



Mandatory Reporting Policy

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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.

AIM

To ensure that each child's rights to be safe is maintained and each child is protected against physical abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Any person who is registered as a teacher under the *Education and Training Reform Act (2006)*, or any person who has been granted to teach under the Act, including Principals, is mandated to make a report to the Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Protection.
- School staff should discuss any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of students with the Principal or a member of the school leadership team, especially if they have a suspicion of possible abuse but have not formed a belief at that time. If the Principal or member of the school leadership team does not believe that a mandatory report is warranted, this does not discharge the teacher of their obligation to do so if they have formed a reasonable belief that abuse may have occurred. If the teacher's concerns continue, even after consultation with the Principal, that teacher is still legally obliged to make a mandatory report of their concerns.
- Non-mandated staff members (Education Support Staff) who believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection are encouraged to speak to their Principal as well as being able to make a report to DHS Child Protection.
- If a belief has been formed by a staff member that abuse or neglect has taken place a comprehensive record will need to be made in the school's 'Welfare Diary' which is kept in the main office. The teacher and/or the Principal class officer will contact the Department of Human Services (DHS) by telephone as soon as possible to make an official notification on **9213 2111** or the after school hours crisis line **131 278**.
- New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures as part of their induction procedure by a member of the school leadership team.
- Staff will be reminded of mandatory responsibilities annually and provided with up-to-date information as it becomes available.
- 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 reports, subsequent discussions and information are to be recorded and remain strictly confidential.
- While only mandated by law to report incidents of physical and sexual abuse, and neglect; teachers must report incidents of emotional abuse or neglect.
- Students who disclose to staff a desire to harm themselves or others, must be reported by staff to the Principal.

REFERENCES

- School Policy and Advisory Guide – Child Protection – Mandatory Reporting (<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/childprotection.aspx>)
- Flowchart: [A step-by-step guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST\(PDF - 270Kb\)](#)

EVALUATION

Guidelines are updated annually and/or as per DEECD recommendations.

CERTIFICATION

This policy was adopted at the School Council Meeting held at Cranbourne South Primary School, on ...

Signed.....
School Council President

Signed.....
Principal