



Child Protection Policy

Introduction

Yarra Valley Grammar is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children. The School has a zero tolerance for child abuse. Everyone working at the School is responsible for the care and protection of children and for reporting information about child abuse.

If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000 and ask to speak to the Police.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- (a) Prevent child abuse occurring within all School Environments;
- (b) Promote an organisational culture of child safety
- (c) Ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs
- (d) Provide guidance as to action that should be taken should abuse be suspected within or outside of the School
- (e) Provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated.

For the purposes of this Policy, "School Environment" means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the School's Board for use by a child, including:

- (a) A campus of the School;
- (b) Online School environments (including email and intranet systems); and
- (c) 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).

Scope

This policy applies to all students (over the age of 18 years), employees, volunteers, contractors, and Board members of the School, whether they work face-to-face, online or remotely with children.

Note that a child is defined as a person under the age of 18 years, or as according to the applicable legislation.

Guiding principles

This policy is based on the following guiding principles:

- (i) the School has zero tolerance for child abuse
- (ii) the best interests of the child are paramount
- (iii) child protection is a shared responsibility
- (iv) all children have a right to feel safe and be safe at school, and have equal rights to protection from abuse
- (v) the School may consider the opinions of students and use their opinions to develop child protection policies and procedures

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A CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL IN THE ANGLICAN TRADITION – EARLY LEARNING TO YEAR 12

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- (vi) the School is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for students living with a disability
- (vii) the School will take into account the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, overseas students, children residing in Homestay accommodation, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable, and make reasonable efforts to accommodate these matters;
- (viii) everyone covered by this policy must also comply with the School's Code of Conduct, which sets stringent standards for personal behaviour
- (ix) all children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse;
- (x) the School recognises that overseas students are vulnerable due to their cultural and linguistic background, and supports the safety and wellbeing of its overseas students by
 - empowering overseas students to learn about child abuse;
 - encouraging them to speak up about suspected child abuse;
 - encouraging open lines of communication with overseas students, Homestay Hosts and Local Support Persons on the measures that have been put in place to ensure child safety for overseas students;

References:

YVG Staff Code of Conduct
YVG Privacy Policy
YVG Social Media and Networking Policy
YVG Bullying, Violence, Harassment and Discrimination Policy
YVG School Interaction on On-line Social Networks Procedures
VRQA Child Safe standards

Child Safety Officers

Nominated and trained Child Safety Officers (**CSOs**) are available to listen, discuss and clarify issues confronting individuals in relation to child physical and sexual abuse. The CSOs will make reports on behalf of the School and ensure that adequate records are maintained. The CSOs at Yarra Valley Grammar are the Student Wellbeing staff at Junior and Secondary School levels and the School Chaplain.

Recognising child abuse

Child abuse may be divided into four categories: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional and psychological abuse and neglect:

Physical abuse: Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental physical injury, injury or violence which results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child or young person;

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse is when a child or young person is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others (this includes grooming behaviour);

Serious emotional and psychological abuse: Emotional and psychological abuse is when a child has suffered or is likely to suffer emotional or psychological harm of such a kind that the child's emotional or intellectual development is or is likely to be, significantly damaged and the child's parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type;

Serious neglect: Neglect is an omission, where the child or young person suffers serious harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care.

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Reporting obligations

Mandatory reporting obligations

Certain professionals must make a report to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) when, in the course of their position or employment:

- (a) they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection because the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse; and
- (b) the child's parents or caregiver have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm.

At the School, mandatory reporters include the Principal, registered teachers and nurses (**Mandatory Reporters**).

Mandatory reporters are required by law to notify DHHS as soon as practicable after forming such a belief, and after each occasion on which they become aware of any further reasonable grounds for the belief.

It is not mandatory to report emotional and psychological abuse or neglect, but all staff are at liberty to do so.

Reasonable Grounds for Belief

Reasonable grounds to notify exist when:

- (a) a child states that he/she has been physically or sexually abused
- (b) a child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child is talking about themselves)
- (c) someone else, such as a relative, friend, acquaintance or sibling of the child, tells you that a child has been abused
- (d) your observations of the child's behaviour or knowledge of children lead you to believe that the child has been abused; or
- (e) you observe physical signs or indicators of abuse (e.g. bruises, cuts etc.).

