

*Child Protection:
Policy and Procedures*

*(Implementing Victoria's 11 Child Safe Standards
And Ministerial Order 1359)*



ST ANDREWS
CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

INSPIRED BY
FAITH

DISTINGUISHED BY
CHARACTER

LEADERS BY
INFLUENCE



PREAMBLE

All policy, protocols and procedures flow from the St Andrews Christian College Mission Statement:

“To educate our students so that they are well skilled, understand life on the basis of biblical truth, and are motivated to walk with God and serve Him in their lives, so that they will be a positive Christian influence in the world.”

POLICY DOCUMENT INFORMATION

TITLE: Child Protection: Policy and Procedures

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

PURPOSE: To provide policy and direction for all the College Community.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

Pastoral Care and Student Well-being Policy
Staff and Student Boundaries
Child Safe Employment Policy
Child Protection Staff Manual
Risk and Compliance Policy and Management
Excursion and Camps Policy
Privacy Policy

KEY DATES

ISSUE DATE: June 2022

REVIEW DATE: 2024

1. RATIONALE

St Andrews Christian College is committed to educating children and nurturing them as they grow in all aspects of personal development. This care and respect for the child includes the commitment to keeping every child, young and vulnerable person safe from abuse of any kind. This responsibility has been mandated by the Victorian and Australian governments and is an expectation of those families who entrust us with the care of their children.

Our priority is to:

- provide safe physical, emotional and online environments
- develop and implement clear expectations to guide the behaviour of adults towards children, expressed in a Child-safe Code of Conduct and explicit Professional Boundaries that provide advice for managing relationships between staff members and students
- develop and implement strategies for identifying, mitigating or eliminating risks to children's wellbeing and safety.
- provide clear and accessible pathways for acting on observations, allegations and disclosures, including reporting abuse.

All students are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26) and are, therefore, valued by God. Thus, they should be valued highly and safe-guarded by staff, their peers, visitors to the school, and family members. The care and protection of children is also a key principle in the teachings of Jesus Christ, who reserved His most severe condemnation for those who 'cause a child to stumble' or hinder them. The policies and procedural strategies we implement are the practical expression of our faith in Christ and desire to be faithful to His teachings.

All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse and discrimination. The College is committed to promoting and protecting the safety and best interests of children, actively working to empower them, and allowing them to feel and be safe from abuse or negligence at all times. Specific procedures and measures are put in place to oversee the proper care of students, especially for students who are vulnerable or more likely to be 'at risk'.

St Andrews Christian College is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally and / or linguistically diverse backgrounds. St Andrews Christian College is committed to providing a safe environment for all students, irrespective of ability, sexuality or gender identity.

Every person working within the St Andrews Christian College community is responsible for the care and protection of students and reporting information about child abuse.

St Andrews Christian College has zero tolerance for child abuse, including sexual, physical psychological or spiritual abuse or racial discrimination.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is:

1. To provide policy and direction for the College Community in alignment with our Mission Statement and Ministerial Order 1359.
2. To work towards an organisational culture of child safety and the prevention of abuse occurring within the College. This means that all members of staff (including volunteers):
 - are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions and places where child abuse may occur
 - know how to respond to child abuse when it occurs or is alleged, how to protect the victim and how to report to the College leadership (via the Child Protection Officer) and state authorities
 - follow operational procedures, the Code of Conduct and Staff-Student Professional Boundaries to minimise the risk of abuse
 - commit to assessing risks and taking every reasonable step to mitigate or eliminate risks to the safety and well-being of the children to whom they have a duty of care.
3. To provide mandatory reporters (registered teachers) with clarity as to their responsibilities under law to protect children and report abuse when they reasonably believe it has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.
4. To provide the College community with guidance as to action that is required where they develop a reasonable belief that abuse is occurring or could occur within or outside of the school environment.
5. To assist the College community to feel enabled, confident and supported to safely disclose/report child safety concerns.
6. To provide a clear statement to the College community, including visitors, volunteers and contractors forbidding any such abuse.
7. The College also demonstrates its commitment to child safety through its Related Documents (see cover page).

If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000.

3. DEFINITIONS (SEE APPENDIX 3)

4. SCOPE

Child protection is a shared responsibility of all the St Andrews Christian College community. This Policy, the Child-safe Code of Conduct and the Child Protective Procedures outlined apply to:

- The College Board of Directors (the governing body). The Board has ultimate responsibility for the prevention of child abuse and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective control systems are in place.
- The Principal. In accordance to the *Board Policy for Delegation of Authority*, the College Board assigns responsibility for discharging the requirements of the Ministerial Order No:1359 – Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools -to the Principal.
- The College Executive Leadership Team (ELT), which comprises of the Principal, Deputy Principals (Operations and Learning and Teaching), the heads of Primary and Secondary schools and the Business Manager.
- The Head of Wellbeing / Child Protection Officer (see below) and the supporting *Child Safe Champions*, which includes the Wellbeing Officers (primary and Secondary, the College Chaplain and the Youth Worker/Welfare officer
- All staff members, that is, employees, contractors and volunteers.
- Parents and extended family members.
- Visitors to the College or its activities on or off campus.
- Students. We recognise that significant abuse of young children is perpetrated by other children, particularly teenagers.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Whilst it is acknowledged (above) that this policy and its understandings, protocols and procedures applies to everyone, some roles have been assigned particular responsibility for child protection and pastoral care. These are outlined fully in the Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing Policy. The key person is the Child Protection Officer.

5.1 The Child Protection Officer

The Child Protection Officer is an appointment that includes administrative support. The CPO reports to the Deputy Principal – Operations. The CPO has several key responsibilities which include:

- To establish and maintain the CPO section on ‘the hub’ which contains resources, forms and clear instructions for students, parents and staff around reporting concerns or making allegations of child abuse.
- To provide a single conduit for triaging child Abuse Reports, complaints or allegations, and for reporting any circumstance where there is a reasonable belief that a child is at risk of abuse.
- To record and securely store notes and forms, reports and outcome statements arising from actions, such as reports or investigations.
- To support and assist, where necessary, teachers and any other staff members who are obligated to report child abuse.
- To organise Child Safety educational programs and events for staff, students and families.
- To oversee the Complaints Management process as outlined in the Complaints Management and Investigations Policy and ensure that it is child-focussed, well-known and adhered to.
- To handle Information Sharing requirements between organisations and agencies.

The CPO works with the Wellbeing Team, Year Level Coordinators and Class and Home Room teachers to ensure that these key teachers are sensitive to indicators of abuse, following up and reporting up the line using the agreed procedures, to ensure that student safety is prioritised and handled appropriately.

