form a reasonable belief that an employee has committed reportable conduct; or engaged in misconduct that may involve reportable conduct, whether or not the conduct or misconduct occurred within the course of the person's employment.

Employees can include a principal, teacher, administrative staff member, College board member, contractor, volunteer, teacher's aide, student wellbeing professional or allied health staff member. It may also include former employees.

The Scheme imposes certain obligations on the head of entity, i.e. the Principal to ensure there are systems in place to:

- prevent the commission of reportable conduct by an employee or volunteer within the course of their employment;
- enable any person, including an employee, to notify the Principal of a reportable allegation;
- enable any person or employee to notify the SSR of a reportable allegation involving the Principal (as head of entity); and
- investigate and respond to a reportable allegation against an employee or volunteer of the College.

The Principal must advise the SSR of any reportable allegation within three (3) business days after becoming aware of an allegation against an employee or volunteer. Detailed information about the allegations together with the College's proposed response must be made within 30 calendar days.

All College employees, including any volunteers, must notify the Principal if they have a reportable allegation. If the Principal is involved in the allegation the report should be made to a member of the College Board, preferably to the Chair.

Mandatory reporting and other reporting obligations still apply. Reportable conduct reporting processes should be followed in addition to these other reporting obligations.

If the College becomes aware that Victoria Police will investigate a reportable allegation, the College must not begin or continue its own investigation but wait until police advise that their investigation has concluded or that a College investigation may be conducted simultaneously.

3. Student Sexual Offending

Student sexual offending refers to sexual behaviour led by a student 10 years and over which may amount to a sexual offence. A sexual offence includes rape, sexual assault, indecent acts and other unwanted sexualised touching.

Under Victorian law, children between 12-15 can only consent to sexual activity with a peer no more than two years their senior. Therefore, sexual contact led by a student with a child outside of these age parameters may amount to student sexual offending.

Staff should familiarise themselves with the information in [PROTECT Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#) document.

The College has an obligation to protect children and to report any incident, allegation and/or suspicion that a student is victim of student sexual offending, or a student has committed sexual offending.

Any staff member or volunteer who witnesses an incident, or forms a suspicion receives a disclosure that a student is a victim of a student sexual offending, or a student has engaged in student sexual offending must act immediately by following the reporting obligations as outlined in [Four Critical Actions For Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#). Staff must also report their concerns or suspicions or any incident involving student sexual offending to the Principal.

Children with sexual behaviour problems include those children less than 10 years of age demonstrating developmentally inappropriate or aggressive sexual behaviour. In such cases staff should seek advice in consultation with the Principal and the student's parent/s from Child Protection or Victoria Police Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team (SOCIT). SOCIT can be contacted via the Melton Police Station on 9747 7999. In an emergency staff should call 000.

4. Reporting procedure

Staff are advised to use the PROTECT: Responding to Suspected Child Abuse: A Template for all Victorian Schools in Appendix 3 to document any incident, disclosure or suspicion that a child has been, or is at risk of being abused.

Staff, volunteers or College Board members should follow the [Four Critical Actions](#) when responding to an incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse. These are summarised as follows:

1. Respond to an Emergency: If a student is at immediate risk of harm staff must ensure their safety.

2. Report to Authorities/Refer to Services: As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed you must report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures as soon as possible.
3. Contact Parents or Carers: The Principal must consult with Child Protection and/or Victoria Police to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers.
4. Provide Ongoing Support: Ongoing support for students impacted by abuse (in some instances this may include peers of the relevant student). This is an essential part of our duty of care to our students and staff.

A full version of the Four Critical Actions is available at Appendix 4. A poster style version which can be displayed around the College is in Appendix 5.

5. Further information

Confidentiality

Staff members must respect confidentiality when dealing with cases of suspected child abuse and neglect. They may only discuss case details and the identity of the child and the child's family with those directly involved in the management of the child's situation.

Our College maintains the confidentiality and privacy of all concerned (including the alleged perpetrator), except if doing so would compromise the welfare of the child or young person and/or investigation of the allegation. To prevent access by unauthorised persons, we store any documentation associated with an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child or young person by having:

- hard-copy documentation stored in a locked filing cabinet (or similar); and
- electronic documentation stored in a password-protected folder (or similar).

The College will maintain and regularly monitor records of child abuse reports as part of our Incident Management processes to ensure that they are responded to effectively in accordance with this policy and that requirements for reporting to external authorities are complied with. These records will inform reviews of the policy.

Fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained in this policy/procedures document is not intended to displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.

Consequences of breaching policy

If a staff fails to report instances, allegations, disclosures or concerns in relation to abuse or neglect of a child or young person – by an employee within the College or by others – Muhammadiyah Australia College management will view such failure as a serious matter.