Voluntary reporting

Any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse, may disclose that information to the Police or the DHHS. If a person would like internal guidance or support with addressing their concerns, they are encouraged to speak with a Child Safety Officer at the School. This will help the School to meet its obligations to protect children from potential abuse to the greatest extent possible.

Protection of reporters

Any person that makes a report in good faith in accordance with their reporting obligations will be supported by the School, and will not be penalised by the School for making the report.

If a person is uncertain as to whether they should make a report to an external authority in relation to the safety of a child, they can speak to a CSO for guidance and information. Ultimately, it is a personal decision of the reporting person whether they choose to make a report to an external authority or not.

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Reportable Conduct Scheme

Under the *Children Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) (**CWS Act**), if the Principal becomes aware of a reportable allegation against an employee, volunteer, contractor, or Board member of the School, the Principal must notify the Commission of Children and Young People (**Commission**) in writing:

- within 3 business days after becoming aware of the reportable allegation—
 - that a reportable allegation has been made against an employee, volunteer, contractor, or Board member of the School;
 - the name (including any former name and alias, if known) and date of birth, if known, of the employee, volunteer, contractor, or Board member concerned;
 - whether Victoria Police has been contacted about the reportable allegation;
 - the name, address and telephone number of the School; and
 - the name of the Principal; and
- as soon as practicable and within 30 days after becoming aware of the reportable allegation:
 - detailed information about the reportable allegation;
 - whether or not the School proposes to take any disciplinary or other action in relation to the employee, volunteer, contractor, or Board member and the reasons why it intends to take, or not to take, that action; and
 - any written submissions made to the Principal concerning the reportable allegation that the employee, volunteer, contractor, or Board member wished to have considered in determining what, if any, disciplinary or other action should be taken.

In addition to the obligations above, any person may disclose a reportable allegation to the Commission. If a person would like internal guidance or support with addressing their concerns, they are encouraged to speak with a Child Safety Officer at the School.

For the purposes of the scheme:

- “reportable conduct” means:
 - a sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the offence has been commenced or concluded; or
 - sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of, a child; or
 - physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child; or
 - any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child; or
 - significant neglect of a child;
- “reportable allegation” means any reportable allegation means any information that leads a person to form a reasonable belief that an employee, volunteer, contractor, or Board member has committed:

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- reportable conduct; or
- misconduct that may involve reportable conduct,

whether or not the conduct or misconduct is alleged to have occurred within the course of the person's engagement.

Prevention

Recruitment

The School undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all employees, volunteers and contractors which aims to:

- (a) promote and protect the safety of all children within School Environments
- (b) identify and recruit the safest and most suitable candidates who share the School's values and commitment to protect children; and
- (c) prevent a person from working at the School if they pose an unacceptable risk to children.

All employees, volunteers and contractors engaged by the School as classroom teachers must be registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching, which includes Working with Children Checks (**WWCC**). Teachers must provide evidence of such registration before they commence employment, and are informed of the School's Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct and Procedures within their Letter of Appointment.

All non-teaching employees, volunteers and contractors engaged at the School are required to have a current and valid WWCC prior to being engaged by the School. The School records all WWCCs which are validated annually to determine who requires a renewal.

School Board members are also required to have current WWCCs, which are recorded and checked by the Corporate Services Manager.

The School will conduct thorough and documented reference checks to ensure the suitability of all candidates prior to their engagement or appointment to the Board. Once engaged, employees, contractors, volunteers and Board members must review and acknowledge their understanding of the Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct and Procedure as a part of their Induction process.

All successful applicants engaged at the School will be assessed on an ongoing basis:

- (a) during any scheduled performance review; and
 - (b) after any concern is raised regarding their conduct with children,
- to ensure that they remain suitable for child-connected work.

