

RESPONDING AND REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Child Safe – Standard 5

Rationale

As members of a school community, we all have a moral obligation to protect any child under our care and supervision from foreseeable harm. As staff members of Aireys Inlet Primary School, we play an especially critical role in protecting children (including identifying, responding and reporting child abuse) and we must meet a range of legal obligations to do so. To comply with our legal and moral obligations we must report any reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused, or is at risk of being abused by following the Four Critical Actions for Schools:

- 1) Responding to an Emergency
- 2) Reporting to Authorities
- 3) Contacting Parents/Carers
- 4) Providing Ongoing Support.

1. Our Obligation to Children

- **All** school staff members have a moral and legal obligation and a Duty of Care to protect any child under their care from foreseeable harm (not just staff who are classified as mandatory reporters).
- Every staff member must respond to any reasonable suspicion that a child has been or is at risk of being abused by following the Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures or Suspicions of Child Abuse.
- Recent changes to Victorian legislation create additional legal obligations in relation to reporting suspected sexual child abuse. Failing to meet these obligations can constitute a criminal offence, including a:
 - failure to disclose a sexual offence
 - failure to protect a child (where it is known that a person associated with their organisation poses a substantial risk of sexually abusing children).
- The easiest way to comply with our legal and moral obligations is to remember that **you must report any reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused or is at risk of being abused.**
- This includes abuse that has, or is suspected to have, taken place within or outside of school grounds and hours.
- Further detailed information can be found following these DET links:
 - [Duty of Care Obligations](#)
 - [Mandatory Reporting Obligations](#)
 - [New Criminal Offences](#)
 - [Ministerial Order No 870: Child Safe Standards - Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools](#)

All school staff members have a duty to take reasonable steps to protect children under their care and supervision from harm that is reasonably foreseeable. The question of what constitutes 'reasonable steps' will depend on the individual circumstances of each case. In relation to suspected child abuse, reasonable steps may include but are not necessarily limited to:

- Acting on concerns and suspicions of abuse as soon as practicable, seeking appropriate advice or consulting with other professionals or agencies when the school staff member is unsure of what steps to take.
- Reporting the suspected child abuse to appropriate authorities such as the Victoria Police and DHHS Child Protection, arranging counselling and/or other appropriate

welfare support for the child, and providing on-going support to the child – this may include attending DHHS Child Protection Case Planning meetings, and convening regular Student Support Group meetings .

- Sharing information with other school-based staff who will also be responsible for monitoring and providing on-going support to the child.

Duty of care also extends to students who are:

- Aged 17 years and over. In circumstances where staff suspect that a student over the age of 17 is subject to abuse you should still follow the Four Critical Actions for Schools as outlined later in this document. Although DHHS Child Protection work with children under 17 they can still be contacted with concerns relating to students 17 and over for referral and advice.
- Involved in student sexual offending. We have a duty of care towards all students involved in student sexual offending, including the alleged victim, assailant and any other students in the school who may have witnessed and/or been affected by the abusive behaviour.

All school staff members, visitors, trades people, contractors, volunteers, etc. have a duty to take reasonable steps to protect children within our school community from harm that is reasonably foreseeable. (This applies to everyone connected to the school environment.) It is particularly important that visitors or others associated with the school, such as contractors, etc. seek out school personnel who can assist and provide advice in regards to any further steps that might need to be taken.

2. Identifying Signs of Child Abuse

At Aireys Inlet Primary School all staff members play a critical role in protecting children from child abuse. In some cases staff members may be the best-placed or only adult in a child's life who is in a position to identify and respond to signs that a:

- child is being abused, or is at risk of abuse
- school community member (including a school staff member) may be a perpetrator of child abuse.

At Aireys Inlet Primary School all staff members will receive training to support them in identifying signs of Child Abuse. Members of the Wellbeing Team will have higher levels of expertise and be able to act as supporters to other staff members.

There are different types of abuse and all staff are required to be able to recognise the possible physical and behavioural indicators of:

- [Physical child abuse](#)
- [Child sexual abuse](#)
- [Grooming](#)
- [Emotional child abuse](#)
- [Neglect](#)
- [Family violence](#)
- [Oral, written or electronic abuse](#)

Please be aware that these links lead to information with explicit descriptions of abuse and may be distressing to engage with for some staff members. If you need to talk to someone, it is recommended that you speak to a member of the school's Wellbeing or Leadership teams about arranging appropriate support. You can also talk to your GP or another allied health professional. Government school staff can also contact the Employee Assistance Program on 1300 361 008.