5.2 The Wellbeing Team: Child Safety Champions¹.

The CPO is supported by the appointment of Child Safety Champions who are trained and able to provide strategic care and advice for students who are concerned about or disclosing abuse to themselves or other students. The members of the Wellbeing team are all designated Child Safety Champions.

5.3 Year Level Coordinators

Year Level Coordinators support the classroom or Home Room teachers in their group. They are experienced and able to guide Home Room teachers in their support of students and in communication to parents. They ensure record keeping and Pastoral Care notes are kept up to date in collaboration with Primary and Secondary Wellbeing Coordinators and the CPO.

5.4 Classroom and Home Room teachers

The Classroom or Home Room teacher is the first level of pastoral care within the College, taking responsibility for recording attendance, absence and observations of wellbeing or changes in demeanour or behaviour that may indicate problems. Concerns or a developing belief about a student’s safety or wellbeing should be directed to the head of Wellbeing/Child Protection Officer in the first instance. If a

¹ [Guidance for child safety champions | Victorian Government \(www.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.vic.gov.au/guidance-for-child-safety-champions)



reasonable belief is held, then the reporting obligations of mandatory reporters, as outlined in this Policy, must be followed immediately.

6. THE CHILD SAFE STANDARDS @ ST ANDREWS

- AN OVERVIEW

Standard 1. Culturally Safe Environments.

A culturally safe place for Aboriginal children. The practices and sensitivities that relate to Standard 5 apply to the enrolment of an Aboriginal/Torres Strait child. The spirit of this Standard is to take a stand against racism. St Andrews Christian College does not tolerate or promote racism of any kind.

Standard 2. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in leadership, governance and culture.

Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in the College culture at every level, from the College Board, via the Principal and the Executive Leadership Team and understood and implemented by all staff members. The Child-safe Code of Conduct is read and signed by all members of staff annually. Our statement of commitment to child safety and our policies are on the College website. Our risk management strategies and procedures are comprehensive.

Standard 3. Child and Student Empowerment.

All students (children and young people) will be educated and empowered about their human rights: to be heard, consulted and included in decision-making processes that affect them and the strategies and procedures in place to keep them safe. This includes access to sexual abuse prevention programs, delivered in age-appropriate formats.

Standard 4. Family Engagement

The College community, which includes families, staff and students, will be informed and involved in developing and implementing the practices and procedures that will protect our children and their wellbeing.

Standard 5. Diversity and Equity

Equity is upheld and diverse needs are respected in policy and practice. The College recognises some children are vulnerable because of their cultural and linguistic diversity, physical or intellectual disability, sexual identity or gender dysphoria, and will ensure they are not discriminated against or disadvantaged by the structures, policies and practices of the College.



Standard 6. Suitable staff and volunteers

People employed or approved to work with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice. This will be evidenced by VIT registration or Working With Children clearance, and will be the focus of recruitment, screening and interviewing processes. The College's publications will emphasise the commitment to child safety.

Standard 7. Complaints Management Processes

Processes for making, managing and responding to complaints, including investigating complaints and child abuse concerns, are visible, accessible and child focussed. The College has a Complaints Management process that is outlined in several Policy documents and is illustrated with simple graphic flow charts. Students and parents can lodge a Child Safety concern through the Hub.

Standard 8. Child Safety knowledge, skills and awareness

Regular staff training throughout the year will equip all staff members with the knowledge, skills and awareness required to keep children safe. Teachers will complete the Protecting Children – mandatory reporting and other obligations eLearning module and provide certification of completion. All staff will read and sign off on key policies, manuals and the Child-safe Code of Conduct annually.

Standard 9. Child safety in physical and on-line environments

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing, minimising the opportunity for children or young people to be harmed. Strategies for risk management and mitigation of physical and online risk are contained in relevant policies.

Standard 10. Review of Child Safety practices

The College is committed to regular review and improvement of child safety and its implementation with the College community.

Standard 11. Implementing Child Safe practices

This policy and the related documents show how the College works to exercise its duty of care to all students, and to provide evidence that these child-safe practices and procedures are well-known and complied with.

Details on how these Standards are incorporated into the College Policy and Procedures are outlined below.

7. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

7.1 Child Safety and Wellbeing are embedded in College governance, leadership and culture. CSS 2

St Andrews Christian College will:

- Ensure the College website has a clear statement that child abuse of any kind or harmful discrimination on the basis of identified attributes will not be tolerated. This statement is also a part of recruitment documentation and other College publications.
- Through the College Board, assign the responsibility for child safety education and practices to the Principal. This responsibility will be practically shared by members of the Executive Leadership Team, the Child Protection Officer and the Child Safe Champions. They will ensure that all staff complete mandatory reading and training in Child Protection, Mandatory Reporting, Risk Management and Duty of Care, as well as other policies which support these principles.
- Undertake annual Risk Assessment audits and review of procedures, at Board and Executive levels.
- Ensure all members of staff, including casually employed staff and volunteers, read and sign the College Child-safe Code of Conduct and the Staff-Student Professional Boundaries statement.
- Build Risk Management strategies into the planning of all activities on and off campus, including excursions, camps, sporting programs and other special events. The College uses the CompliSpace Plan-Check-Go product to guide teachers through the planning, risk management and approval process.
- Regularly (at least annually) provide all staff with PD and other forms of communication to ensure their understanding of obligations under the law regarding record keeping and information sharing. At St Andrews Christian College, all information sharing under the Act regarding Family Violence or any other type of information **must go through the Child Protection Officer**.

7.2 Education and Empowerment of Students (children and young people) - CSS 3; CSS 7

This element of the Child Protection Policy identifies the need for children to be educated and aware:

- of what is and what is not child abuse
- ways and opportunity to provide feedback to teachers about concerns or uncertainty relating to their safety in College programs and activities.
- of how to make a complaint or allegation about abuse to themselves or another child.

To this end, St Andrews Christian College will:

- Make this Policy and related documents available to all members of the College community, as PDF documents on the website, and on **the hub**.
- **Inform and educate students** about the importance of self-protection, personal safety, strategies for finding support and help if concerned. Information posters are displayed in classrooms and other spaces.



- Encourage students to complete Feedback Forms at the end of units of study or activities where personal safety could be an issue.
- Provide age-appropriate **Sexuality and Relationships Education** for students that gives them opportunity to discuss and process such information and safety concerns, in a safe, open context. In this context the teacher will also outline key Biblical teaching about moral and behavioural choice that reflect the College's Biblical Worldview. Staff must never counsel student/s or be judgemental in anyway. Staff are to be aware of guidelines and expectations concerning the 'Change or Suppression Act'.
- Ensure **Student Codes of Conduct** (Primary and Secondary Behaviour Matrices), **Four Critical Actions** posters and other helpful materials are displayed in classrooms and other open spaces.
- Ensure important information about **making a complaint** about alleged abuse to the Child Protection Officer, Wellbeing officers (Child Safety Champions) or other pastoral carers will be available for students.