Communication

The School is pro-active in the area of prevention and will communicate and disseminate the Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct and Procedure in the manner below.

| STUDENTS | PARENTS, GUARDIANS, COMMUNITY, SPONSORS, PARTNERS | EMPLOYEES, BOARD MEMBERS | VOLUNTEERS, CONTRACTORS |
|---|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • School assemblies • School Health and Wellbeing curriculum • Information to Senior School students prior to turning 18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditions of enrolment • Website • Parent information evenings • School newsletter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Letters of appointment/ contracts • New employees, and board members Induction Training and refresher training • Annual Training Session • Performance Development and Coaching sessions (as applicable) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Contracts • Application forms • Induction |

The School will ensure that the School's child safety practices and its child safety code of conduct are communicated in an accessible manner for:

- younger students, by discussing the documents in-person (and any other method deemed appropriate and effective for the particular age of the student); and
- students living with a disability, by discussing the documents in-person (and any other method deemed appropriate and effective for the particular type of disability that the student is living with).

Overseas students

The School recognises that overseas students are at particular risk of child abuse. Reasons for this include, but are not limited to:

- separation from family and friends;
- residing in a home other than the family home;
- grappling with cultural changes and expectations; or
- language barriers.

The School is committed to providing a safe environment for its overseas students. It does this by:

- regularly distributing information to overseas students and Homestay hosts explaining what child abuse is, why it is not tolerated and people the overseas student can speak to if they suspect child abuse is occurring;
- meeting with students regularly to provide them with a forum in which to report suspected child sexual abuse;
- monitoring and observing overseas students' interactions within the School community, with particular sensitivity to the unique situation of overseas students and in accordance with this policy;

- (d) providing mandatory training to key individuals, including staff members, overseas students and Homestay Hosts, on the Child Sage Standards, the unique risks associated with overseas students and child abuse and how key stakeholders can work together to reduce the risk of child abuse.

The School considers the unique risk factors of overseas students within its Risk Register. It also regularly conducts assessments of the potential risks of child abuse to overseas students while in Homestay accommodation and responds in accordance with the perceived risk as determined by each assessment.

Responding & Reporting

In the case of an allegation being made against an employee, contractor, volunteer or Board member at the School, the Child Safety Officer will follow the Child Protection Procedure in consultation with the Principal or delegate. The School will take all steps to ensure that the safety of the child is paramount.

The first step is to 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.

Case Management

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

Investigations

The Principal or delegate will conduct an independent investigation into the allegation to the extent that it will not interfere with investigations by DHHS, the police or the Commission, and will co-operate with the authorities as required.

All individuals covered by the Child Protection Policy must co-operate fully with any investigation by DHHS, the police, the Commission or the School.

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

The outcome will depend on the findings of the investigation, but may include withdrawal from active duty, re-assignment to duties with no contact with children, increased supervision, disciplinary action, dismissal or criminal prosecutions.

The Principal will ensure that their obligations under the CWS Act (i.e. the reportable conduct scheme) are satisfied, and that the Commission is notified in the manner (and time periods) required.

Record keeping

All reports of alleged abuse or harm, or risk thereof, must be recorded in the form of an Incident Report. Reporting should be factual and not conjectural or interpretative. Places, times, dates, names of people, observable behaviours or evidence of harm are what is recordable. Reports must be to be securely stored by the Principal or delegate.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Principles

There are two guiding principles in respect to a child or young person's privacy:

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- (i) First, the School will operate on “the best interests principle”. The Principal, all employees, volunteers, contractors and Board members will do what they believe to be in the best interest of the child or young person. This principle supersedes all others.
- (ii) Second, the School will respect a child or young person’s right to privacy except in situations where it conflicts with “the best interests principle”.

As much as is reasonably possible, an individual’s right to privacy is to be protected. Both those who are making reports and those about whom accusations are being made are entitled to privacy. Where there is suspected abuse or misconduct, employees, volunteers, contractors and Board members must not disclose or make use of the information in a manner that breaches confidentiality, other than to report and act consistent with the Child Protection Policy and Procedures, and relevant statutory requirements.