When identifying child abuse, it is critical to remember that:

- the trauma associated with child abuse can significantly impact upon the wellbeing and development of a child
- all concerns about the safety and wellbeing of a child, or the conduct of a staff member, contractor or volunteer must be acted upon as soon as practicable.

If physical and/or behavioural indicators lead you to suspect that a child has been or is being abused, or is at risk of abuse, you must respond as soon as practicable by following the Four Steps: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures or Suspicions of Child Abuse.

If you believe that a student is not being abused, but you still hold concerns for their safety or wellbeing, refer to advice about responding to concerns about the wellbeing of a child (or unborn child) to determine who to consult with, when to make a report and when to engage other wellbeing professionals. Follow this link for further information: [Responding to Other Concerns About the Wellbeing of a Child](#)

3. Four Critical Actions for Schools

Staff at Aireys Inlet Primary School must take action if they suspect a child is being abused. Staff play a critical role in protecting children in our school's care.

- Staff must act, by following the 4 critical actions, as soon as an incident is witnessed, a disclosure is received, or a reasonable belief is formed that a child has or is at risk of being abused.
- Staff must act if they form a suspicion/reasonable belief, even if they are unsure and have not directly observed child abuse (e.g. if the victim or another person tells you about the abuse).
- Staff must use the Responding to Suspected Child Abuse template included in this document to keep clear and comprehensive notes.
- A reasonable belief is a deliberately low threshold. This enables authorities to investigate and take action.

CRITICAL ACTION 1 – RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY

If there is no risk of immediate harm go to ACTION 2.

If a child is at immediate risk of harm you must ensure their safety by:

- 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.

Where necessary you may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve evidence.

CRITICAL ACTION 2: REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES

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.

IF THE SOURCE OF SUSPECTED ABUSE IS FROM WITHIN THE SCHOOL:

VICTORIA POLICE - You must report all instances of suspected child abuse involving a school staff member, contractor or volunteer to Victoria Police.

You **must also** report **internally** to: School Principal and/or leadership team/Employee Conduct Branch / DET Security Services Unit.

IF THE SOURCE OF SUSPECTED ABUSE IS FROM WITHIN THE FAMILY OR COMMUNITY

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION - You **must** report to DHHS Child Protection if a child is considered to be:

- 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.

VICTORIA POLICE - You **must also** report all instances of suspected sexual abuse (including grooming) to Victoria Police.

You **must also** report **internally** to: School Principal and/or leadership team and DET Security Services Unit.

CRITICAL ACTION 3: CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS

The Principal **must** consult with DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers. They may advise:

- **not to contact** the parents/carers (e.g. 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 parents/carers 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).

CRITICAL ACTION 4: PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT

The 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.

All staff **must** follow the Four Critical Actions every time they become aware of a further instance or risk of abuse. This includes reporting new information to authorities.

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 Child FIRST (in circumstances where the family are open to receiving support), or to DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police.

CONTACTS

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION - South Division 1300 655 795 and West Division (Rural) 1800 075 599