We will listen to and act on any concerns children or their parents/carers raise with us.

We are committed to protecting children from abuse. 'Abuse', as used in this policy, includes all the following types of abuse or neglect of children and young people:

physical; sexual; emotional/psychological; racial/cultural or spiritual/religious, or neglect.

7.3 Family Engagement – CSS 4

A central principle of Christian Education is that it is a partnership between the parents and the College – and it involves all aspects of the education and pastoral care of every student. This Policy affirms the right of parents to:

- have opportunity to comment on arrangements, policies and procedures in place for the safety and well-being of their children
- be fully informed of activities and the risk assessment and mitigation that has been undertaken
- have access to all the policies that guide governance and leadership decisions around child safety. These documents will be available on both the website and ‘the hub’.

7.4 Upholding Equity, Respecting Diversity CSS 5

St Andrews Christian College is blessed to have families from a wide range of ethnic, cultural and language backgrounds. We value and uphold this diversity and are enriched by it. Our beliefs - relating to the value of every child, regardless of age, gender or sexual orientation, race or ethnicity, ability or disability – underpin our policies and practices in curriculum delivery and assessment, behaviour management and pastoral care.

We pay particular attention to the needs of students with physical or intellectual, or learning disabilities, through our Learning Support Team and programs. We provide for students with English as a second language through our English as an Additional Language Program. St Andrews Christian College respect and respond to the particular needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island students.

Students who identify as LGBTIQ+ or who have gender dysphoria or anxiety or confusion about any of these identifications are protected and cared for by our Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Teams.

7.5 Employment of Staff and Volunteers – CSS 6

7.5.1 Recruitment, screening and selection practices (Ref: Staff Recruitment and Induction Procedures)

The College will be vigilant in the recruitment, selection and screening of all staff, contractors, activity leaders and volunteers to ensure they are safe and suitable to work with children and young people. It is important that every person who works with children under the auspices of this College upholds and exemplifies our Christian beliefs and values, as expressed in this Policy, especially in their interaction with children and other vulnerable people.

- i. Our statements of commitment to child safety and our behavioural expectations of employees and volunteers are included in all advertisements and Position Descriptions.
- ii. We will conduct thorough screening to determine whether a prospective staff member, contractor, volunteer or leader may pose a risk to children. This will include making reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child-connected work:
 - a. Child-related Employment Screening Clearance, that is, the Working With Children Check, the National Criminal Record check, and, for teachers, *current registration* with the V.I.T.
 - b. proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications;
 - c. the person's history of work involving children; and
 - d. references that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.

- iii. The type of evidence that an applicant is required to provide to the College will vary depending on the type of position that they are applying for. However, the College will not offer any applicant a position of responsibility until they provide the required evidence to Human Resources.

Any person with a record of child abuse, either sexual or physical, will not be offered a role at the College.

- iv. Short-listed applicants will be interviewed by the Principal and/or another member of the ELT prior to appointment being made official. Interviews will include specific questions relating to allegations or complaints made against the applicant involving misconduct against a child. The applicant will sign the questionnaire verifying the truthfulness and accuracy of the statements. (See: Child-safe Employment Policy)

7.5.2 Induction, Training and Annual Certification

The College provides a system of induction, support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. This system will train and guide our staff and volunteers in their interactions with children and provide clear procedures for managing programs and activities.

- a. All staff are provided with a copy of this **Child Protection: Policy and Procedures** (the core documents, and the Child Protection Staff Manual) that defines unacceptable conduct, boundaries and expectations for behaviour. Staff will sign a pledge stating they have read, understand and will comply with all guidelines and procedures.
- b. New staff will complete a Child-safe Induction process as part of their orientation to the College.
- c. Annual ***'Refresh, Renew, Update'*** sessions are run for all teachers, administration staff and volunteers, to ensure staff awareness of the risks to child safety and familiarity with College child-protective practices and reporting expectations, and where there have been changes to legislation or practice. This includes the completion of the 'Protecting Children; Mandatory Reporting' eLearning module for teachers and other Mandatory Reporters. Satisfactory completion of this module will generate a Certificate of completion/compliance, which is recorded by Administration. It can be accessed at [Information Sharing and MARAM Online Learning System: Log in to the site \(childlink.com.au\)](https://childlink.com.au)

First time use will require each person to create a login username and password. It is advisable to use your College Initial-Surname or email address for username and your College password for this application as well.

7.5.3 Support and Supervision for Staff, Contractors and Volunteers:

St Andrews Christian College provides support and supervision so that people feel valued, respected and fairly treated in the following ways:

- The College checks VIT registrations for teachers, and WWCCs for all other directly employed staff annually. The VIT and WWCC organisations regularly check the suitability of staff for child connected work throughout the period that the registration / check is held.



- Staff complete *Staff Intentions* Forms annually. This form outlines expectations and confirms that staff are still in agreement with the College *Statement of Belief*. It provides opportunity for staff to voice any concerns they may have regarding their employment.
- Staff are accountable to read and familiarise themselves with College policies annually, as available on **the hub** and directed by the ELT. Staff sign-off after reading is checked and stored.
- Staff are aware that they are accountable to their peers, supervisors and ultimately, God for the safety and wellbeing of students. Awareness, vigilance and conferring with colleagues and supervisors are important strategies that are encouraged in protecting our students.
- Where possible, the College will:
 - Organise for trade-based works to take place outside of school hours.
 - Endeavour to employ regular contractors for trade works.
 - Ensure that contracts include child safety standards and expectations.



8. RISK MANAGEMENT CSS 9+

The College Executive Leadership Team and the OH&S committee role is to identify and manage risks in all school environments, including physical and online. A detailed statement of the College's approach to Risk Management is contained in the Risk and Compliance Policy and Management document².

Risk assessment and management practices are embedded in our procedures for all services, programs or activities authorised by the College. We use these practices to inform our planning and implementing of all aspects of operation at the College.

Risk identification and mitigation is part of the planning process for all activities, especially sports events, excursions and camps. The College uses the Plan-Check-Go product from CompliSpace to ensure consistent and thorough risk management processes are provided to the Deputy Principal – Operations prior to any event being approved and authorised. (See Excursions and Camps Policy³)

Online safety is managed in various ways, articulated in the College ICT and Digital Devices Policy and Protocols⁴ and overseen by the College Network Administrator. Annually, students and parents are given direct instruction in regards to online safety.

