



## Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy

### Purpose

CSV Limited ('CSV') is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation where students feel safe and are safe, including culturally. This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy outlines CSV's commitment to child safety and to ensuring a child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels.

CSV aims to create a child-safe and child-friendly environment where students are free to enjoy life without any concern for their safety. The safety and wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we do not or will not tolerate child abuse or harm.

This Policy takes into account relevant legislative requirements within the state of Victoria, including the specific requirements of the Child Safe Standards as set out in Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools, of which CSV is committed to upholding. In accordance with the Child Safe Standards, CSV acknowledges the need to pay particular attention to the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people, the needs of children and young people with a disability, children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home and LGBTQIA+ children and young people.

### Scope

This Policy applies to all CSV Staff for the duration of their employment or engagement with CSV. For the purposes of this policy 'Staff' includes contractors, volunteers, CRT Staff, and student teachers.

This Policy applies to all activities that involve, result in or relate to contact with students. Application of this policy is not limited to the School's grounds and operating hours and extends to any situation where Staff have contact, including online, with students.

### Commitment to Child Safety

CSV has zero tolerance for child abuse and harm and are committed to acting in students' best interests and keeping them safe from harm. CSV regards its child safety responsibilities with the utmost importance and commits to proactively identifying and managing any risks of harm to students.

CSV fosters a culture that encourages the reporting of any concerns related to Child Safety. Reports are treated seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly.

**Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called.**

### Definitions

Key definitions related to CSV Child Safe policies and procedures are provided at Appendix A.

### Roles and Responsibilities

All CSV Staff have a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play individually and collectively to ensure a child safe culture in which the wellbeing and safety of all students is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

CSV has allocated roles and responsibilities for child safety and wellbeing as follows:

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## CSV LTD

ABN 93 061 557 364

### Balcombe Grammar School

389 Nepean Highway  
Mount Martha, Victoria 3934  
Ph. (03) 5970 1100  
[www.balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au](http://www.balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au)

### Casey Grammar School

3 New Holland Drive  
Cranbourne East, Victoria 3977  
Ph. (03) 5991 0800  
[www.caseygrammar.vic.edu.au](http://www.caseygrammar.vic.edu.au)

### Clyde Grammar

110 Smiths Lane  
Clyde North, Victoria 3978  
Ph. (03) 8903 4500  
[www.clydegrammar.vic.edu.au](http://www.clydegrammar.vic.edu.au)

|                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>CSV Board</i>                             | <p>The CSV Board is responsible for ensuring that CSV's governance arrangements support and prioritise a child safe culture.</p> <p>The CSV Board are also responsible for ensuring each CSV School has appropriate resources to implement all Child Safe policies and procedures, and to hold the Principals accountable for its implementation and reporting.</p>                                                                                              |
| <i>Principals</i>                            | <p>Each Principal is responsible for taking practical and effective measures to ensure all Child Safe policies and procedures are implemented to promote and maintain a Child Safe culture in their relevant CSV School, including facilitation of mandatory professional development.</p> <p>Principals are expected to promote Child Safe policies to the School Community and hold Staff accountable for actions that may breach policy and/or procedure.</p> |
| <i>Child Safety Officers</i>                 | <p>CSV has nominated Child Safety Officers at each School to act as a first point of contact for child safety concerns or queries and to aid in coordinating responses to child safety incidents.</p> <p>A full list of each School's Child Safety Officers and their contact details is available at Appendix B.</p>                                                                                                                                            |
| <i>Leadership Teams</i>                      | <p>Leadership Teams are responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained. This includes reinforcing high standards of behaviour between Staff and students.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <i>All Staff, Volunteers and Contractors</i> | <p>All Staff are required to be familiar with the content of CSV Child Safe policies and procedures and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse.</p> <p>Staff are required to always follow and act in accordance with CSV Child Safe policies and procedures and engage will all training and relevant discussions and professional development related to Child Safety.</p>                                                       |
| <i>Students</i>                              | <p>Students are actively encouraged to report any incidents where they feel unsafe or are experiencing abuse or harm or believe a peer may feel unsafe or experiencing abuse or harm.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

## Disclosures and Reporting Procedures

If you have a concern or suspicion (a *reasonable belief*, as defined below and later in this Policy) that a child may be experiencing any form of child abuse (see Appendix A – Definitions), this policy requires that it is immediately raised with a Child Safety Officer (as outlined in Appendix B) and that the *PROTECT – Four Critical Actions for Schools – Responding to Incident, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse* ('Four Critical Actions') is followed.