After hours, weekends, public holidays 13 12 78

CHILD FIRST - www.dhs.vic.gov.au

VICTORIA POLICE - **000** or contact your local police station

DET SECURITY SERVICES UNIT - (03) 9589 6266

STUDENT INCIDENT AND RECOVERY UNIT - (03) 9637 2934

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH - (03) 9637 2595

FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse

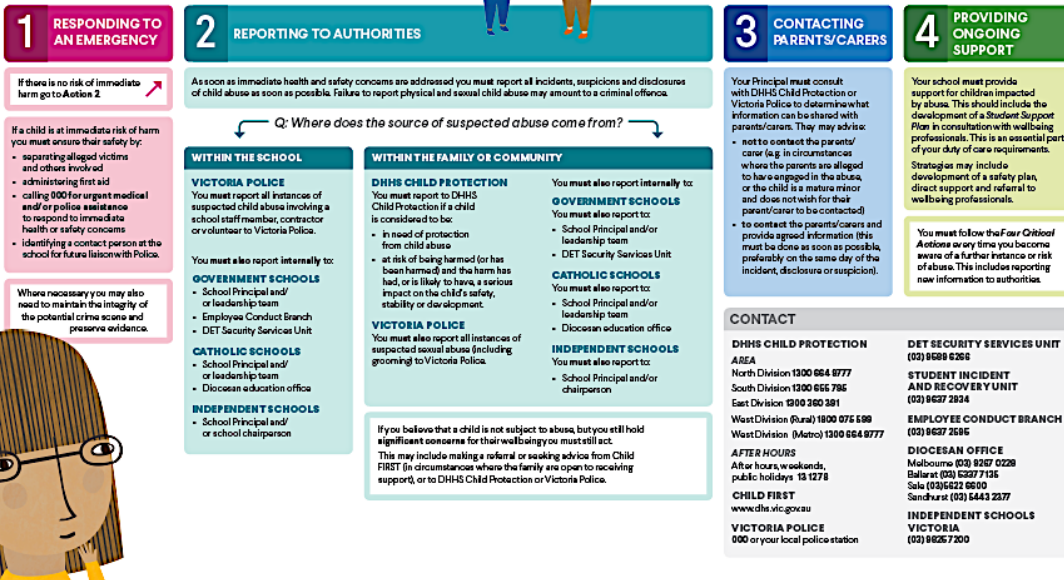


YOU MUST TAKE ACTION

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

- You must act by following the 4 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.
- 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).
- You must use the Responding to Suspected Child Abuse template to keep clear and comprehensive notes.

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



4. Responding to Other Concerns about a Child

If you believe that a student is not being abused, but you still hold concerns for their safety or wellbeing, refer to advice about responding to concerns about the wellbeing of a child (or unborn child) to determine who to consult with, when to make a report and when to engage other wellbeing professionals. Follow this link for further information: [Responding to Other Concerns About the Wellbeing of a Child](#)

Regardless of the suspected cause, all concerns about the wellbeing of a child (or their unborn child) should be taken seriously and acted upon. This includes concerns about the wellbeing of a child, which do not appear to be the result of abuse.

Staff should make a referral to Child FIRST if:

- there is significant concern for a child's wellbeing
- the concerns have a low-to-moderate impact on the child
- the child's immediate safety is not compromised
- the school has discussed the referral with the family and they are supportive of it.

Staff must contact Victoria Police if:

- there is any concern for a child's immediate safety and/or
- a child is partaking in any risk-taking activity that is illegal and extreme in nature or poses a high risk to the child.

5. Responding to Suspected Child Abuse Template

- School staff will use the [DET 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 the above four critical actions.

- Completing the template should not impact on reporting times. If a child is in immediate danger, school staff should report immediately to Victoria Police.
- Whilst gathering information to make a report, it is not the role of school staff to investigate abuse, leave this to Victoria Police and/or DHHS Child Protection.
- When completing this template the aim is 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 staff if they 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.

6. Privacy and Information Sharing

School staff members are permitted to share certain information about a child who has been impacted (or is suspected to have been impacted) by abuse with:

- other staff members in order to enable staff to best support and protect that child
- an officer from DHHS Child Protection, if the information requested may be of assistance to DHHS Child Protection in their investigation of protective concerns
- Victoria Police if the information may assist in the investigation of potential criminal offences or may aid in the immediate protection and safety of the child.

7. Contact Details and More Information

Within the Department of Education and Training, there are a number of supports available to Victorian government schools responding to incidents, disclosures or suspicions of child abuse, including:

Security Services Unit (SSU)

The Security Services Unit provides a 24-hour communications center for schools and Departmental staff to report a range of incidents. On receiving notification of an incident involving child abuse the Security Services Unit immediately alerts the Student Incident and Recovery Unit (SIRU) and relevant staff within the Central and Regional Office.

Regional Offices

Principals of Victorian government schools are required to maintain on-going contact with their Regional Office throughout any incidents, disclosures or suspicions of child abuse. Each region has an emergency management contact/s. These officers can provide initial advice and support to Victorian government schools during and after incidents, and assists schools to minimise the effects of trauma and enhance recovery.