Risk Management also applies to Occupational Health and Safety generally and is covered in more detail in OH&S Policy and Staff Manual 2020. The College **OH&S committee will identify and manage risks within the College and its environment**. If the OH&S Committee identifies risks of child abuse occurring in the College or its environment the Committee will make a record of those risks and specify the action(s) the College will take to reduce or remove the risks (i.e. risk controls). As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the Committee will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls.

9. RECORD KEEPING CSS 7, 8 & 11

Record keeping is an essential element of our Child Protection strategies.

- Teachers, aides and volunteers should keep personal notes of concerns, observations and disclosures regarding child abuse during the process of forming a reasonable belief.
- Notes can be saved as a Pastoral Care Record on a student's profile on 'the hub'. These are accessible by the CPO and the Deputy Principal – Operations.
- When a 'reasonable belief' has been established, these notes can be recorded as an Initial CPO Report, available from the CPO site on 'the hub'. If it is clear that the belief requires a mandatory report, the notes and Initial CPO Report can be used to make out a formal Child Abuse Report Form, that can be supplied to the Victoria Police or the Child Protection Unit of DFFH.
- If a report is made by a mandated reporter or any other employee of the College, then all notes and the Report Form will be saved to a **case file**, which will keep all subsequent correspondence and materials relating to investigations, determinations and further actions.

Notes and forms will record places, times, dates, names of people, observable behaviours or evidence of harm. Reports must be securely stored by the CPO/College Administration. They provide valuable legal documents for any investigations and demonstrate the College's due diligence.

² [Microsoft Word - Risk and Compliance Policy and Management 12 21 \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

³ [Microsoft Word - Excursions and Camps Policy Protocols and Procedures 2020 \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

⁴ [Microsoft Word - ICT and Digital Devices Policy and Implementation 20.10.20v3 \(amazonaws.com\)](#)



10. PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

CSS 11

The College will collect, use, disclose and hold personal information of all people who fulfil a role within the College, in accordance with relevant privacy legislation. Such data will be securely stored and protected. Greater detail is provided in the College's *Privacy Policy*

As much as is reasonably possible, an individual's confidentiality is to be protected where allegations of child abuse are made. Both those who are making reports and those about whom accusations are being made are entitled to confidentiality. Where there is suspected abuse or misconduct, staff members, leaders, volunteers and contractors must not disclose or make use of the information in a manner that breaches confidentiality, other than to report and act in a way consistent with the Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct and Procedure, and relevant statutory requirements.

11. REVIEW

CSS 10

All policies, procedures and practices for keeping children safe will be reviewed every three years or following changes to the law. After every reportable incident, this policy will be reviewed to assess whether the College's child protection policies or procedures require modification to better protect the children under its care. St Andrews Christian College undertakes to seek views, comments and suggestions from children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers.



12. REPORTING OBLIGATIONS –

RESPONDING, REPORTING AND CARE FOR THE CHILD

If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000.

Fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained here does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.¹

12.1 Overview

Child abuse, especially sexual abuse of a child must be reported, where a reasonable belief is held that the child concerned has been abused, is being, or is likely to be, abused. A responsible adult can come to a reasonable belief through:

- i. Disclosure by a child about abuse to his or her self.
- ii. Disclosure by another child or an adult about abuse to a child, or
- iii. Direct observation of the abuse or evidence of it by the reporting adult.

The identity of the abuser and the circumstances of the event determine the procedure that should be followed by the leadership, employees or volunteers of the College.

12.2 Reporting Abuse of a Child Outside of the College

If a child enrolled in the College discloses abuse against them or to another child, by a person **outside of the College community**, then the procedures outlined in **Reporting Procedure 1** (Appendix 1 and 1A) must be followed. All such disclosures should be written up on a **Complaints Form** (Appendix 2) and the Principal informed (or if the concern is about the Principal, the Board Chair should be informed instead).

Staff are not required to make a judgement about the truth of the allegation of child abuse⁵.

However, it is the duty of the person to whom the disclosure was made to report the matter to either the Police or Child Protection Services (a division of DFFH), following the Reporting Procedure 1. The College leadership may also decide to make a report.

In this case, ***no further investigation by the College is required***. However, all reasonable steps to protect the child from harm should be taken, and pastoral care extended to the child and family, as appropriate.

12.3 Abuse of a Child by a College employee, volunteer or contractor.

In the case of an allegation being made against staff member, volunteer, leader or contractor at College, the staff member initially contacted will follow the Reporting Procedure in **Procedure 1** (Appendix 1 and 1B) to notify both the College Executive Leadership Team (usually the Principal) and the Police (if the matter is deemed severe or criminal).

If the allegation is against the Principal, concerns should be raised with the Board Chair by email chairman@standrews.vic.edu.au

⁵ Ministerial Order 870 – *Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse* 11(4)(c)
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In this case, then the additional requirements of the **Reportable Conduct Scheme** must also be followed by the Principal, as summarised here:

The College will take all steps to ensure that the safety of the child is paramount.

- Step 1.** Ensure that the details of the allegation are recorded on a College **Complaint Form**, and the Board/Executive Leadership Team is informed. Report the matter to the Police or DFFH.
- Step 2.** **Withdraw the accused person from active duty**, which could entail standing down (with pay, where applicable), re-assignment to other duties that do not have direct contact with children, or to work under increased supervision while the matter is being investigated.
- Step 3.** Notify the **Commission for Children and Young People** in accordance with the Reportable Conduct Scheme guidelines, that is, within three (3) working days.
- Step 4.** The investigation process should be completed within 30 days of notification, or within 30 days of any investigation undertaken by the Police or other government agency. The report of the investigation, including findings and actions taken (or decision not to act) will be sent to the CCYP. In some cases it may be appropriate to bring in an investigator from outside the College, to avoid conflicts of interest. (See below)
- Step 5.** When a report is made, the leadership will contact the Insurance company (ACS Insurance) and the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

12.4 Investigations

The College will ensure all allegations relating to an incident of abuse are appropriately investigated in accordance with its obligations and to the extent reasonably practicable.

In some circumstances, as described by the **Reportable Conduct Scheme**, it may be necessary for College to endorse and conduct an investigation *in addition to* any investigation conducted by authorities (e.g. the police).

This inhouse investigation may only occur after being given clearance by the Police, if criminal charges have been made.

The College may conduct an independent investigation into the allegation to the extent that it will not interfere with investigations by the Department or the police and will co-operate with the authorities as required. All people covered by this Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct and Procedure must co-operate fully with any investigation by the Department, the police or the College.