**Wherever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 000.**

- Staff must gather and record all information, and discuss concerns with a Child Safety Officer. The Child Safety Officer will:

- Listen to staff concerns
- Protect the privacy of the person reporting the information
- Assist with recording staff observations (as per below)
- Assist with seeking additional advice from authorities or organisations
- Assist in implementation of the Four Critical Actions

The Four Critical Actions are summarised as follows. A full copy of the Four Critical Actions is available at Appendix C, as well as posted in key areas of each CSV School.

1. *Respond to an Emergency:* If a student is at immediate risk of harm Staff must ensure their safety.
2. *Report to Authorities/Refer to Services:* As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed you must report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures as soon as possible. Reporting Obligations are included in this Policy.
3. *Contact Parents or Carers:* The Principal must consult with DFFH Child Protection and/or Victoria Police to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers.
4. *Provide Ongoing Support:* Ongoing support for students impacted by abuse (in some instances this may include peers of the relevant student). This is an essential part of CSV's Duty of Care requirements.

Staff must use the *PROTECT Recording your actions: Responding to Suspected Child Abuse* template, available at Appendix D, to detail application and completion of the Four Critical Actions.

This process applies to all Child Safety Incidents. "Child Safety Incidents" includes matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, management the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to suspicions, incidents, disclosures or allegations of child abuse.

Specific reporting obligations are detailed below. Staff are reminded that where there is an obligation to report externally (e.g. Mandatory Reporting) this obligation is not met through internal reporting.

### Mandatory Reporting

Under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)*, mandatory reporters must make a report to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing if, while carrying out their professional duties, form a reasonable belief that:

- a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical and/or sexual abuse; and/or
- the child's parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type.

Mandatory reporters within CSV include, but are not limited to, Principals, registered teachers, school counsellors, nurses and people of religious ministry. A full list of Mandatory Reporters is included in Appendix A.

A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person, doing the same work, with the same information, would form the same belief. There must be some objective basis for the belief, however, it is not the same as proof, and certainty is not required.

Factors contributing to reasonable belief may include, but are not limited to:

- a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves).
- behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed
- someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it
- observing suspicious behaviour.
- doubt of the parents'/carer's ability to protect the child.

Where a staff member is unsure of the reasonable belief threshold having been met, they must seek guidance from a Child Safety Officer or member of the Leadership Team.

### Failure to Disclose

Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that an adult may have committed a sexual offence against a child under the age of 16 is legally obligated to report this to Victoria Police. Where the adult fails to disclose these matters to Victoria Police they may be found to have committed a criminal offence under the *Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)* ('Failure to Disclose'), unless an exemption applies.

'Sexual Offence' for the purposes of the Reportable Conduct Scheme means a serious sexual offence as set out in clause 1 of Schedule 1 of the *Sentencing Act 1991 (Vic)* which includes, but is not limited to:

- Rape.
- Attempted rape.
- Sexual assault.
- Incest.
- Indecent act with a child.
- Persistent sexual abuse of a child.
- Grooming; and
- The production or possession of child pornography.

### Failure to Protect

It is an offence under the *Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)* for a person in a position of authority within CSV who knows of a substantial risk that a child under the age or 16, under the care, supervision or authority of CSV will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with CSV (for example Staff, contractor, volunteer or visitors) who negligently fails to remove or reduce of the risk of harm ('Failure to Protect').

Within CSV those in a position of authority includes all Staff in a position of leadership (for example Principal, Deputy Principal, Head of Year).

### Reportable Conduct

CSV is required to investigate and report to the Commission for Children and Young People (the Commission) any and all allegations of Staff reportable conduct, or misconduct that may involve reportable conduct. Strict requirements and timelines apply to reporting to the Commission once the Principal has been notified of an allegation/s.

Reportable Conduct is defined to include, but not limited to:

- a Sexual Offence (even prior to criminal proceedings commencing), sexual misconduct or physical violence committed against, with, or in the presence of a child;
- behaviour causing significant emotional or physical harm to a child;
- significant neglect of a child; and/or
- misconduct involving any of the above.