At all times, the Child Safe Standards of the Victoria Registration and Qualifications Authority (**VRQA**) must be observed and acted upon. This Publication is referred to in this Policy.



Child Protection Policy

YARRA VALLEY
G R A M M A R

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES AND CODE OF CONDUCT

Responsibilities

The **Board** of the School has ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of child abuse and is responsible for:

- (a) ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place; and
- (b) ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and a Child Protection Code of Conduct are in place.

The **Principal** of the School is responsible for:

- (a) dealing with and investigating reports of child abuse
- (b) ensuring that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures, and the organisation's Code of Conduct
- (c) ensuring that all adults within the School community are aware of their obligation to report suspected sexual abuse of a child in accordance with these policies and procedures
- (d) ensuring that all staff, contractors and volunteers are aware of their obligation to observe the Code of Conduct (particularly as it relates to child safety);
- (e) ensuring that the Principal's obligations under the CWS Act (i.e. the reportable conduct scheme) are satisfied, and that the Commission is notified in the manner (and time periods) required; and
- (f) providing support for staff, contractors and volunteers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.

All **Heads of School, Managers and Senior Staff** must ensure that they:

- (a) promote child safety at all times
- (b) assess the risk of child abuse within their area of control and eradicate / minimise any risk to the extent possible
- (c) educate employees about the prevention and detection of child abuse; and
- (d) facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities.

Management should be familiar with the types of abuse that might occur within their area of responsibility and be alert for any indications of such conduct.

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All **staff/volunteers/contractors** share in the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse, and must:

- (a) familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, and the School's policy and procedures in relation to child protection, and comply with all requirements
- (b) report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant authorities (such as the police and / or the Department of Human Services) and fulfil their obligations as mandatory reporters
- (c) report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to their supervisor (or, if their supervisor is involved in the suspicion, to a Child Safety Officer at the School); and
- (d) provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.

Code of conduct

Introduction

Any form of abusive, derogatory, discriminatory, offensive or intimidating behaviour or language by adults towards children and young people, or children towards other children and young people, is not acceptable.

A person must not engage in any action that at is, or may be perceived by a reasonable observer as, grooming behaviour.

Comments or actions that are negatively and unreasonably critical of a person's culture, ethnicity, language, gender identity, disability, sexuality or age, are unacceptable.

Management, employees, volunteers, contractors and Board members at the School are required to abide by this Code.

The following list of behaviours includes examples of what is acceptable and not acceptable behaviour.

Acceptable behaviours

All people involved in the care of children on behalf of, or in connection with, the School must:

- (a) conduct themselves in a manner consistent with their position as an employee, partner, volunteer or contractor of the School and as a role model to children and young people
- (b) treat all people with respect and be open to and accepting of diversity and difference in people's backgrounds, work style and personal preferences
- (c) promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children and young people (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island child or young person's self-identification)
- (d) promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children and young people with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- (e) promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children and young people with a disability

- (f) listen and respond to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they are or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- (g) raise concerns, issues or problems about the suspected risk to a child with a Child Safety Officer
- (h) record and act upon all allegations or suspicions of abuse, discrimination or harassment
- (i) respect confidentiality when sharing information about children and young people in accordance with the Child Protection Policy and their reporting obligations
- (j) establish and maintain a child-safe environment in the course of their work;
- (k) be professional in their actions
- (l) maintain strict impartiality; and
- (m) contact the police if a child is at immediate risk of abuse (telephone 000).

Unacceptable behaviours

All people involved in the care of children on behalf of the School must not:

- (a) spend time alone with a child or young person where there is risk, particularly overnight
- (b) take a child or young person to their home or encourage meetings outside program activities
- (c) engage in rough physical games, hold, massage, kiss, cuddle or touch children in an inappropriate and or/culturally insensitive way
- (d) practice favouritism when building relationships with children
- (e) speak to a child or young person in a way that is or could be construed by any observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. Some examples are:
 - (i) swearing in the presence of a child
 - (ii) yelling at a child or young person, except in an emergency situation where the child's safety may be in danger
 - (iii) dealing with a child while the adult is angry with the child; and
 - (iv) use of hurtful sarcasm.
- (f) using, possessing, or being under the influence of illegal drugs while in the presence of a child
- (g) using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol while supervising a child
- (h) providing or allowing a child to consume alcohol or illegal drugs
- (i) engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with a child unless the conversations are part of a legitimately arranged instructional activity dealing with human sexuality issues
- (j) discussing sexual activities with a child unless it is a specific job requirement and the person is trained to discuss these matters