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for College to engage a person (or persons) from outside the College to conduct an independent investigation in relation to allegations. ⁶

The College will make every effort to keep any such investigation confidential; however, from time to time other employees, leaders, volunteers and contractors may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation (e.g. to provide witness statements).

⁶ It is important to have an arrangement in place. The investigator must be a person of experience and qualification, maybe with a role in the wider church association or sourced through Christian Schools Australia.



12.5 Case Management

In the event of a child disclosing an incident of abuse to someone they trust it is essential that it is dealt with swiftly, sensitively and professionally.

An investigation conducted by the College will be conducted in accordance with procedural fairness to protect the integrity of the investigation and the interests of all the participants involved in the investigation. The College will also handle the allegations in a confidential manner to the greatest extent possible. The outcome will depend on the findings of the investigation, but may be (but not limited to). Such outcomes:

- withdrawal from current role;
- re-assignment to duties with no contact with children;
- increased supervision;
- disciplinary action, dismissal or criminal prosecution.

12.6 Care and Concern for the Abused Child

As a Christian community, it is expected that anyone aware of a child who has been abused, is at risk or in need of protection, will go over and above the legal requirements to protect and comfort the child. It is expected that the care, concern and support for the child will envelop the entire process, including follow up, and after the situation seems to have resolved. Child abuse is a serious and traumatic matter.

The College will provide access to qualified counsellors/psychologists for students and staff who have been involved in abuse or traumatic events that have happened in the College.

11. State and Local Contact Details

Victoria Police	000
Child First - Yarra Ranges	1300 369 146
Child Protection Crisis Line (24 hours)	13 12 78
DFFH Child Protection – Eastern Suburbs	1300 360 391
Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)	1300 360 391
Headspace – Knox	(03) 9801 6088
Kids Helpline	1800 55 1800
Lifeline	13 11 14
Victoria Police - Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team (SOCIT)	(03) 9881 7939

Appendix 1. Reporting Procedures

Reporting Procedure 1

1. Clarifying, Recording Evidence and Specific Information about the Child

A Report is required if you believe, based on reasonable grounds, that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm as a result of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect AND that the child's parents or caregivers have not, or are unlikely to, protect the child from such harm.

The following information will be required when making a formal report to either the Police or Child Protection Services.

- The child's name, age (date of birth is preferable) and address
- The name, age and address of any known siblings
- Your reasons (observations or disclosures) for believing that the child is at risk of abuse, or actually being abused or neglected
- Your assessment of the immediate danger to the child
- Current whereabouts of the child or vulnerable person (if not in the home)
- Your description of injuries or 'sign' behaviours you have observed
- Any other information you may have of relevance to the investigation

2. Fill out a Complaints Report Form (Appendix 2)

N.B. You do not have to be given permission by College leadership to make such a report. Your identity as notifier will remain confidential unless you choose to inform the child or family.

3. Reporting. Making a report is to lay a serious allegation of a criminal offence against another person, so clarify your perceptions carefully before reporting.

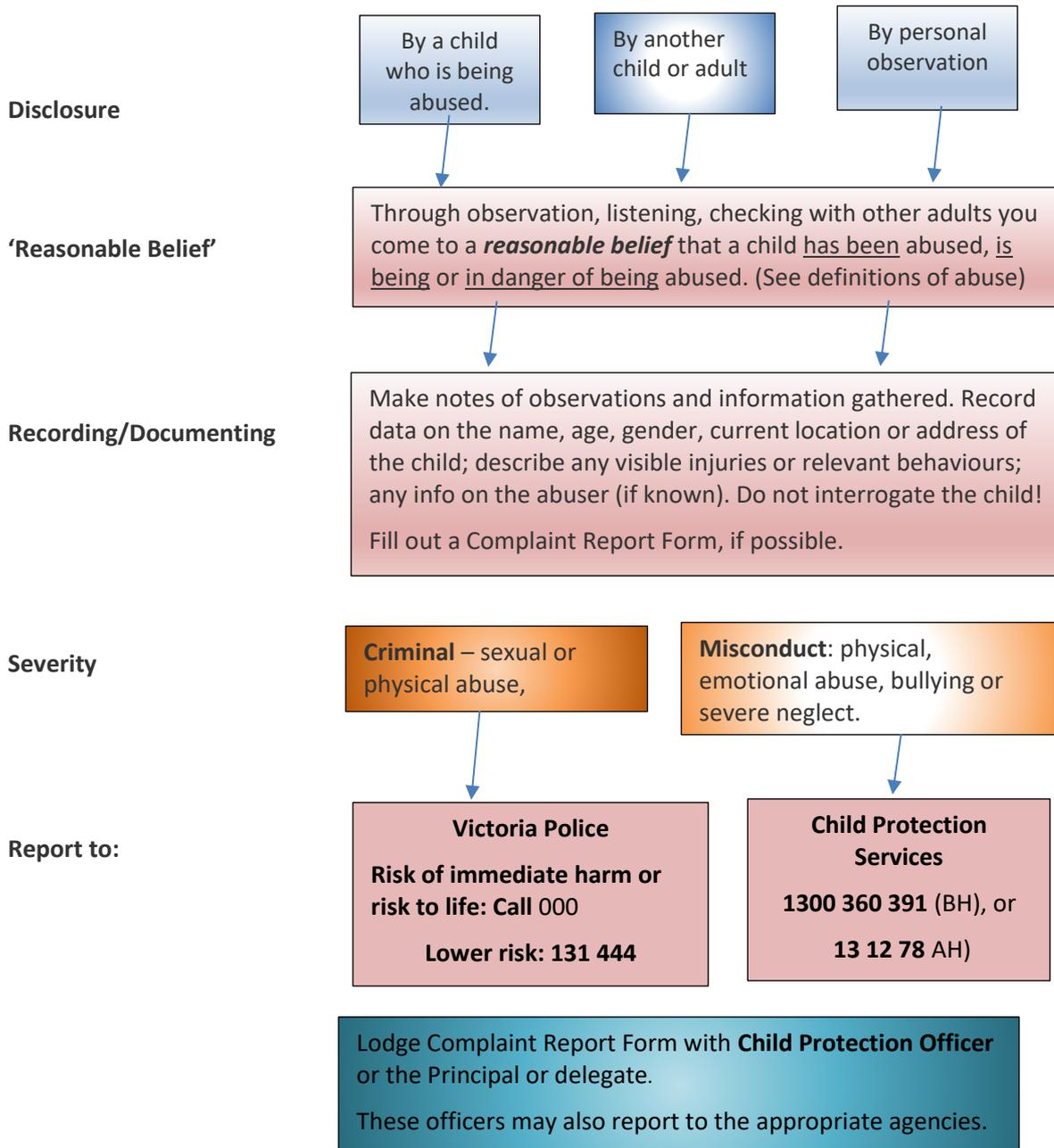
You can make your report to:

- **The College Child Protection Officer**, using a Complaint Form. Attach your notes to the form, keeping a copy. Please note, the CPO will inform the Principal / ELT of your report (or if the concern is about the Principal, the Board Chair will be informed), and they will act in accordance to law. You may still make an independent report to:
- **The Police.** (Ring 000) The police are the most appropriate first responders if the report is regarding abuse that is immediate, criminal or endangering the child either on school premises in another location.
- **Child Protection Services** 1300 360 391 (Eastern suburbs)
Victoria: (1300 655 795 BH, or 13 12 78 AH) is a statutory service provided by DFFH to protect children and young people at risk of harm and to work with families to ensure these risks are mitigated.