Student Incident and Recovery Unit (SIRU)

The Student Incident and Recovery Unit (SIRU) works with Victorian Government schools following incidents of a sexual nature to ensure appropriate advice and supports are in place that prioritise the health and wellbeing of the children involved. The SIRU is notified by the Security Services Unit as soon as an incident involving sexual abuse (or problem sexual behaviour) is reported.

The SIRU will:

- provide timely and appropriate advice to Victorian Government schools
- support regions and Victorian Government schools to respond to critical incidents of a sexual nature

- advise Victorian Government schools to meet their legal obligations and duty of care responsibilities
- assist Principals and senior school staff from Victorian Government schools to manage incidents of a sexual nature in a manner that ensures adverse impact on the school community is minimised
- monitor the progress of school management of such incidents
- provide advice on appropriate response measures, such as counselling and management strategies to support those involved in allegations of sexual offending or problem sexual behaviour
- provide advice on the provision of a suitable level of support to school staff and members of the school community on whom the incident has impacted

The SIRU works closely with other key agencies, such as Victoria Police SOCIT and the DHHS, and with organisations such as the Centre against Sexual Assault (CASA) to support student wellbeing in Victorian Government schools.

Student Support Services

The role of the Student Support Services (SSS) is to provide support to Victorian Government schools including:

- establishing a relationship with students and possibly their families
- providing a supportive, calm approach and acknowledging the issues raised
- clarifying the needs of the child
- evaluating the child's present strengths and resources
- evaluating possible ways of accommodating the child's identified needs, such as referral for specialist counselling and school-based supports
- documenting information and actions
- identifying the process for follow up and review
- ascertaining which intervention programs are most appropriate in meeting an individual child's needs

working with the school staff on the appropriate strategies and supports needed for individual children

Employee Conduct Branch

The Employee Conduct Branch is responsible for the implementation of policy and the provision of advice on complaint resolution procedures, unsatisfactory performance, serious misconduct (which would include allegations of child abuse), equal opportunity complaints, managing appeals against disciplinary action, criminal records checks and police liaison, as it relates to Victorian Government school and DET employees.

The branch also manages discipline matters involving members of the teaching service (including Principal Class Officers), Student Support Services and public servants. A key role of the branch is to support Principals or designated officers in their management of processes, and provide advice to them concerning legislative and procedural frameworks.

The Employee Conduct Branch must be contacted on all issues of alleged serious misconduct including allegations of child abuse and grooming which involve a staff member employed by the Department. This includes teachers and Principals.

Legal Division

The Department's Legal Division provides specific advice to government school Principals in relation to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse.

Communications Division

The Department's Communications Division manages all Departmental media liaison, and can support Principals of Victorian government schools in responding to media enquiries relating to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse.

Roles of Other Relevant Authorities

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION

Under the ***Children Youth and Families Act 2005*** the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has a responsibility to provide child protection services for all children and young people under the age of 17 years, or where a protection order is in place, for children under the age of 18.

The main functions of DHHS Child Protection are to:

- receive reports from people who believe that a child is in need of protection or have significant concerns about the wellbeing of a child
- provide consultation and advice to people making reports
- investigate matters where it is believed that a child is at risk of significant harm
- refer children and families to services that assist in providing for the ongoing safety and wellbeing of children.

DHHS Child Protection will also intervene and bring cases before the Children's Court if a child's safety cannot be managed without intervention. DHHS Child Protection has a responsibility to provide adequate supervision, care and protection for children in accordance with orders granted by the Children's Court.

Child First

Child and Family Information, Referral and Support Teams (Child FIRST) were introduced to give families an opportunity to obtain family services earlier at their own request or following a referral from others, including school staff.

Child FIRST is staffed by family services practitioners who are experienced in assessing the needs of vulnerable children and their families. Child FIRST teams work closely with community-based DHHS Child Protection workers.

The role of Child FIRST includes:

- providing a point of entry to a local network of family services
- receiving reports about vulnerable children where there are significant concerns about their wellbeing
- undertaking an initial identification and assessment of the risks to the child and the child's needs in consultation with DHHS Child Protection and other services
- identifying appropriate service responses for families.