- (k) being naked in the presence of a child
- (l) possessing sexually oriented or morally inappropriate printed materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing, etc.)
- (m) sleeping in the same beds, sleeping bags or small tents with a child or young person; and/or
- (n) engaging in sexual contact with a child.

For the purposes of this Policy, sexual contact is defined as vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse, oral intercourse or the touching of an erogenous zone of another (including but not limited to the thighs, genitals, buttocks, pubic region or chest) for the purpose of sexually arousing or gratifying either person.

Physical Contact / Touching

All teachers are required to follow the Victorian Institute of Teaching's (VIT) Code of Conduct.

Employees, volunteers, contractors and Board members are prohibited from using physical discipline in any way for behaviour management of children and young people. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviours by children and young people.

Physical contact may be required in an emergency situation to remove children and young people quickly from danger or threat of danger.

Appropriate contact between employees, volunteers, contractors, Board members and children is part of normal human relationships. Some considerations and guidelines include the following:

- (a) consider the child or young person's age, developmental level, maturity and level of care required, for example, touching a child to gain their attention, guiding or comforting a distressed child or young person
- (b) work in an open environment; for example, in confidential interviews or a one-to-one meeting, the door should be open with visual access (NB: exceptions apply for professions with strict confidentiality requirements)
- (c) be alert to cues from children about how comfortable they are in your proximity and respect their need for personal space
- (d) be sensitive when interacting with children who may misinterpret your actions, such as those who may have been traumatised by abuse or adolescents seeking attention from a member of the opposite sex
- (e) be aware of cultural norms that may influence the interpretation of your behaviour
- (f) be cautious about physical contact in games or practical instruction. If you need to make physical contact for demonstrations, explain the activity and what you will do, maintain a safe and appropriate distance
- (g) physical contact should be made in a way that makes children feel comfortable, for example, shaking hands, a congratulatory pat on the back or rub on the side of their arm for reassurance. Massaging a child or allowing a child to massage you is inappropriate physical contact
- (h) the use of images of children as screen savers or backgrounds on personal electronic devices is not appropriate. The collection and storage of photographs or images of children must be for

educational or professional purposes. Use of social media and posting of student images by students, employees, contractors, volunteers or members of the Board must be consistent with the School's Social Media Policy and School Interaction on On-line Social Networks Procedures

- (i) be aware that the giving and receiving of gifts, giving extra attention, accepting a different standard of behaviour from a child or young person having 'special time' with a child or young person must be appropriate and justified as a strategy to meet teaching and learning outcomes
- (j) obtain permission from the School and parents when meeting with students for activities outside of school hours
- (k) the provision of your personal contact details should be justified in terms of educational or professional purpose
- (l) it is not appropriate for employees, volunteers and contractors to initiate out of hours contact with a child unless it is in the context of an emergency or where the child is unavailable during work hours
- (m) all forms of physical contact should therefore be avoided where possible. The School has invested in a Student Wellbeing team who bring appropriate qualifications in addressing the mental, physical, spiritual and emotional needs of students.

The School's Policy on Bullying, Violence, **Harassment and Discrimination** also addresses physical contact.

Transportation and off-site events

Other than in an emergency or other abnormal situation where no other option could be reasonably foreseen, it is not acceptable to transport children or young people without written permission of their parent, carer or guardian.

It is prohibited to have unnecessary and/or inappropriate physical contact with children or young people while in vehicles.

Children and young people should be transported directly to their destination. No stops should be made other than those that are reasonably scheduled for meals or comfort stops.