Appendix 1A - Reporting Child Abuse *External* to the Workplace / College

The chart below outlines the process that a person working with children in a specific setting should follow to protect a vulnerable child from actual or possible abuse, from someone **with no relationship or connection with the organisation**.



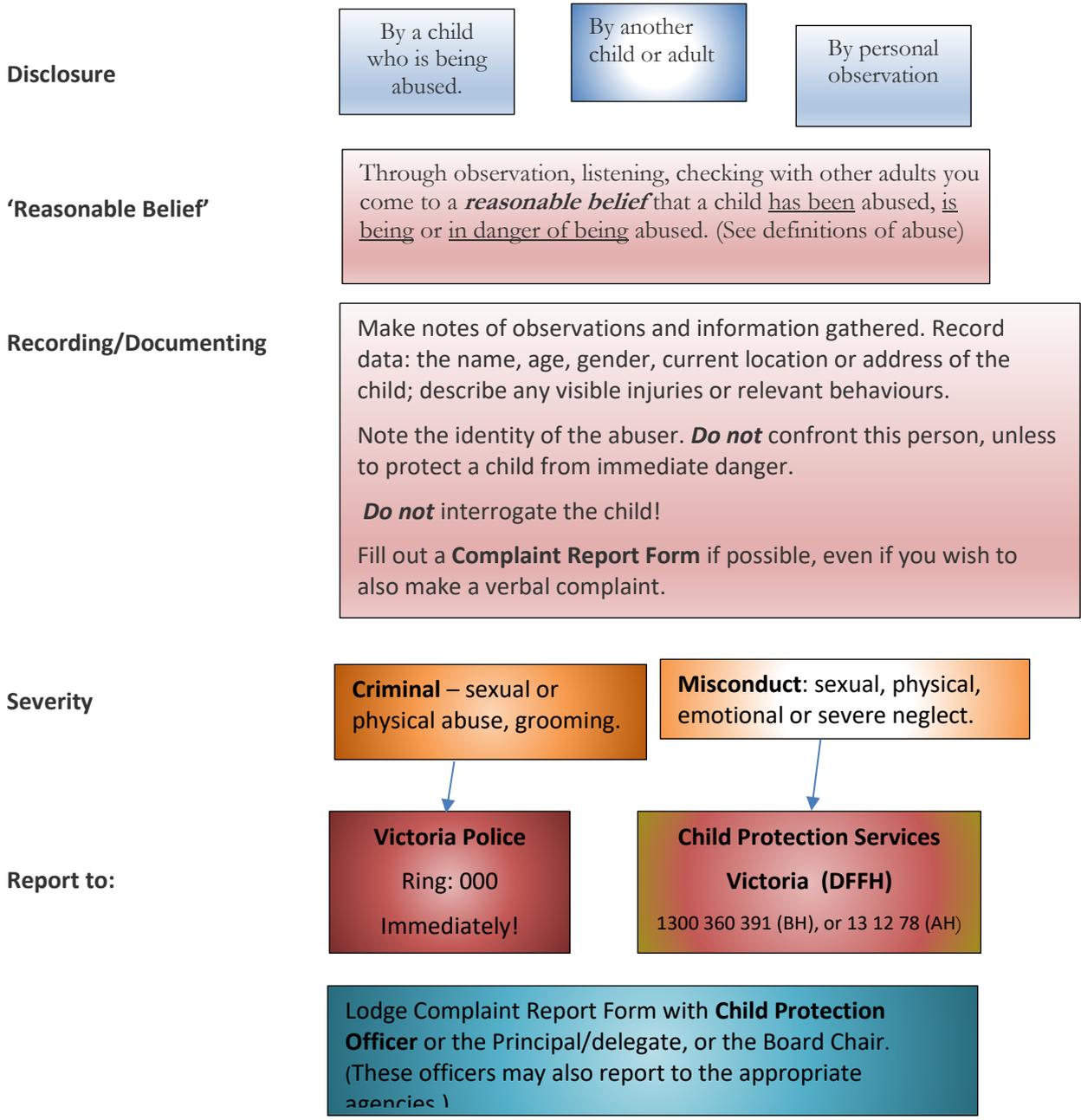
There is nothing else you need to do, as a responsible adult.

Your identity as notifier will remain confidential unless you choose to inform the child or family.



Appendix 1B – Reporting Child Abuse IN your Workplace

Even if you know the person as a colleague, your first duty of care is to safeguard the child.



Reporting Obligations of the 'Head of Entity' under the Reportable Conduct Scheme:

Notify: The Principal has 3 working days to notify the CCYP of a reportable allegation.

Investigate: You **must investigate** an allegation (*subject to Police clearance on criminal matters*); advise CCYP as to who is investigating; manage the immediate risks to children (e.g. remove alleged offender from any contact with children)

Update: Within 30 days, provide a report which updates CCYP with information and actions you have taken.

Outcomes: Notify CCYP of findings and actions (or why no action was taken).