This policy prohibits all personnel from:

- discussing any concerns or allegations with unauthorised personnel – within or outside the College – such prohibition not being designed to limit, in any way, their rights and responsibilities to report their concerns or allegations, but rather as part of the College commitment to ensuring privacy, confidentiality and adherence to the principles of natural justice; and
- making deliberately false, misleading or vexatious allegations.

Our employees are obliged to raise any concerns they might have in relation to:

- the College policies designed to safeguard children and young people; and,
- actions of other staff that contravene our policies, or that may otherwise have the potential to harm a child or young person.

Support for children connected to alleged child abuse

Any communication of the allegation will appropriately consider the confidentiality and welfare of all children involved, their families and those making the allegations. In the case of an allegation of sexual abuse, the Principal will inform the College Board.

Once aware of the allegation, the College will act immediately to provide appropriate support and protection for the alleged victim of abuse and all other children involved. Advice regarding the form and source of this support and protection will be sought from the College psychologist/school counselor or relevant external agencies, ensuring that the College is sensitive to the diversity of all children, including the needs of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities and children who are vulnerable.

The support might include:

- developing a case management plan for vulnerable students;
- working with the student's family to ensure the College's response is in the best interests of the safety and welfare of the student; and
- appointing a support staff member to oversee the student's safety and welfare while at school, and to monitor the student's ongoing needs.

Support and protection for the children involved, their families and anyone else affected will be arranged through the Child Safety, Risk and Compliance Committee.

Reducing or removing the risk of offence within the College

To reduce or to remove the risk of sexual offence against a child by an adult within or associated with Muhammadiyah Australia College, in accordance with the College Child Safe Standards Policy, the College is committed to take the following actions:

- Conducting a thorough and rigorous employment screening and reference checking (Child Safe Standard 6);
- Facilitating continuous supervision and regular training for the College staff (Child Safe Standards 8 and 9);
- Implementing systems to provide early warning of possible offences (Child Safe Standards 2, 3 and 6);
- Performing random and unannounced inspections to deter misconduct (Supervisory requirements/risk mitigation are part of Child Safe Standard 9);
- Prohibiting adults from being alone with a child (Supervisory requirements/risk mitigation are part of Child Safe Standard 9);
- Encouraging children and adults to notify authorities or parents about any signs of unusual or aberrant behaviour (Child Safe Standards 3 and 4).

Raising student awareness

At the start of each year, each child will be reminded that he/she has the right to a safe and protective environment at all times, and that they can seek assistance from any staff and the College principal if a situation arises that he/she feels threatens their safety.

Raising staff awareness

The following strategies will be employed to raise awareness of all staff about their responsibilities regarding child safety and protection. All staff will be reminded at the start of each year:

- that each child has the right to a safe and protective environment at all times; and
- of their responsibilities regarding reporting allegations or beliefs of sexual offences against a child under the age of 16.

In addition to this, all mandated staff will be reminded at the start of each year of:

- their obligations regarding mandatory reporting as outlined in this policy;
- their obligations to understand the failure to disclose, failure to protect and grooming offences as outlined in this policy;
- the requirements of the Reportable Conduct Scheme and how it relates to staff and volunteers;
- their obligations, and expectations of behaviour, with regard to duty of care as outlined in the VIT Code of Conduct, the VIT Code of Ethics, the Muhammadiyah Australia College Code of Conduct and the Muhammadiyah Australia College Staff Manual.

Raising community awareness

The College community, including parents and volunteers, will be informed of their responsibilities regarding reporting allegations or beliefs of a sexual offence against a child under the age of 16 through the newsletter and the Muhammadiyah Australia College website.

Communication

This policy will be communicated:

- To all staff and volunteers in induction processes on commencement of employment and at annual staff training and volunteer induction sessions.
- To parents, guardians and carers, students and the College community on the College website.

Relevant Legislation

- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)
- Crimes Amendment (Grooming) Act 2014 (Vic)
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)

- Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the child safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools and boarding premises (Vic)

Relevant policies

- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Policy
- Child Safe Standards Risk Register
- Child Safety Recruitment Policy
- Child Safety Volunteer Policy
- Duty of Care Policy

Resources

Further information about specific offences is available through the following links:

- [Failure to disclose offence](#)
- [Failure to protect](#)
- [Grooming offence](#)
- [Reportable Conduct Scheme](#)
- [PROTECT: Responding to Suspected Child Abuse: A Template for All Victorian Schools](#)

Victorian Governments resources on child safety and reporting obligations include:

- [PROTECT: Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse](#)
- [PROTECT: Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](#)

Appendix 1 – Mandatory Reporters

Section 182 of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* defines a mandatory reporter as a:

- registered teacher (including a pre-service or casual relief teacher)
- school principal
- school counsellor (see details below)
- registered medical practitioner
- nurse
- midwife
- police officer
- registered psychologist
- person in religious ministry
- out of home care worker (excluding voluntary foster and kinship carers)
- early childhood worker
- youth justice worker

A ‘school counsellor’ is defined as a person employed or engaged (other than on a voluntary basis) to provide direct support to school students at or directly connected with a school, for mental emotional or psychological wellbeing.