'Sexual Misconduct' includes:

- behaviour, physical contact, speech or other communication of a sexual nature (e.g. sexting');
- inappropriate touching or physical contact.
- grooming behaviour; and/or
- voyeurism.

The threshold for reporting allegations of reportable conduct is a 'reasonable belief' as defined above.

Whilst the Principal is required to report on behalf of CSV within the mandated period (3 days), any person may report to the Commission directly.

## Grooming

Under the *Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)* it is an offence for any person over the aged of 18 years to engage in grooming behaviours with a person under the age of 16 years.

Grooming concerns predatory conduct undertaken to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time. The offence applies where an adult communicates, by words or conduct, with a child under the age of 16 years or with a person who has care, supervision of authority for the child with the intention of facilitating the child's involvement in sexual conduct, either with the groomer or another adult.

Grooming does not necessarily involve any sexual activity or event discussion of sexual activity. For example, it may only involve establishing a relationship with the child, parent or carer for the purpose of facilitating sexual activity at a later time.

## Parent & Community Reporting

Parents and community members may be subject to action from Victoria Police where they fail to respond appropriately to a Child Safety incident (see 'Failure to Disclose').

Should a parent or member of the CSV School Community suspect or know a child to be at risk of harm they must immediately report it. Reports can be made to a CSV Child Safety Officer and/or relevant reporting body (e.g. Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Child Protection and/or Victoria Police).

## Record Keeping

As noted above, whenever an incident, concern or complaint related to child safety is raised all Staff must use the *PROTECT Recording your actions: Responding to Suspected Child Abuse* template to capture all details of a Child Safety Incident.

CSV requires that all records be complete and accurate to allow any person required to access the records to understand all aspects of the incident and response/s.

The Principal keeps a secure log of all reports made that are associated with this Policy. Staff are encouraged to keep their own secure evidence to demonstrate they have discharged their legal obligations, however all documents and evidence must be available to, or secured by, the Principal.

CSV maintains and disposes of all records related to Child Safety complaints, disclosures or breaches in accordance with security and privacy requirements and the *Public Record Office Recordkeeping Standards* (including minimum retention periods).

### Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, unless there is a risk to someone's safety.

For further information as to how CSV handles information please see the CSV Privacy Policy, available on each School website.

### Information Sharing

Requests for records maintained by CSV relating to Child Safe incidents or disclosures should be directed to the Principal.

CSV is a prescribed Information Sharing Entity (ISE) meaning that, where legislated requirements are met, it is able to share confidential information with other ISEs to promote child wellbeing or safety under the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme and/or Child Information Sharing Scheme.

### Breach

CSV considers any breach of this policy a Child Safety Incident and as such disciplinary action will be undertaken including, in the case of serious breaches, dismissal.

Where a Staff member is under investigation for breach of this policy, or for any reason that would question their suitability to work with children, they may be immediately stood down until such time as a thorough investigation can be completed.

Teaching Staff who breach this policy may also be reported '(CCYP)' and the Victorian Institute of Teaching, or any other relevant body.

### Procedural Fairness

Staff under investigation for breach of this policy are entitled to, and will be afforded, procedural fairness. Procedural Fairness included, but is not limited to:

- Providing details of allegations and allowing an opportunity to respond.
- Affording the Staff member the opportunity to have a support person present during the investigation process.
- Any response provided by the Staff member is considered before any final decision is made.

### Complaints

Any complaint of breach of child safe policies, procedures and practices will be investigated as a Child Safety incident in accordance with this policy.

CSV will assess Child Safety complaints and concerns to improve our policies and practices.

Complaints not related to Child Safety should be made in accordance with the CSV Complaints Resolution/Grievance Policy available on each school website.

### Further Information

Questions or queries related to this Policy should be directed to the relevant School Principal or Child Safety Officers.

## Related Documents

Child Safe Code of Conduct

Complaints Resolution/Grievance Policy

Working with Children Check Policy

Inclusion, Engagement and Empowerment Policy (Internal Policy)

Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy (Internal Policy)

Records Retention Policy (Internal Policy)

Child Safety Risk Register (Internal Document)

## Review

This policy is to be reviewed, approved and endorsed by the CSV Board every two (2) years, as a minimum.

Last approved November 2024.

Next review November 2026.