APPENDIX 2. Complaint Report Form (Child Abuse)

Please use this Form to make a Formal Complaint regarding discrimination or abuse of any kind towards yourself or another person, including a child. **Please read the Code of Conduct Document before using this form.**

COMPLAINT FORM (Private and Confidential) Date: / /20__ Time: __:__ am/pm

Your Name: _____	(If applicable) Role at the College: _____
Is the complaint about offending behaviour: a. Directed towards you? Yes / No b, Concerning a child? Yes / No c. About a vulnerable person? Yes / No	Who was the victim of the behaviour? Name: _____ Date of Birth: ___ / ___ / _____ Age: ____ Address: _____ _____
Please briefly, but accurately, describe the alleged behaviour about which you are lodging this Complaint Report Form. (Keep to the facts, without interpretation or opinion.) Who was the offending person? _____ What abusive behaviour did you observe or come to hear about? _____ _____ _____ Is the abuse still happening or was it a past event? _____ Is there any physical evidence of abuse – is the child injured? _____ _____ Where did the event/behaviour take place? _____ _____ Were there other witnesses? If so, provide name(s) _____ _____ What is the level of risk to the victim now? _____ Low High _____ Possible Likely to happen Immediate high risk Happened in the past Any other comments: _____ _____	



Any other comments (continued)

Statement of Intent: I make this complaint in all sincerity, recognising that such a complaint may have a serious or long-term impact on all those involved. I will act in good faith in the process and accept the ruling of the investigator where I believe it is fair and transparent.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____ / _____ / 20____

If you feel comfortable about involving another witness, do so below:

Witness: (Print name) _____ **Date:** _____ / _____ / 20____

Witness Signature: _____

APPENDIX 3 — DEFINITIONS

Child generally means a young person under the age of 18. In the context of this school, it includes all children enrolled as a student at the school, including those who turn eighteen during the school year.

Child abuse includes—

- Any act committed against a child involving
 - a sexual offence; or
 - an offence under section 49B(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming); and
- The infliction, on a child, of
 - physical / family violence; or
 - serious emotional or psychological harm; and
- Serious neglect of a child.

Child safety or child protection encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse. Child safety includes **cultural safety** for children.

Children with a disability. A disability can be any physical, sensory, neurological disability, acquired brain injury or intellectual disability or developmental delay that affects a child’s ability to undertake everyday activities. A disability can occur at any time in life. Children can be born with a disability or acquire a disability suddenly through an injury or illness. Some disabilities may be obvious while others are hidden.

CCYP stands for **the** Commission for Children and Young People.

Cultural safety⁷ is the positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination, and more than cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. It is an environment which is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for children; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their cultural or linguistic identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience, of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening.

Reasonable ground for belief is a belief based on **reasonable grounds** that child abuse has occurred when all known considerations or facts relevant to the formation of a belief are taken into account and these are objectively assessed. Circumstances or considerations may include the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature of and details of the allegation, and whether there are any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.

A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person believes that:

- The child is in need of protection;
- The child has suffered or is likely to suffer “significant harm as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse”;
- The parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

A ‘reasonable belief’ or a ‘belief on reasonable grounds’ is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour, suspicion or speculation.

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 if:

- A child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;

⁷ Revised from *An Overview of the Victorian Child Safe Standards* (November 2015) -State of Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services and *A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation* (Version 2.0 December 2015)- Commission for Children and Young People.



- A child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);
- Someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;
- Professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused; and/or
- Signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused.

School environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- A campus of the school;
- Online school environments (including email and intranet systems); and
- Other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).

School governing authority means:

- The proprietor of a school, including a person authorised to act for or on behalf of the proprietor; or
- The school governing body / College Board; or
- The principal, as authorised by the proprietor of a school, the school governing body, or the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 / Regulations 2017

Staff means an individual working in a school environment who is:

- directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority;
- a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary); or
- a minister of religion.

Students at risk are those whose health, wellbeing and educational success is at risk owing to factors such as poverty, race, ethnicity, language, family stress or other factors. It refers to all children who are vulnerable, in danger, or in need of special care, support, or protection because of age, disability, or risk of abuse or neglect. This can include aboriginal children, children from culturally and / or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability. See *5.4 Identifying Students at Risk* below.



Appendix 4. Signs of Abuse and Indicators of Students at Risk

Students at risk may identify through physical indicators, behaviour, needs or circumstance. Signs of students at risk of abuse may be as follows, including physical, sexual, emotional and neglect⁸. Although indicators are categorised, they are fluid and may indicate a different issue than that which is listed.

Physical Abuse

Physical indicators include:

- Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts.
- Fractured bones, especially in an infant where a fracture is unlikely to occur accidentally.
- Poisoning.
- Internal injuries.

Possible behavioural indicators include:

- Showing wariness or distrust of adults.
- Wearing long sleeved clothes on hot days (to hide bruising or other injury).
- Demonstrating fear of parents and of going home.
- Becoming fearful when other children cry or shout.
- Being excessively friendly to strangers.
- Being very passive and compliant.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is not usually identified through physical indicators. Often the first sign is when a child tells someone they trust that they have been sexually abused. However the presence of sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, bodily bleeding or discharge may indicate sexual abuse.

One or more of these behavioural indicators may be present:

- Child telling someone that sexual abuse has occurred.
- Complaining of headaches or stomach pains.
- Experiencing problems with schoolwork.
- Displaying sexual behaviour or knowledge which is unusual for the child's age.
- Showing behaviour such as frequent rocking, sucking and biting.
- Experiencing difficulties in sleeping.
- Having difficulties in relating to adults and peers.

Emotional Abuse

There are few physical indicators, although emotional abuse may cause delays in emotional, mental, or even physical development.

Possible behavioural indicators include:

- Displaying low self esteem
- Tending to be withdrawn, passive, tearful
- Displaying aggressive or demanding behaviour
- Being highly anxious
- Showing delayed speech
- Acting like a much younger child, e.g. soiling, wetting pants
- Displaying difficulties in relating to adults and peers

Neglect

Physical indicators include:

- Frequent hunger



- Malnutrition
- Poor hygiene
- Inappropriate clothing, e.g. Summer clothes in winter
- Left unsupervised for long periods by parents or carers
- Medical needs not attended to
- Abandoned by parents

Possible behavioural indicators include:

- Stealing food
- Staying at school outside school hours
- Often being tired, falling asleep in class
- Abusing alcohol or drugs
- Displaying aggressive behaviour
- Not getting on well with peers

Further indicators of students at risk are:

Possible physical indicators:

- Physical signs of self-harming, such as cuts, bruises, burns

Possible behavioural indicators:

- Fear of specific people
- Unexplained absences
- Academic problems
- Exhibiting low self-esteem
- Exhibiting high anxiety
- Self-harming
- Needing attention
- Risk taking
- Negative interactions with peers
- Significant change in behaviour, attitude or performance

There are many indicators of child abuse and neglect. The presence of a single indicator, or even several indicators, does not prove that abuse or neglect has occurred. However, the repeated occurrence of an indicator, or the occurrence of several indicators together, should alert teachers to the possibility of child abuse and neglect.

Self-Harm

Self-harm can be direct or indirect. Direct self-harm can include immediate tissue damage (reducing emotional pain without the intent to die) and poisoning (usually is with the intent to die). Indirect self-harm can include:

- Substance abuse
- Excessive exercise
- Eating disorders
- Sleep deprivation
- Risky behaviours (driving without a seatbelt, extreme sports)
- Promiscuity

Students at risk of abuse, or who have been abused may or may not be suicidal.