School counsellor includes:

- student support service staff
- welfare officers
- mental health practitioners in secondary schools
- student wellbeing coordinators
- chaplains
- school-based health and wellbeing staff including allied health staff such as:
 - social workers,
 - speech pathologists,
 - youth workers.

Appendix 2 - Making a mandatory report

The following table describes the information that should be included when making a report about child abuse or child abuse concerns.

The College’s mandatory reporters must follow the following steps:

Step	Action
1. Keep notes	<p>Keep comprehensive and contemporaneous notes that are dated and include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a description of the concerns (e.g. physical injuries, student behaviour) • the source of those concerns (e.g. observation, report from child or another person) • the actions taken because of the concerns (e.g. consultation with the principal, report to DFFH Child Protection (Child Protection)). <p>College staff should use the template provided in PROTECT: Responding to Suspected Child Abuse: A Template for all Victorian Schools to record their notes.</p>
2. Discuss concerns	<p>Due to the complexity of child abuse incidents, disclosures and suspicions, it is recommended that concerns and observations regarding suspected physical or sexual abuse of a student are discussed with the Principal.</p> <p>While this is not a legal requirement, it will help to ensure support is provided to all involved in matters of this nature. The confidentiality of these discussions must be maintained.</p> <p>You should then make your own assessment about whether you are required to make a report about the student and to whom the report should be made.</p> <p>It is important to remember that the duty to report abuse or suspicions of abuse exists even if the Principal or another mandatory reporter, such as a colleague, advises you not to proceed with reporting suspected abuse.</p>
3. Gather and document information	<p>Gather the relevant information necessary to make the report. This should include the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full name, date of birth and residential address of the student, • details of the concerns and the reasons for those concerns, • your involvement with the student, • details of any other agencies which may be involved with the student.

	<p>This information should be collected and documented using <i>PROTECT: Responding to Suspected Child Abuse: A Template for all Victorian Schools</i>.</p> <p>The template is to be used to record as much information as possible to provide when you make your report to either Victoria Police or Child Protection.</p> <p>It is critical that completing the template does not impact on reporting times – if a student is in immediate danger, College staff need to report the matter to Victoria Police immediately.</p>
<p>4. Make the report</p>	<p>To report concerns which are life-threatening, phone 000 or Melton police station on <u>9747 7999</u>.</p> <p>Where the source of the abuse comes from within the College, that is, the suspected or alleged abuse involves a College staff member, volunteer, allied health practitioner, office holder, Board member, contractor or visitor at the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contact Victoria Police, which will contact Child Protection when appropriate • report internally to the Principal, or the Chair of the College Board / Business Manager if the Principal is involved in the allegation • report to the Commission for Children and Young People on 1300 782 978. <p>Where the source of the suspected or alleged abuse comes from within the child’s family or community, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report sexual abuse and grooming to Victoria Police • report the matter to Child Protection if you consider the student to need protection due to child abuse, or that they have been, are being or are at risk of being harmed due to any form of abuse, including family violence. • report internally to the Principal, or the Business Manager if the Principal is unavailable <p>You should contact child protection in the area in which the child lives if you have concerns that a child is at risk of significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect. If after hours, call the Child Protection Emergency Service on 13 12 78</p>
<p>5. Document written records of report</p>	<p>Make a written record of the report, including the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the date and time of the report, and a summary of what was reported • the name and position of the person who made the report, and the person who received the report. <p>The information initially recorded in <i>PROTECT: Responding to Suspected Child Abuse: A Template for all Victorian Schools</i> and any</p>

	<p>additional information provided to either Victoria Police or Child Protection are to be stored securely and maintained indefinitely by the College to ensure that records are accessible upon request by external authorities investigating the matter.</p>
--	--

Reporting that is non-mandatory

All Muhammadiyah Australia College staff, volunteers, contractors, other service providers **who are not mandatory reporters** have professional and moral (and sometimes legal) obligations to report a child protection incident, disclosure or suspicion.

Please refer to [Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse](#) in relation to reporting a child protection incident, disclosure or suspicion that is not the subject of a mandatory reporting obligation.

Appendix 3 - PROTECT: Responding to Suspected Child Abuse: a Template for all Victorian Schools

PROTECT

Responding to Suspected Child Abuse: A Template for all Victorian Schools

When to use this template

School staff should use this template to document any incident, disclosure or suspicion that a child has been, or is at risk of being abused. This template should be used in conjunction with following the [Four Critical Actions For Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse](#) .

Completing this template should not impact on reporting times. If a child is in immediate danger school staff should report immediately to Victoria Police.

Whilst you may need to gather the information to make a report, remember it is not the role of school staff to investigate abuse, leave this to Victoria Police and/or DHHS Child Protection.