*This policy is subject to change without notice at the sole discretion of CSV Limited.*

*Printed hardcopies or downloads of this policy are considered uncontrolled.*

## Appendix A – Definitions

Unless stated otherwise, terms used in our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safe Code of Conduct have the following general meaning and are consistent with legislation, where indicated.

|                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Child                      | Child means a child or young person who is under the age of 18 years.<br><i>Source: Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic).</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Child Abuse                | Child Abuse includes:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Any act committed against a child involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) A sexual offence</li> <li>(2) Grooming offences under section 49M(1) of the <i>Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>(b) The infliction on a child, of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Physical violence</li> <li>(2) Serious emotional or psychological harm</li> </ul> </li> <li>(c) The serious neglect of a child including exposure to family violence and its effects.</li> </ul> <i>Source: Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic).</i> |
| Child Safety               | Child Safety includes matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to suspicions, incidents, disclosures or allegations of child abuse.<br><i>Source: Ministerial Order 1359</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Grooming                   | Grooming is when a person engages in predatory conduct to prepare a child or young person for sexual activity at a later time.<br>Grooming can include communicating or attempting to befriend or establish a relationship or other emotional connect with the child or their parent or carer.<br><i>Source: Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), Child Safe Standards Definitions (<a href="https://www.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards-definitions">https://www.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards-definitions</a>)</i>                                                                                                                           |
| Information Sharing Scheme | Information Sharing Schemes provide prescribed Information Sharing Entities (ISEs) with an expanded ability to share confidential information with other ISEs to promote the wellbeing or safety of children or to assess or manage family violence risk.<br><i>Source: Child Safe Standards Definitions (<a href="https://www.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards-definitions">https://www.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards-definitions</a>)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Mandatory Reporters        | The following are mandatory reporters in Victoria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered medical practitioners</li> <li>• Nurses</li> <li>• Midwives</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

|                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered teachers and early childhood teachers</li> <li>• School Principals</li> <li>• School counsellors</li> <li>• Police officers</li> <li>• Out of home care workers (excluding voluntary foster and kinship carers)</li> <li>• Each childhood workers</li> <li>• Youth justice workers</li> <li>• Registered psychologists</li> <li>• People in religious ministry.</li> </ul> <p><i>Source: Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| School Environment | <p>School environment means any of the any of the following physical, online or virtual places, used during or outside school hours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) A campus of the school.</li> <li>(b) Online or virtual school environments made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child or student (including email, intranet systems, software applications collaboration tools, and online services).</li> <li>(c) Other locations provided by the school or through a third-party provider for a child or student to use including, but not limited to, locations used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Camps</li> <li>(2) Approved homestay accommodation</li> <li>(3) Delivery of education and training such as registered training organisations, TAFE's, non-school senior secondary providers or another school; or</li> <li>(4) Sporting events, excursions, competitions or other events.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>Source: Ministerial Order 1359</i></p> |
| Student            | <p>Student means a person who is enrolled at or attends a CSV school.</p> <p><i>Source: Ministerial Order 1359</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

## Appendix B – Child Safety Officers

The following Child Safety Officers have been appointed by each CSV School:

### Balcombe Grammar School

| <b>Name</b>           | <b>Position</b>                               | <b>Email</b>                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Geoff Roberts-Thomson | Principal                                     | <a href="mailto:G.Roberts-Thomson@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au">G.Roberts-Thomson@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au</a> |
| Natalie Kurelja       | Head of Faith & Wellbeing                     | <a href="mailto:N.Kurelja@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au">N.Kurelja@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au</a>                 |
| Lundal Runge          | Deputy Principal – Secondary 7-12             | <a href="mailto:L.Runge@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au">L.Runge@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au</a>                     |
| Matthew Boundy        | Deputy Principal – Primary                    | <a href="mailto:M.Boundy@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au">M.Boundy@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au</a>                   |
| Anna Wilson           | School Counsellor                             | <a href="mailto:A.Wilson@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au">A.Wilson@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au</a>                   |
| Tea Wolfe             | School Counsellor                             | <a href="mailto:T.Wolfe@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au">T.Wolfe@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au</a>                     |
| Melissa Kenyon        | Deputy Head of Secondary (Senior Years 10-12) | <a href="mailto:M.Kenyon@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au">M.Kenyon@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au</a>                   |
| Tina Lunny            | Deputy Head of Secondary (Middle Years 7-9)   | <a href="mailto:T.Lunny@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au">T.Lunny@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au</a>                     |
| Shain Kurelja         | Deputy Head of Primary                        | <a href="mailto:S.Kurelja@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au">S.Kurelja@balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au</a>                 |