It is prohibited to have children or young people spend the night at the residence of an employee, volunteer or contractor without parental/guardian prior approval.

Changing and showering facilities or arrangements for adults must be separate from facilities or arrangements for children and young people.

Confidentiality

Disclosing Information to Employees, Volunteers, Contractors and Board Members

When children or young people are having a written or verbal interaction with employees, volunteers, contractors and/or Board members of the School, that interaction is confidential to the organisation not to the individual. This means that an employee, volunteer, contractor or Board member is able to talk with other employees, volunteers, contractors or Board members in a way that identifies the child or young person. That said, where possible the privacy of the child or young person should be respected at all times. When considering breaching their privacy who and how many people are told should be based on what is believed to be in the best interests of the child or young person. In all cases, the advice of a Child Safety Officer should be sought before discussing with other personnel.

Disclosing Information to People External to the Organisation

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Employees, volunteers, contractors and Board members should not discuss confidential matters about children or young people with people outside the organisation in a way that identifies that child or young person except when they have the express permission of the child or young person or it complies with the Child Protection Procedure. In circumstances where employees, volunteers, contractors and/or Board members believe that there is not enough knowledge within the organisation to provide the best possible assistance to a child or young person, they are able to seek expertise external to the School. When communicating with people outside the School the child or young person's identity should be protected.

Informing Children

It is the responsibility of the School to communicate the limits of confidentiality in the School to children and young people who are likely to have an ongoing relationship with the School. These guidelines should be published in an accessible place for children and young people.

Related legislation and contacts

- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic);
- Children Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Victorian Institute of Teaching Act 2001 (Vic)
- Department of Health and Human Services Child Protection – North-eastern rural and regional office
1300 360 391 – After hours 131 278
- Child Protection Crisis Line – 24 Hours, seven days a week. Telephone: 13 12 78

CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING PROCEDURE

This Reporting Procedure applies to all students, employees, volunteers, contractors, and Board members of the School, whether they work face-to-face, online or remotely with children. It should be read in accordance with the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct.

Step 1:

When a "Mandatory Reporter" forms a belief, on reasonable grounds, that a child is in need of protection because they have suffered, or are likely to suffer, significant harm due to physical injury or sexual abuse, they must make a report to the Department of Health and Human Services ("DHHS") as soon as practicable. The Head of Student Wellbeing should be informed.

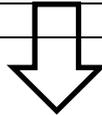
The individual student, employee, volunteer, contractor or Board Member of the School should discuss these observations and concerns with a Child Safety Officer who can assist the person to make the report to DHHS as required. The Head of Student Wellbeing should be informed.

Any person that forms a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or neglect), **may** disclose that information to the Police or the DHHS. The School encourages all persons with concerns to raise this directly with the Child Safety Officer. The Head of Student Wellbeing should be informed.

Any person may disclose a reportable allegation to the Commission.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Student Wellbeing to inform the Principal.

NB: If the Principal becomes aware of a reportable allegation against an employee, volunteer, contractor or Board Member, the Principal must notify the Commission in writing within 3 business days of becoming aware of the reportable allegation.



Step 2:

It may be that, following the previous step, a person decides to make a report to DHHS and/or the police and/or the Commission with the support of the Child Safety Officer and/or the Head of Student Wellbeing.

Making a Report

Ring DHHS at the North-eastern rural and regional office on 1300 360 391. Ask for Child Protection.

AND/OR

Ring the police on 000.

AND/OR

Ring the Commission on (03) 8601 5281 or email the Commission at childsafestandards@ccyp.vic.gov.au.

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A CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL IN THE ANGLICAN TRADITION – EARLY LEARNING TO YEAR 12

Kalinda Road Ringwood Victoria 3134 Australia Telephone +61 3 9262 7700 Facsimile +61 3 9876 1077 Email reception@yvg.vic.edu.au www.yvg.vic.edu.au

ABN 44 004 584 552 CRICOS NO. 00356E

Information for Making a Report:

- Name, age and address of student
- The reason for suspecting that the behaviour or injury is a result of abuse
- An assessment of the immediate danger to the student
- A description of the injury or behaviour observed
- The current whereabouts of the student
- Any other information about the family
- Any specific cultural details, e.g. English speaking, disability, etc.