Why record this information?

When completing this template your aim should be to provide as much information as possible. This information will be critical to any reports and may be sought at a later date if the matter is the subject of Court proceedings. These notes may also later assist you if you are required to provide evidence to support any decisions.

It is a requirement under Ministerial Order No. 870 - Child Safe Standards - Managing the risk of child abuse in schools for schools to keep clear and comprehensive notes on all observations, disclosures and other details that led them to suspect the abuse.



RESPONDING TO AN INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE

PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU ARE MAKING A REPORT TO DHHS CHILD PROTECTION OR VICTORIA POLICE YOU MUST SEEK ADVICE BEFORE CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS SO AS NOT TO COMPROMISE ANY INVESTIGATION OR PLACE A CHILD AT FURTHER RISK.

STAFF MEMBER LEADING THE RESPONSE
NAME:
OCCUPATION:
LOCATION (SCHOOL ADDRESS):
RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD:

CRITICAL ACTION 1: IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO AN INCIDENT

If anyone is in immediate danger school staff should report immediately to Victoria Police on 000.

See Action 1 of Four Critical Actions For Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse

RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY
DID THE CHILD REQUIRE FIRST AID? PROVIDE DETAILS IF 'YES'.
WHO ADMINISTERED THIS? (NAME AND TITLE)
DID THE CHILD REQUIRE FURTHER IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE?
CURRENT LOCATION AND SAFETY STATUS: E.G. ARE ALL IMPACTED STUDENTS SAFE AND NOT IN ANY IMMEDIATE DANGER? IF A CHILD IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER SCHOOL STAFF SHOULD REPORT IMMEDIATELY TO VICTORIA POLICE ON 000.

CHILD'S INFORMATION

PERSONAL DETAILS	
NAME:	GENDER:
YEAR LEVEL/CLASS:	DATE OF BIRTH:
RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS:	
PARENT/CARER NAME/S:	
PARENT/CARER CONTACT:	
LANGUAGE(S) SPOKEN BY CHILD:	
DISABILITIES, MENTAL OR PHYSICAL HEALTH ISSUES:	

CHILD'S BACKGROUND

CULTURAL STATUS AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

IF THE CHILD IS OF ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER BACKGROUND, GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS MUST CONTACT THEIR KOORIE ENGAGEMENT SUPPORT OFFICER, AND CATHOLIC SCHOOLS MUST CONTACT THE DIOCESAN EDUCATION OFFICE TO ARRANGE CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE SUPPORT. IF THE CHILD IS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT YOU MUST **NOTIFY THE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION DIVISION ON (03) 9637 2990.**

ANY KNOWN PREVIOUS HISTORY OF SUSPECTED ABUSE

(PRIOR TO THIS INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION OR INVOLVEMENT WITH AGENCIES):

FAMILY BACKGROUND

FAMILY COMPOSITION (IF KNOWN):

LIST PARENTING OR CARE ARRANGEMENTS AND SIBLING NAMES AND AGES

ANY OTHER PEOPLE LIVING WITH THE CHILD (IF KNOWN):

FAMILY BACKGROUND

DISABILITY, MENTAL OR PHYSICAL HEALTH ISSUES IN FAMILY (IF KNOWN):

LIKELY REACTION TO A REPORT BEING MADE (IF KNOWN):

DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION

**GROUNDS FOR YOUR BELIEF THAT A CHILD HAS BEEN,
 OR IS AT RISK OF ABUSE**

INDICATORS OR INSTANCES WHICH LED YOU TO BELIEVE A CHILD/CHILDREN ARE
SUBJECT TO CHILD ABUSE, OR AT RISK OF ABUSE:

*DETAIL ANY DISCLOSURES OR INCIDENTS OR SUSPICIONS (INCLUDING NAMES, TIMES AND DATES DOCUMENTING
A CHILD'S EXACT WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE). INCLUDE SPECIFIC DETAIL HERE ON WHAT LED YOU TO FORM A
REASONABLE BELIEF THAT A CHILD HAS BEEN, OR IS AT RISK OF BEING ABUSED*

ANY PHYSICAL INDICATORS OF ABUSE:

ANY BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS OF ABUSE:

ANY PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOUR OR PRIOR CONCERNS LEADING UP TO AN INCIDENT,
DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION:

DETAILS OF PERSONS ALLEGED TO HAVE
COMMITTED THE ABUSE (IF KNOWN)

NAME:

GENDER:

DATE OF BIRTH:

RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD:

NOTING IF THEY ARE WITHIN THE SCHOOL OR WITHIN THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY (THIS WILL IMPACT WHO YOU REPORT TO)

ADDRESS:

CONTACT DETAILS:

CRITICAL ACTION 2: REPORTING

See Action 2 of **Four Critical Actions For Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse**

REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES	
<p>TICK THE AUTHORITIES YOU HAVE REPORTED TO:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> VICTORIA POLICE</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> DHHS CHILD PROTECTION</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> CHILD FIRST</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> DECISION NOT TO REPORT</p> <p>IF YOU'VE DECIDED NOT TO REPORT, LIST YOUR REASONS HERE. ALSO INCLUDE ANY FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN BY YOU BELOW:</p> 	
PROVIDE DETAILS OF YOUR REPORT:	
DATE:	TIME:
AUTHORITY:	
OUTCOMES FROM THE REPORT:	

REPORTING INTERNALLY	
PROVIDE DETAILS OF YOUR DISCUSSION WITH SCHOOL LEADERSHIP:	
TIME:	DATE:
NAMES:	
DISCUSSION OUTCOMES:	
<p>PROVIDE DETAILS OF YOUR INTERNAL DISCUSSIONS TO EITHER OF THE FOLLOWING:</p> <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOL STAFF MUST REPORT TO SECURITY SERVICES UNIT AND ALSO TO THE EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH IF THE INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION INVOLVES A STAFF MEMBER, CONTRACTOR OR VOLUNTEER</p> <p>CATHOLIC SCHOOL STAFF MUST REPORT TO THEIR CATHOLIC DIOCESAN EDUCATION OFFICE</p>	
TIME:	DATE:
NAMES:	
DISCUSSION OUTCOMES:	

CRITICAL ACTION 3: CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS

See Action 3 of **Four Critical Actions For Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse**

ACTIONS TAKEN
<p>PROVIDE DETAILS OF YOUR DISCUSSION WITH PARENTS/CARERS (IF APPROPRIATE):</p> <p>SCHOOL STAFF MUST CONSULT WITH VICTORIA POLICE AND/OR DHHS CHILD PROTECTION TO DETERMINE IF IT IS APPROPRIATE TO CONTACT PARENTS. IF IT IS, PARENTS MUST BE CONTACTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (PREFERABLY ON THE SAME DAY OF THE INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION).</p>
<p>HAVE YOU SOUGHT ADVICE FROM DHHS CHILD PROTECTION OR VICTORIA POLICE?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> NO</p> <p><input type="radio"/> YES</p> <p>IS IT APPROPRIATE TO CONTACT PARENT/CARER?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> NO</p> <p><input type="radio"/> YES</p> <p>LIST REASONS IF IT IS NOT APPROPRIATE TO CONTACT PARENT/CARER:</p>
<p>IF CONTACTING PARENT/CARER, PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING DETAILS:</p>
<p>NAME OF STAFF MEMBER MAKING THE CALL:</p>
<p>NAME OF PARENT/CARER RECEIVING THE CALL:</p>
<p>DISCUSSION OUTCOMES:</p>

CRITICAL ACTION 4: PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT

See Action 4 of [Four Critical Actions For Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse](#)

PLANNED ACTIONS
<i>INCLUDE DETAIL ON WHAT FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS HAVE OCCURRED TO SUPPORT THE STUDENT (FOR EXAMPLE REFERRAL TO WELLBEING PROFESSIONALS AND OTHER SPECIALISED SERVICES, THE CONVENING OF A STUDENT SUPPORT GROUP AND DEVELOPMENT OF SUPPORT PLANS):</i>
FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:
SUPPORT:
REFERRAL(S):

PROCESS OF REVIEW

COMPLETE THIS SECTION BETWEEN 4- 6 WEEKS AFTER AN INCIDENT, SUSPICION OR DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE IN CONJUNCTION WITH YOUR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM.

THIS WILL SUPPORT YOU AND YOUR SCHOOL TO CONTINUE TO PROTECT CHILDREN IN YOUR CARE AND TO REFLECT ON YOUR PROCESSES AND THE NEED FOR ANY FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS.

SAFETY AND WELLBEING

CURRENT SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF THE CHILD

IS THE CHILD SAFE FROM ABUSE AND HARM?

- NO
 YES

IF NOT CONSIDER THE NEED TO MAKE A FURTHER REPORT.

DOES THE CHILD HAVE ANY WELLBEING ISSUES THAT ARE NOT CURRENTLY BEING ADDRESSED?

- NO
 YES

IF SO, CONSIDER HOW THESE CAN BE ADDRESSED AND CAPTURED WITHIN A STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN.

CURRENT WELLBEING OF OTHER CHILDREN WHO MAY BE IMPACTED BY THE ABUSE

ARE THERE ANY OTHER CHILDREN WHO MAY BE IMPACTED BY THE ABUSE?

- NO
 YES

IF SO HAVE THEIR WELLBEING NEEDS BEEN MET?

- NO
 YES

CURRENT WELLBEING OF IMPACTED STAFF MEMBERS

DOES THE STAFF MEMBER WHO MADE THE REPORT/WITNESSED AN INCIDENT, FORMED A SUSPICION OR RECEIVED A DISCLOSURE REQUIRE ANY SUPPORT?

