



# Mandatory Reporting Policy

Mooroopna Primary School

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## Rationale

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

In Victoria there is a clear legal duty upon all adults to report information about child sexual abuse to police.

## Aim

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

## Implementation

- Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 has an obligation to report that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence.
- A 'reasonable belief' is not the same as having proof. A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds.
- All members of the Teaching Service are mandated by law to report signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, and neglect.
- New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures as part of their induction procedure.
- Staff will be reminded of mandatory responsibilities annually.
- All concerns must be reported immediately to the Principal, or in his/her absence, the Assistant Principal. If either person forms a belief that a report is to be undertaken, then a DHS report must occur.
- The Principal will keep a record of all discussions about a student with whom there is a concern.
- The teacher and/or the Principal class officer will contact the Department of Human Services by telephone as soon as possible to make an official notification on **Phone 1800 650 227**.
- Members of the Department of Human Services, or associated support or intervention services that visit the school following a notification, will interview staff and children only in the presence of a Principal class member or his/her nominee.
- All reports, information sheets and subsequent discussions and information are to be recorded and remain strictly confidential.
- All incidents to be monitored, and any subsequent signs or indications of abuse are also to be reported.
- While only mandated by law to report incidents of physical and sexual abuse, and neglect; teachers are also encouraged to report incidents of emotional abuse or neglect.
- While only teaching staff are legally mandated to report, non teaching staff will report any concerns to the Principal and/or Department of Human Services, or Victoria Police.
- Student teachers will comply with all areas of this policy as per teachers.

## Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed triennially as part of the school's three-year review cycle.