Ask that the School be informed of each step of the procedure.

Request that if an interview is to take place at the School the visiting police officer/Commission representative is in plain clothes and the time of the interview is specified so that appropriate arrangements for a meeting room can be organised.

When the person informs the Child Safety Officer that he/she is to make/has made a report, a Case Management Group that may consist of the Child Safety Officers, the Head of Student Wellbeing and /or the Principal or delegate will be set up to discuss the matter and to offer support to the student and reporter].

If the complainant alleges that a crime has been committed by a student employee, volunteer, contractor or Board Member that person will be stood aside immediately. Furthermore, if the Principal becomes aware of a reportable allegation, he/she will notify the Commission within 3 business days of becoming aware of the reportable allegation.

The Principal (or Chair of the Board if the allegation involves the Principal) will conduct an independent investigation into the allegation to the extent that it will not interfere with investigations by DHHS, the police and the Commission, and will co-operate with the authorities as required. If the allegation is considered a reportable allegation, the Principal will notify the Commission of who is going to conduct the investigation.

Where an allegation has been the made, the School will make, secure, and retain records of the allegation of child abuse and the School's response to it.

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

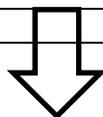
Step 3:

If the student is agreeable to be interviewed by DHHS, the Commission and/or the police, the Child Safety Officer / Head of Student Wellbeing should offer to be present at the interview to give support to the student.

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Step 4:

Following a report, DHHS, the police and/or the Commission may need to contact the Principal about the notification. It would be a matter of courtesy to inform the Principal that a report has been made, or is about to be made.

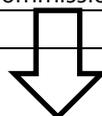


Step 5:

Following a report, it is important to protect confidentiality and the interests of the child and family at all times.

Special comments:

- DHHS will only interview the student if he/she is agreeable
- The family will not be contacted until it is believed there is a case and the student is at risk
- If the incident which caused the report to be made has occurred in the past - the student may be seen to be no longer at risk and no further action may be taken
- The identity of the person making a notification will be kept confidential (except when that information is required in a court case) unless that person gives permission for the information to be divulged. Such confidentiality should also be requested by the Child Safety Officer / Head of Student Wellbeing and any other person who may become aware that a notification is to be, or has been, given
- Throughout the entire process of observation, discussion and reporting, the interests of the student and their family should be protected from unnecessary disclosure of information concerning abuse
- Following the making of a report, any investigation that takes place by that external authority (i.e. DHHS, the police or the Commission) is the responsibility of that authority.



Step 6:

Within 30 calendar days after becoming aware of any reportable allegation/s, the Principal will provide the Commission with:

- Detailed information about the reportable allegation;
- Information about proposed disciplinary or other action to be taken in response to the allegation; and
- Any written submissions made by the employee, volunteer, contractor or Board member about that disciplinary or other action.



Step 7:

After the independent investigation has concluded, the Principal will provide the Commission with:

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- A copy of the investigation findings and reasons; and
- Additional information about proposed disciplinary or other action to be taken in response to the allegation.

Investigations

If the DHHS, the Commission or the police decide to conduct an investigation of this report, all students, employees, contractors, volunteers and Board members must co-operate fully with the investigation.

Whether or not the authorities decide to conduct an investigation, the Principal or delegate will consult with the authorities to determine whether an internal investigation is appropriate. If it is decided that such an investigation will not conflict with any proceeding of the authorities, the Principal or delegate may decide to conduct such an investigation. All students, employees, contractors, volunteers and Board members must co-operate fully with the investigation.

Any such investigation will be conducted according to the rules of natural justice.

The Principal or delegate will make every effort to keep any such investigation confidential; however, from time to time other members of staff may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation.

After an initial review and a determination that the suspected abuse warrants additional investigation, the Principal or delegate shall coordinate the investigation with the appropriate investigators and/or law enforcement officials. Internal or external legal representatives will be involved in the process, as deemed appropriate.