- NO
 YES

IF SO HAS THIS BEEN RECEIVED?

- NO
 YES

REVIEW OF ACTIONS TAKEN

HAVE SCHOOL STAFF FOLLOWED THE FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS:
RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS, DISCLOSURES OR SUSPICIONS OF CHILD ABUSE?

WAS AN APPROPRIATE DECISION MADE
IN RELATION TO WHEN TO ACT?

- NO
- YES

COULD THE SUSPECTED ABUSE HAVE BEEN
DETECTED EARLIER?

- NO
- YES

ACTION 1

DID THE SCHOOL TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION
IN AN EMERGENCY?

- NO
- YES

ACTION 2

WAS A REPORT MADE TO THE APPROPRIATE
AUTHORITIES AND INTERNALLY?

- NO
- YES

WERE SUBSEQUENT REPORTS MADE IF
NECESSARY?

- NO
- YES

ACTION 3

DID THE SCHOOL CONTACT THE
PARENTS/CARERS ASAP?

- NO
- YES

HAVE THE PARENTS CONTINUED TO BE
ENGAGED IF APPROPRIATE?

- NO
- YES

ACTION 4

HAS THE SCHOOL PROVIDED ADEQUATE
SUPPORT FOR THE STUDENT?

- NO
- YES

HAS A STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN BEEN
ESTABLISHED, IMPLEMENTED & REVIEWED?

- NO
- YES

HAS A STUDENT SUPPORT GROUP
BEEN ESTABLISHED?

- NO
- YES

WAS THE STUDENT APPROPRIATELY
SUPPORTED IN ANY INTERVIEWS?

- NO
- YES

HAVE ANY COMPLAINTS BEEN RECEIVED?

- NO
- YES

HAVE THE COMPLAINTS BEEN RESOLVED?

- NO
- YES

OTHER LEARNINGS

Empty box for recording other learnings.

Appendix 4 - Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures or Suspicions of Child Abuse

Critical Action 1	Responding to an Emergency
<p><i>If there is no risk of immediate harm go to Action 2.</i></p> <p>If the child has just been abused or is at risk of immediate harm, staff must take reasonable steps to protect the child, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • separating the alleged victim and others involved and supervising any students present • if necessary, providing urgent medical assistance, including administering first aid or calling 000 for an ambulance • calling 000 for urgent police assistance if the person who is alleged to have engaged in the abuse poses an immediate risk to the health and safety of any person. <p>If the child abuse incident has occurred at the College, staff should also ensure that reasonable steps are taken to preserve the environment, the clothing and other items, and to prevent any potential witnesses (including staff) from discussing the incident until Victoria Police or relevant authorities arrive on the premises.</p>	
Critical Action 2	Reporting to Authorities
<p>All forms and instances of suspected or alleged child abuse must be reported to the appropriate authority.</p> <p>Once immediate health and safety concerns have been addressed, the College staff member must take steps to report the incident, suspicion or disclosure of child abuse as soon as practicable.</p> <p>Failure to report physical and sexual child abuse may amount to a criminal offence.</p> <p>There are different reporting procedures depending on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether the source of the suspected or alleged abuse comes from within the College or within the family or community of the child • the type of abuse. <p>Additionally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muhammadiyah Australia College requires all staff or volunteers to report any child safety incident or concern involving our students to the Principal or, if the Principal is unavailable or is involved in the allegation, to the Chair of the Board. • where the source of the abuse comes from within the College, that is, the suspected or alleged abuse involves a staff member, volunteer, allied health professional, College Board member, contractor or visitor at the College, it must be reported to Victoria Police • where the suspicion, belief or disclosure relates to sexual abuse or grooming, it must be reported to Victoria Police. • where the source of the abuse comes from within the family or community and is not sexual abuse or grooming, it must be reported to Child Protection. 	
Critical Action 3	Contacting Parents/Carers/Guardians
<p>Where it is suspected that a child has been or is at risk of being abused, it is critical that parents/carers/guardians of the child are notified as soon as practicable after a report is made to the authorities.</p>	

- developing Student Support Plans for other students impacted by the incident to ensure they have appropriate levels of care and support depending on their involvement.

Staff should contact the Principal for advice on what school-based support services are available. This may include referral to allied health services or mental health services.

Where external authorities are investigating a report of abuse or risk of abuse, the Principal will ensure that affected students are supported throughout interviews at the College.

Appendix 5 – Four Critical Actions for Schools (poster version)

FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse

YOU MUST TAKE ACTION

You **must** act, by following the Four Critical Actions, as soon as you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief* that a child has, or is at risk of being abused.

As a school staff member, you play a **critical role** in protecting children in your care.

