



PARK ORCHARDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Child Safe Standard 5

For responding to and reporting suspected child abuse – mandatory reporting policy

Reviewed June- July 2018 Endorsed by School Council July 2018

INTENT OF CHILD SAFE STANDARD 5: P.O.P.S. policies and procedures for reporting and responding to suspected child abuse must enable individuals to take the appropriate course of action to protect the safety of students.

P.O.P.S. CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING POLICY AND PROCEDURES (to read the full child protection reporting policy and procedures visit: <https://pops.vic.edu.au/overview/#values>)

PURPOSE: To define the roles and responsibilities of school staff in protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and to enable staff to:

- identify indicators that a child or young person may be in need of protection.
- make a report about a child or young person who may be in need of protection
- comply with reporting obligations under child protection law and criminal law and fulfil their duty of care.

Types of child abuse and indicators of harm: Child abuse can have a significant effect on a child's physical or emotional health, development and wellbeing.

Types of child abuse include: physical abuse, sexual abuse emotional abuse, neglect, medical neglect, family violence, human trafficking (including forced marriage) and sexual exploitation (including pornography and prostitution).

SOME KEY POINTS:

- **Reporting child protection concerns:** Mandatory reporters, who believe on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse, must report their concerns to Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Protection. This policy and procedures for reporting and responding to suspected child abuse applies to all staff involved in child-connected work in all school environments and outside of school hours.
- **Reporting criminal child sexual abuse - failure to disclose offence:** Any staff member who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 must disclose that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence, except in limited circumstances such as where the information has already been reported to DHHS Child Protection.
- The offence applies to **all adults** in Victoria, not just professionals who work with children. To read more information about the 'failure to disclose' offence, see: [Department of Justice and Regulation – Failure to disclose offence](#)
- To read more information about the 'failure to protect offence', see: [Department of Justice and Regulations – Failure to protect offence](#) **Note:** Department policies already require school staff to uphold a high standard of care in relation to child safety and wellbeing.
- **Making a Report:** Staff must respect confidentiality with dealing with a case of suspect child abuse and neglect and may discuss case details and the identity of the child or young person only with those involved in managing the situation.
- **In case of emergency** or if a child is in immediate danger contact Triple Zero (000) or the local police station. Alternatively, to report concerns about the immediate safety of a child within their family unit to DHHS Child Protection, call the Child Protection Crisis Line on 13 12 78 (24 hours 7 days, toll free)
- For more information about managing and responding to the risk of abuse see: *Duty of care, Responding to Student Sexual Assault* and *Risk Management* under [Department resources](#) below

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS / LINKS

- **DET RESOURCES:** <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/childprotection.aspx#link57>
- **DHHS Child Protection & Child FIRST:** <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/child-protection> <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/family-and-parenting-support/family-services/child-first-child-and-family-information,-referral-and-support-teams>
- **DET – related policies:**
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/childprotection.aspx#link40>
- **Related Legislation:**
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/childprotection.aspx#link39>
- **VRQA Child Safe Standards:** <http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/chilsafe/Pages/default.html>