Suicidal indicators include:

- Hopelessness
- Social isolation / withdrawal
- Depression
- Threats, talk of, or joking about suicide
- Making final arrangements, giving away possessions, saying goodbye



- Focus on death / suicidal thoughts, which may be expressed verbally or through artwork, poems or stories
- Noticeable behaviour changes
- Risk taking, skipping school, running away, sexual promiscuity, impulsiveness, agitation, indifference, rebelliousness, destructive or illegal activity
- Loss of interest in hobbies, sports, work and school.
- Sudden mood swings, abrupt changes in personality, sadness, frequent crying
- Self-mutilation
- Fatigue/sleep disturbances
- Inability to concentrate, make decisions or accept alternatives
- Low self-esteem, self-criticism
- Recipient of sexual, emotional, physical abuse or neglect
- Family crisis/homelessness
- Substance abuse Mental Health Issues including depression, anxiety, eating disorders, psychotic episodes.

Appendix 5. A Step-by-Step Guide for Reporting Child Abuse

A step-by-step guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST

Protective concerns

You are concerned about a child because you have:

- received a disclosure from a child about abuse or neglect
- observed indicators of abuse or neglect
- been made aware of possible harm via your involvement in the community external to your professional role.

At all times remember to:

- record your observations
- follow appropriate protocols
- consult notes and records
- consult with appropriate colleagues if necessary
- consult with other support agencies if necessary

STEP 1	RESPONDING TO CONCERNS	STEP 2	FORMING A BELIEF ON REASONABLE GROUNDS	STEP 3	MAKING A REFERRAL TO Child FIRST	STEP 4	MAKE A REPORT TO CHILD PROTECTION
	<p>1. If your concerns relate to a child in need of immediate protection; or you have formed a belief that a child is at significant risk of harm*.</p> <p>Go to Step 4</p> <p>2. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Child FIRST for family services.</p> <p>Go to Step 3</p> <p>3. In all other situations</p> <p>Go to Step 2.</p> <p>* Refer to Appendix 2: Definitions of child abuse and indicators of harm in the Protocol – <i>Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people</i></p>		<p>1. Consider the level of immediate danger to the child.</p> <p>Ask yourself:</p> <p>a) Have I formed a belief that the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm? YES / NO and</p> <p>b) Am I in doubt about the child's safety and the parent's ability to protect the child? YES / NO</p> <p>2. If you answered yes to a) or b)</p> <p>Go to Step 4</p> <p>3. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Child FIRST for family services.</p> <p>Go to Step 3</p>		<p>Child Wellbeing Referral</p> <p>1. Contact your local Child FIRST provider.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See over for contact list for local Child FIRST phone numbers. <p>2. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details.</p>		<p>Mandatory/Protective Report*</p> <p>1. Contact your local Child Protection Intake provider immediately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See over for contact list for local Child Protection phone numbers. For After Hours Child Protection Emergency Services, call 131 278. <p>2. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details.</p> <p>* <i>Non-mandated staff members who believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection are able to report their concerns to Child Protection</i></p>

For further information refer to *Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people – A joint protocol of the Department of Human Services Child Protection, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Licensed Children's Services and Victorian Schools*

Victoria Police: 000 – the Police will also investigate family violence, especially where children are involved as victims or onlookers.

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing - Child Protection Unit 13 12 78

Eastern Division Child Protection intake Office 1300 360 391

After hours Child Protection Emergency Services (AHCPEs) State-wide number for all emergency child protection matters outside of normal business hours (24 hours, 7 days a week): 131 278

Appendix 6. The Reportable Conduct Scheme – Head of Entity reports to the Commission for Children and young People

Information sheet 7

Reporting to the Commission

When does the Commission need to be told about a reportable allegation?

Three business day notification

When the head of an organisation becomes aware of a reportable allegation against a worker or volunteer, they must notify the Commission for Children and Young People within three business days.

30 calendar day update

Within 30 calendar days after becoming aware of a reportable allegation, a head of an organisation must provide the Commission with detailed information about the allegation, disciplinary or other actions undertaken, and the response of the worker or volunteer to the allegation.

Advice on investigation

The allegation must be investigated as soon as practicable after the head of organisation becomes aware of it. The investigation may be conducted by the organisation, their regulator or an independent investigator. The head must inform the Commission of who will conduct the investigation.

Outcomes of investigation

At the conclusion of an investigation into a reportable allegation, a final investigation report must be prepared. The final investigation report should set out the findings, reasons for the findings and recommendations made at the conclusion of the investigation. A copy of the final investigation report should be provided to the Commission as soon as practicable.

What information does the Commission need?

The types of information that the Commission will seek are set out in the diagram below.

Three business day notification	30 calendar day update	Advice on investigation	Outcomes of investigation	Additional documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of the worker or volunteer • Date of birth • Police report • Organisation contact details • Head of organisation's name • Initial advice on the nature of the allegation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of the allegation • Details of your response to the allegation • Details about any disciplinary or other action proposed • Any written response from the worker or volunteer about the allegation and the proposed disciplinary or other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of investigator • Contact details • As soon as practicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of findings and reasons for the findings • Details about any disciplinary or other action proposed • Reasons for taking or not taking action • As soon as practicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commission may request further documents from the head of the organisation

Page 1 of 2

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Last updated: 30 May 2017



COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
3000 TORRENS PLACE 2



How do I give the Commission information?

The Commission will operate an online form for heads of organisations to notify of a reportable allegation, which will guide them through the notification process. Supporting documentation can be submitted through the online form. The Commission requires that heads of organisations use the online form.

If you are not the head of an organisation you can still tell the Commission about a reportable allegation by using the online form, calling or writing to the Commission.

If you are in doubt about how to complete the online form, we encourage you to contact the Commission for advice and support.

What matters should be reported to Victoria Police?

All suspected criminal behaviour should be reported to Victoria Police.

If the reportable allegation involves suspected criminal behaviour, both Victoria Police and the Commission must be notified.

If you are unsure of how to proceed, contact the Commission or Victoria Police for guidance.

If an organisation becomes aware that Victoria Police will investigate a reportable allegation, they must not begin or continue their own investigation. Organisations should wait until police advice that its investigation has concluded or that the organisation's investigation may be conducted simultaneously.

Where to go for help

Organisations covered by the Reportable Conduct Scheme should contact the Commission for clarification and guidance, and to talk through any issues of concern.

- Telephone: 8601 5281
- Email: childsafestandards@ccyo.vic.gov.au

Further information is also available on the Commission for Children and Young People's website at www.ccyo.vic.gov.au