### Casey Grammar School

| <b>Name</b>    | <b>Position</b>                      | <b>Email</b>                                                                               |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Robert Jacob   | Deputy Principal & Head of Wellbeing | <a href="mailto:R.Jacob@caseygrammar.vic.edu.au">R.Jacob@caseygrammar.vic.edu.au</a>       |
| Virgina Duell  | Primary Teacher                      | <a href="mailto:V.Duell@caseygrammar.vic.edu.au">V.Duell@caseygrammar.vic.edu.au</a>       |
| Sarah Blythman | Head of Careers & Student Pathways   | <a href="mailto:S.Blythman@caseygrammar.vic.edu.au">S.Blythman@caseygrammar.vic.edu.au</a> |

### Clyde Grammar

| <b>Name</b>   | <b>Position</b>    | <b>Email</b>                                                                           |
|---------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Leanne Evans  | Principal          | <a href="mailto:L.Evans@clydegrammar.vic.edu.au">L.Evans@clydegrammar.vic.edu.au</a>   |
| Deanne Bourke | F-2 Coordinator    | <a href="mailto:D.Bourke@clydegrammar.vic.edu.au">D.Bourke@clydegrammar.vic.edu.au</a> |
| Karina Adam   | Learning Diversity | <a href="mailto:K.Adam@clydegrammar.vic.edu.au">K.Adam@clydegrammar.vic.edu.au</a>     |

# Appendix C – PROTECT – Four Critical Actions for Schools – Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse

## FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

### Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse

#### YOU MUST TAKE ACTION

- You must act by following the Four 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.

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

- It is strongly recommended that you use the **Responding to Suspected Child Abuse template** to keep clear and comprehensive notes, even if you make a decision not to report.

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

## 2 REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES / REFERRING TO SERVICES

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.

**Q: Where does the source of suspected abuse come from?**

**WITHIN THE SCHOOL**

**VICTORIA POLICE**

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

You must also report internally to:

**GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**

- School principal and/or leadership team
- Employee Conduct Branch
- DET Incident Support and Operations Centre

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

- School principal and/or leadership team
- Diocesan education office.

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**

- School principal and/or school chairperson
- Commission for Children and Young People on **1300 782 978**.

All allegations of reportable conduct must be reported as soon as possible to:

**GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**

- Employee Conduct Branch

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

- Diocesan education office

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**

- Commission for Children and Young People on **1300 782 978**.

**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:

**GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**

- School principal and/or leadership team
- DET Incident Support and Operations Centre

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

- School principal and/or leadership team
- Diocesan education office.

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**

- School principal and/or chairperson.

**OTHER CONCERNS**

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/The Orange Door (in circumstances where the family are open to receiving support)
- DHHS Child Protection
- Victoria Police.

For suspected student sexual assault, please refer to the **Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending**.

## 3 CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS

Your 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/carer (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 parent/carer 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)
- how to communicate with all relevant parties with consideration for their safety.

## 4 PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT

Your 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 and support.

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

#### CONTACT

**DHHS CHILD PROTECTION**

**AREA**

- North Division **1300 664 977**
- South Division **1300 655 795**
- East Division **1300 360 391**
- West Division (Rural) **1800 075 599**
- West Division (Metro) **1300 664 977**

**AFTER HOURS**

After hours, weekends, public holidays **13 12 78**

**CHILD FIRST**

<https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/referral-and-support-team>

**ORANGE DOOR**

<https://www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence/the-orange-door.html>

**VICTORIA POLICE**

**000** or your local police station

**DET INCIDENT SUPPORT AND OPERATIONS CENTRE**

**1800 126 126**

**INCIDENT MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT UNIT**

**1800 126 126**

**EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH**

**(03) 9637 2595**

**DIOCESAN OFFICE**

Melbourne **(03) 5267 0228**  
Ballarat **(03) 5337 7135**  
Sale **(03) 5622 6600**  
Sandhurst **(03) 5443 2377**

