MANDATORY REPORTING POLICY

Rationale:
- All children have a right to feel safe and to be safe. As teachers, we have a legal and moral responsibility to respond to serious incidences involving abuse and neglect of the children with whom we have contact, and to report instances that we believe involve physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect.

Aims:
- To ensure that children’s’ rights to be safe are maintained and each child is protected against physical and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Implementation:
- All members of the Teaching Service are mandated by law to report signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, and neglect.
- New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures as part of their induction procedure.
- Staff will be reminded of mandatory reporting responsibilities annually and will complete online training as required by DEECD regulations. Support / assistance will be provided to make a report when necessary. See attachment.
- All concerns must be reported to Sub-school Leaders, Wellbeing Leader, Assistant Principal or Principal. Leaders may involve other wellbeing and teaching staff in discussions about students prior to making a report.
- Records will be kept of all discussions about a student with whom there is a concern.
- If a belief has been formed by a staff member that sexual or physical abuse has taken place a “Mandatory Reporting Information Sheet” available from the Principal must be completed and filed in the Principal’s office.
- The teacher and/or the school leader will contact the Department of Human Services by telephone as soon as possible to make an official notification on:
  (03) 5434 5555 or after school hours crisis line 131278
- Members of the Department of Human Services, or associated support or intervention services that visit the school following a notification, will interview staff and children only in the presence of a Principal class member or his/her nominee.
- All “Mandatory Reporting Information Sheets” will be retained and remain confidential.
- All reports, information sheets and subsequent discussions and information will be recorded and remain strictly confidential.
- All incidents to be monitored, and any subsequent signs or indications of abuse will be reported.
- Teachers and leaders will work collaboratively to monitor and support students and families and be aware of incidents of emotional abuse or neglect that may accompany such students.

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

This policy was last ratified by School Council in.... November 2014
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<tr>
<th><strong>Mandatory Reporting Information Sheet</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher’s name</td>
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<td>Leader involved</td>
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<td>Child’s name</td>
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<td>Parent / carer names</td>
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<td>Address</td>
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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
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*.
   **Go to Step 4**
2. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Child FIRST for family services.
   **Go to Step 3**
3. In all other situations
   **Go to Step 2**

* Refer to Appendix 2: Definitions of child abuse and indicators of harm in the Protocol – Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people

### Step 2: FORMING A BELIEF ON REASONABLE GROUNDS
1. Consider the level of immediate danger to the child.
   Ask yourself:
   a) Have I formed a belief that the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm?
   **YES / NO**
   and
   b) Am I in doubt about the child's safety and the parent's ability to protect the child?
   **YES / NO**
2. If you answered yes to a) or b)
   **Go to Step 4**
3. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Child FIRST for family services.
   **Go to Step 3**

### Step 3: MAKING A REFERRAL TO Child FIRST
Child Wellbeing Referral
1. Contact your local Child FIRST provider.
   - See over for contact list for local Child FIRST phone numbers.
2. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details.

### Step 4: MAKE A REPORT TO CHILD PROTECTION
Mandatory/Protective Report*
1. Contact your local Child Protection Intake provider immediately.
   - See over for contact list for local Child Protection phone numbers.
   - For **After Hours Child Protection** Emergency Services, call **131 278**.
2. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details.

* 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

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