You **must** act if you form a suspicion/ reasonable belief, even if you are unsure and have not directly observed child abuse (eg. if the victim or another person tells you about the abuse).

It is strongly recommended that you use the **Responding to Suspected Child Abuse template** to keep clear and comprehensive notes, even if you make a decision not to report.

*A reasonable belief is a deliberately low threshold. This enables authorities to investigate and take action.

1 RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY	2 REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES / REFERRING TO SERVICES	3 CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS	4 PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT			
<p>If there is no risk of immediate harm go to Action 2.</p> <p>If a child is at immediate risk of harm you must ensure their safety by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> separating alleged victims and others involved administering first aid calling 000 for urgent medical and/or police assistance to respond to immediate health or safety concerns identifying a contact person at the school for future liaison with Police. <p>Where necessary you may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve evidence.</p>	<p>As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed you must report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures of child abuse as soon as possible. Failure to report physical and sexual child abuse may amount to a criminal offence.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Q: Where does the source of suspected abuse come from?</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <p>WITHIN THE SCHOOL</p> <p>VICTORIA POLICE You must report all instances of suspected child abuse involving a school staff member, contractor, volunteer or visitor to Victoria Police.</p> <p>You must also report internally to:</p> <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team Employee Conduct Branch OCT Incident Support and Operations Centre. <p>CATHOLIC SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team Diocesan education office. <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or school chairperson Commission for Children and Young People on 1300 782 978. <p>All allegations of reportable conduct must be reported as soon as possible to:</p> <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee Conduct Branch <p>CATHOLIC SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diocesan education office <p>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission for Children and Young People on 1300 782 978. </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <p>WITHIN THE FAMILY OR COMMUNITY</p> <p>DHHS CHILD PROTECTION You must report to Child Protection if a child is considered to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in need of protection from child abuse at risk of being harmed (or has been harmed) and the harm has had, or is likely to have, a serious impact on the child's safety, stability or development. <p>VICTORIA POLICE You must also report all instances of suspected sexual abuse (including grooming) to Victoria Police.</p> <p>You must also report internally to:</p> <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team OCT Incident Support and Operations Centre. <p>CATHOLIC SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team Diocesan education office. <p>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or chairperson. </td> </tr> </table>	<p>WITHIN THE SCHOOL</p> <p>VICTORIA POLICE You must report all instances of suspected child abuse involving a school staff member, contractor, volunteer or visitor to Victoria Police.</p> <p>You must also report internally to:</p> <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team Employee Conduct Branch OCT Incident Support and Operations Centre. <p>CATHOLIC SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team Diocesan education office. <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or school chairperson Commission for Children and Young People on 1300 782 978. <p>All allegations of reportable conduct must be reported as soon as possible to:</p> <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee Conduct Branch <p>CATHOLIC SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diocesan education office <p>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission for Children and Young People on 1300 782 978. 	<p>WITHIN THE FAMILY OR COMMUNITY</p> <p>DHHS CHILD PROTECTION You must report to Child Protection if a child is considered to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in need of protection from child abuse at risk of being harmed (or has been harmed) and the harm has had, or is likely to have, a serious impact on the child's safety, stability or development. <p>VICTORIA POLICE You must also report all instances of suspected sexual abuse (including grooming) to Victoria Police.</p> <p>You must also report internally to:</p> <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team OCT Incident Support and Operations Centre. <p>CATHOLIC SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team Diocesan education office. <p>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or chairperson. 	<p>For suspected student sexual assault, please follow the Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending.</p> <p>OTHER CONCERNS</p> <p>If you believe that a child is not subject to abuse, but you still hold significant concerns for their wellbeing you must still act. This may include making a referral or seeking advice from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child FIRST/The Orange Door (in circumstances where the family are open to receiving support) DHHS Child Protection Victoria Police. 	<p>Your principal must consult with DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers. They may advise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> not to contact the parents/carer (eg. in circumstances where the parents are alleged to have engaged in the abuse, or the child is a mature minor and does not wish for their parent/carer to be contacted) to contact the parents/carers and provide agreed information (this must be done as soon as possible, preferably on the same day of the incident, disclosure or suspicion) how to communicate with all relevant parties with consideration for their safety. <p>Your school must provide support for children impacted by abuse. This should include the development of a Student Support Plan in consultation with wellbeing professionals. This is an essential part of your duty of care requirements. Strategies may include development of a safety plan, direct support and referral to wellbeing professionals and support.</p> <p>You must follow the Four Critical Actions every time you become aware of a further instance or risk of abuse. This includes reporting new information to authorities.</p>	