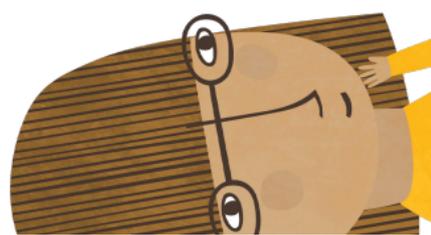
**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS VICTORIA**

**(03) 9825 7200**

**THE LOOKOUT**

The LOOKOUT has a service directory, information, and evidence based guidance to help you respond to family violence: <http://www.lookout.org.au>

Family violence victims/survivors can be referred to **1800 Respect** for counselling, information and a referral service: **1800 737 732**.



# Appendix D – PROTECT – Recording your actions: Responding to Suspected Child Abuse

For a PDF version of this document see [here](#).

## PROTECT

### Recording your actions: Responding to suspected child abuse

#### A TEMPLATE FOR VICTORIAN SCHOOLS

##### When to use this template

School staff should use this template to document any incident, disclosure or suspicion that a child has been, or is at risk of being abused, including exposure to family violence. This template should be used in conjunction with the following:

**Four Critical Actions For Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse.**

Completing this template should not impact on reporting times. If a child is in immediate danger, school staff should report immediately to Victoria Police.

Whilst you may need to gather the information to make a report, remember it is not the role of school staff to investigate abuse, leave this to Victoria Police and/or DHHS Child Protection.

This template should also be used if you make a decision not to report, to record your rationale for this decision and any other related follow up actions you take to support the child.

##### Why record this information?

When completing this template your aim should be 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 you if you 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.



## 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 – THIS IS PARTICULARLY CRITICAL IN INSTANCES OF FAMILY VIOLENCE.*

### 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

### CULTURAL STATUS AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

*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.*

ANY KNOWN PREVIOUS HISTORY OF SUSPECTED ABUSE (INCLUDING EXPOSURE TO FAMILY VIOLENCE) PRIOR TO THIS INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION, OR INVOLVEMENT WITH AGENCIES:

## 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

### GROUNDS FOR YOUR BELIEF THAT A CHILD HAS BEEN ABUSED, OR IS AT RISK OF ABUSE

INDICATORS OR INSTANCES WHICH LED YOU TO BELIEVE A CHILD/CHILDREN ARE SUBJECT TO CHILD ABUSE, OR AT RISK OF ABUSE INCLUDING EXPOSURE TO FAMILY VIOLENCE:

*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:

*NOTING IF THEY ARE WITHIN THE SCHOOL OR WITHIN THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY (THIS WILL IMPACT 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 DISCUSSIONS WITH ANY OF THE ABOVE AUTHORITIES:**

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). THIS IS PARTICULARLY CRITICAL IN INSTANCES OF SUSPECTED FAMILY VIOLENCE.*

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 OF 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:

REFERRAL(S):

## PROCESS OF REVIEW

COMPLETE THIS SECTION BETWEEN 4- 6 WEEKS AFTER AN INCIDENT, SUSPICION OR DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE IN CONJUNCTION WITH YOUR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM.

THIS WILL SUPPORT YOU AND YOUR SCHOOL TO CONTINUE TO PROTECT CHILDREN IN YOUR CARE AND TO REFLECT ON YOUR 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, INCLUDING EXPOSURE TO FAMILY VIOLENCE?

- 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

### CURRENT WELLBEING OF IMPACTED STAFF MEMBERS

DOES THE STAFF MEMBER WHO MADE THE REPORT/WITNESSED AN 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 SCHOOLS: 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
- YES

WERE SUBSEQUENT REPORTS MADE IF  
NECESSARY?

- NO
- YES

#### **ACTION 3**

DID THE SCHOOL CONTACT THE  
PARENTS/CARERS ASAP?

- NO
- YES

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 & REVIEWED?

- NO
- YES

HAS A STUDENT SUPPORT GROUP  
BEEN ESTABLISHED?

- NO
- YES

WAS THE STUDENT APPROPRIATELY  
SUPPORTED IN ANY INTERVIEWS?

- NO
- YES

HAVE ANY COMPLAINTS BEEN RECEIVED?

- NO
- YES

HAVE THE COMPLAINTS BEEN RESOLVED?

- NO
- YES

## OTHER LEARNINGS