Victoria Police

Both DHHS and Victoria Police have statutory responsibilities under the ***Children Youth and Families Act 2005*** in relation to the protection of children. DHHS Child Protection is the lead agency responsible for the care and protection of children, while Victoria Police is responsible for criminal investigations into alleged child abuse.

Members of Victoria Police are protective interveners and mandatory reporters under the ***Children, Youth and Families Act 2005***. The predominant role of police in child abuse incidents is to detect and investigate alleged child physical and sexual abuse and to initiate legal proceedings where appropriate, against the alleged offender/s.

The key responsibilities of Victoria Police in relation to child abuse are to:

- ensure all police members are aware of relevant legislation and their responsibilities
- ensure all police accept and carry out their responsibilities under the Act
- conduct all investigations on the basis that the safety and welfare of the child are paramount

- plan investigations in collaboration with other, relevant agencies
- work with other agencies in accordance with agreed work practices
- provide information to other, relevant agencies
- provide training for staff, and, jointly, with relevant agencies.

Victoria Police Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Teams (SOCIT) have been established to ensure that appropriately trained and qualified police officers are available to respond to and investigate allegations of child abuse and sexual offences.

Counselling/Support Organisations

[THE CENTRE AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT](#)

There are 15 Centers Against Sexual Assault, who work to ensure that women, children and men who are victim/survivors of sexual offending have access to comprehensive and timely support and intervention to address their needs. Phone: 1800 806 292

[GATEHOUSE CENTRE, ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL](#)

Provides support and assistance to children and young people affected by sexual offending or problem sexual behaviours.

[CHILDREN'S PROTECTION SOCIETY](#)

Provide advice and support to children and families to help them break out of the cycle of abuse, neglect, poverty and disadvantage through a creative portfolio of programs, resources and services. Phone: (03) 9450 0900

[AUSTRALIAN CHILDHOOD FOUNDATION](#)

Provide recognised programs that counsel and support children to recovery, help professionals who work with children to better support at risk children and raise awareness of the causes and consequences of abuse. Phone: 1800 176 453

[VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICE](#)

The Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service Co-operative Limited provides legal advice and representation for the Koorie community. Phone: (03) 9322 3555 or country toll free on 1800 015 188

[CHILD WISE](#)

Child Wise is Australia's leading international child protection charity committed to the prevention and reduction of sexual abuse and exploitation of children around the world. Phone: (03) 9695 8900

[ABORIGINAL FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND LEGAL SERVICES](#)

Provides assistance to victims of family violence and sexual offending and to work with families and communities affected by violence.

[HEADSPACE](#)

Headspace is the National Youth Mental Health Foundation providing early intervention mental health services to 12-25 year olds, along with assistance in promoting young peoples' wellbeing. This covers four core areas: mental health, physical health, work and study support and alcohol and other drug services. Information and services for young people, their families and friends as well as health professionals can be accessed through this website, headspace centers, online counselling service headspace, and post intervention suicide support program headspace School Support.

Contact Information

24 HOUR SERVICES

- Victoria Police - 000
- Department of Health and Human Services Child Protection - 131 278
- Department of Education and Training Security Services Unit - (03) 9589 6266

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Security Services Unit - (03) 9589 6266
- Student Incident and Recovery Unit - (03) 9637 2934 or (03) 9637 2487
- Legal Division - (03) 9637 3146
- Employee Assistance Program - 1300 361 008
- Employee Health - (03) 9637 2395
- Employee Conduct Branch - (03) 9637 2595
- Privacy Unit - (03) 9637 3601
- International Division - (03) 9651 3976
- Communications Division - (03) 9637 2871

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES CHILD PROTECTION

West Rural and Regional LGA – Surf Coast – 1800 075 599

CHILD FIRST

Surf Coast - 1300 551 948

OTHER SERVICES

- Centres Against Sexual Assault (CASA) - Emergency Counselling & Support Line - 1800 806 292
- Australian Childhood Foundation - 1800 176 453
- Child Wise - (03) 9695 8900
- Vic Aboriginal Education Association - (03) 9481 0800
- Child Safety Commission - 1300 782 978
- Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner - 1800 880 176
- Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) - (03) 9287 8800
- Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) - (03) 9411 9411