<p>WITHIN THE SCHOOL</p> <p>VICTORIA POLICE You must report all instances of suspected child abuse involving a school staff member, contractor, volunteer or visitor to Victoria Police.</p> <p>You must also report internally to:</p> <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team Employee Conduct Branch OCT Incident Support and Operations Centre. <p>CATHOLIC SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team Diocesan education office. <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or school chairperson Commission for Children and Young People on 1300 782 978. <p>All allegations of reportable conduct must be reported as soon as possible to:</p> <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee Conduct Branch <p>CATHOLIC SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diocesan education office <p>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission for Children and Young People on 1300 782 978. 	<p>WITHIN THE FAMILY OR COMMUNITY</p> <p>DHHS CHILD PROTECTION You must report to Child Protection if a child is considered to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in need of protection from child abuse at risk of being harmed (or has been harmed) and the harm has had, or is likely to have, a serious impact on the child's safety, stability or development. <p>VICTORIA POLICE You must also report all instances of suspected sexual abuse (including grooming) to Victoria Police.</p> <p>You must also report internally to:</p> <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team OCT Incident Support and Operations Centre. <p>CATHOLIC SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team Diocesan education office. <p>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or chairperson. 					
<p>CONTACT</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 5px;"> <p>DHHS CHILD PROTECTION AREA</p> <p>North Division 1300 664 977 South Division 1300 665 795 East Division 1300 360 391 West Division (Que) 1800 075 599 West Division (Metro) 1300 664 977</p> <p>AFTER HOURS After hours, weekends, public holidays 93 12 78.</p> <p>CHILD FIRST https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-first-and-support-team/</p> <p>ORANGE DOOR https://www.familyviolence.vic.gov.au/the-orange-door/</p> </td> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 5px;"> <p>VICTORIA POLICE 000 or your local police station</p> <p>DET INCIDENT SUPPORT AND OPERATIONS CENTRE 1800 126 126</p> <p>INCIDENT MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT UNIT 1800 126 126</p> <p>EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH 031 9637 2565</p> <p>DIOCESAN OFFICE Melbourne (03) 9267 0228 Ballarat (03) 5337 7135 Laure (03) 9623 6600 Sandhurst (03) 5443 2377</p> </td> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 5px;"> <p>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS VICTORIA (03) 9625 7300</p> <p>THE LOOKOUT The LOOKOUT has a service directory, information, and evidence based guidance to help you respond to family violence: http://www.lookout.org.au Family violence vicomhelpline can be referred to: 1800 RESPECT for counselling, information and a referral service: 1800 737 732.</p> </td> </tr> </table>				<p>DHHS CHILD PROTECTION AREA</p> <p>North Division 1300 664 977 South Division 1300 665 795 East Division 1300 360 391 West Division (Que) 1800 075 599 West Division (Metro) 1300 664 977</p> <p>AFTER HOURS After hours, weekends, public holidays 93 12 78.</p> <p>CHILD FIRST https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-first-and-support-team/</p> <p>ORANGE DOOR https://www.familyviolence.vic.gov.au/the-orange-door/</p>	<p>VICTORIA POLICE 000 or your local police station</p> <p>DET INCIDENT SUPPORT AND OPERATIONS CENTRE 1800 126 126</p> <p>INCIDENT MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT UNIT 1800 126 126</p> <p>EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH 031 9637 2565</p> <p>DIOCESAN OFFICE Melbourne (03) 9267 0228 Ballarat (03) 5337 7135 Laure (03) 9623 6600 Sandhurst (03) 5443 2377</p>	<p>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS VICTORIA (03) 9625 7300</p> <p>THE LOOKOUT The LOOKOUT has a service directory, information, and evidence based guidance to help you respond to family violence: http://www.lookout.org.au Family violence vicomhelpline can be referred to: 1800 RESPECT for counselling, information and a referral service: 1800 737 732.</p>
<p>DHHS CHILD PROTECTION AREA</p> <p>North Division 1300 664 977 South Division 1300 665 795 East Division 1300 360 391 West Division (Que) 1800 075 599 West Division (Metro) 1300 664 977</p> <p>AFTER HOURS After hours, weekends, public holidays 93 12 78.</p> <p>CHILD FIRST https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-first-and-support-team/</p> <p>ORANGE DOOR https://www.familyviolence.vic.gov.au/the-orange-door/</p>	<p>VICTORIA POLICE 000 or your local police station</p> <p>DET INCIDENT SUPPORT AND OPERATIONS CENTRE 1800 126 126</p> <p>INCIDENT MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT UNIT 1800 126 126</p> <p>EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH 031 9637 2565</p> <p>DIOCESAN OFFICE Melbourne (03) 9267 0228 Ballarat (03) 5337 7135 Laure (03) 9623 6600 Sandhurst (03) 5443 2377</p>	<p>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS VICTORIA (03) 9625 7300</p> <p>THE LOOKOUT The LOOKOUT has a service directory, information, and evidence based guidance to help you respond to family violence: http://www.lookout.org.au Family violence vicomhelpline can be referred to: 1800 RESPECT for counselling, information and a referral service: 1800 737 732.</p>				



A printable version can be found [here](#)