SEXUALLY ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR TREATMENT SERVICES PROVIDERS

- Aust Childhood Foundation - (03) 9874 3922
- Children's Protection Society - (03) 9450 0900
- Berry St - (03) 5822 8100
- Barwon CASA - (03) 5222 4318

Links and Related Policies:

The following are links to support material for schools:

- [DET - Child Safe Standards](#)
- [DET - Standard 5 Schools Guide](#)

Related School Policies:

- Child Protection Reporting Policy

RESPONDING TO AN INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE

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
<p>CULTURAL STATUS AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND <i>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</i></p>
<p>ANY KNOWN PREVIOUS HISTORY OF SUSPECTED ABUSE (PRIOR TO THIS INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION OR INVOLVEMENT WITH AGENCIES):</p>

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:

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

INDICATORS OR INSTANCES WHICH LED YOU TO BELIEVE THAT 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:

NOTHING IF THEY ARE WITHIN THE SCHOOL OR WITHIN THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY (THIS WILL IMPACT ON 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

TICK THE AUTHORITIES YOU HAVE REPORTED TO:

- VICTORIA POLICE
- DHHS CHILD PROTECTION
- CHILD FIRST
- DECISION NOT TO REPORT

IF YOU'VE DECIDED NOT TO REPORT, LIST YOUR REASONS HERE. ALSO INCLUDE ANY FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN BY YOU BELOW:

PROVIDE DETAILS OF YOUR INTERNAL DISCUSSIONS TO EITHER OF THE FOLLOWING:

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.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL STAFF MUST REPORT TO THEIR CATHOLIC DIOCESAN EDUCATION OFFICE

DATE:

TIME:

AUTHORITY:

OUTCOMES FROM THE REPORT:

REPORTING INTERNALLY

PROVIDE DETAILS OF YOUR DISCUSSION WITH SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

TIME: _____ DATE: _____

NAMES: _____

DISCUSSION OUTCOMES: _____

PROVIDE DETAILS OF YOUR INTERNAL DISCUSSIONS TO EITHER OF THE FOLLOWING:

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

CATHOLIC SCHOOL STAFF MUST REPORT TO THEIR CATHOLIC DIOCESAN EDUCATION OFFICE

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

PROVIDE DETAILS OF YOUR DISCUSSION WITH PARENTS/CARERS (IF APPROPRIATE):

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).

HAVE YOU SOUGHT ADVICE FROM DHHS CHILD PROTECTION OR VICTORIA POLICE?

- NO
- YES

IS IT APPROPRIATE TO CONTACT PARENT/CARER

- NO
- YES

LIST REASONS IF IT IS NOT APPROPRIATE TO CONTACT PARENT/CARER:

IF CONTACTING PARENT/CARER, PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING DETAILS:

NAME OF STAFF MEMBER MAKING THE CALL:

NAME OF PARENT/CARER RECEIVING THE CALL:

DISCUSSION OUTCOMES:

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
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):
FOLLOW UP ACTIONS
SUPPORT:
REFERRALS(S):

PROCESS OF REVIEW

Complete this section between 4-6 weeks after an incident, suspicion or disclosure of abuse in conjunction with the school Leadership Team. This will support staff and the school to continue to protect children in our care and to reflect on 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

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

CURRENT WELLBEING OF IMPACTED STAFF MEMBERS

DOES THE STAFF MEMBER WHO MADE THE REPORT/ WITNESSED THE 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 SCHOLS: 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

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 AND REVIEWED?

- NO
- YES

HAS A STUDENT SUPPORT GROUP BEEN ESTABLISHED?

- NO
- YES

WAS THE STUDENT APPROPRIATELY SUPPORTED IN ANY INTERVIEWS?

- NO

<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
WERE SUBSEQUENT REPORTS MADE IF NECESSARY?	HAVE ANY COMPLAINTS BEEN RECEIVED?
<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
ACTION 3	HAVE THE COMPLAINTS BEEN RESOLVED?
DID THE SCHOOL CONTACT THE PARENTS/CARERS ASAP?	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
<input type="checkbox"/> YES	

Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle or when deemed necessary.
- This policy was last ratified by School Council – **June 2017**.