

## CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### PURPOSE

To ensure school staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and are able to:

- understand their various legal obligations to report and take other reasonable steps to discharge the duty of care that may be owed to the child or young person
- identify indicators that a child or young person has been, is being, or is at risk of being abused
- make a report about a child or young person who has been, is being, or is at risk of being abused
- ensure Department staff are aware of their reporting obligations and the potential consequences of making a report.

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### Reporting Obligations

The following information summarises the mandatory and other reporting obligations where there is a concern that a child or young person has been, is being, or is at risk of being abused.

#### **Mandatory Reporting**

The following professionals are considered mandatory reporters:

- Teachers registered to teach or who have permission to teach pursuant to the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Principals of government and non-government schools
- Registered medical practitioners, nurses and all members of the police force

Mandatory reporters must make a report to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) (Child Protection) as soon as practicable if, in the course of practising their profession or carrying out their duties, they form reasonable belief that a child or young person is in need of protection, as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse, and the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child from that abuse.

A mandatory reporter who fails to comply with these reporting obligations may be committing a criminal offence.

#### **Failure to Disclose**

All adults, not just professionals who work with children, have a legal obligation to report to Victoria Police where they form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16. Failure to disclose the information may amount to a criminal offence unless you have a "reasonable excuse" or have an "exemption" from doing so.

#### **Failure to Protect**

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Any staff member in a position of authority, who becomes aware that an adult associated with their organisation (such as an employee, contractor, volunteer or visitor) poses a risk of sexual abuse to a child under the care, authority or supervision of the organisation, must take all reasonable steps to remove or reduce that risk. This may include, for example, removing the adult from child-related work pending investigation. If a staff member in a position of authority fails to take reasonable steps in these circumstances, this may amount to a criminal offence.

The offence applies only to adults in a position of authority within an organisation. In a school context, this may include Principals, Assistant Principals, and Campus Principals.

### **Other Reporting Obligations**

#### **Child in Need of Protection**

Any person can make a report to DHHS Child Protection if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection for any of the following reasons:

- the child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of:
  - physical injury and their parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child
  - sexual abuse and their parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child
  - emotional or psychological harm and their parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.
- the child has been abandoned and there is no other suitable person who is willing and able to care for the child.
- the child's parents are dead or incapacitated and there is no other suitable person who is willing and able to care for the child.
- the child's physical development or health has been, or is likely to be significantly harmed and the parents are unable or unwilling to provide basic care, or effective medical or other remedial care.

Department policy requires all staff who form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection to report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police. In the case of school staff, they must also discuss their concerns with the principal or a member of the school leadership team.

#### **Child in Need of Therapeutic Treatment**

Any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child over 10 but under 15 years of age has been exhibiting sexually abusive behaviours and may be in need of therapeutic treatment should make a report to DHHS Child Protection.

Sexually abusive behaviours can be exhibited when a child uses their power, authority or status to engage another person in sexual activity that is unwanted, or where the other party is incapable of giving informed consent (such as other children who are younger or who have cognitive impairments).

In the case of student sexual offending, Department policy requires staff to also report to the Victoria Police. In the case of school staff, they must also discuss their concerns with the principal or a member of the school leadership team.

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### **Significant Concerns for the Wellbeing of a Child**

Any person who has a significant concern for the wellbeing of a child should report these concerns to DHHS Child Protection, or refer the child and their family to Child FIRST.

A significant concern for the wellbeing of a child may arise, for instance, where any of the following factors may have a significant adverse impact on a child's care, welfare or development:

- significant parenting problems
- family conflict or family breakdown
- pressure due to a family member's physical/mental illness, substance abuse, or disability
- vulnerability due to youth, isolation or lack of support
- significant social or economic disadvantage. In the case of school staff, they must also discuss their concerns with the principal or a member of the school leadership team.

### **Additional Legal Obligations**

In addition to the mandatory reporting and other reporting obligations mentioned above, all school staff have duty of care obligations and obligations arising out of the Child Safe Standards. The information below contains information about these obligations.

#### **Duty of Care**

All school staff have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to prevent reasonably foreseeable injury to children and young people under the care. This includes taking reasonable steps to protect their safety, health and wellbeing.

In the case of a child who may be in need of protection or therapeutic treatment, or where there are significant concerns about the wellbeing of a child, reasonable steps may include (but are not necessarily limited to):

- acting on concerns and suspicions of abuse as soon as practicable
- seeking appropriate advice or consulting with other professionals or agencies when the school staff member is unsure of what steps to take
- reporting the suspected child abuse to appropriate authorities such as Victoria Police and DHHS Child Protection
- arranging counselling and/or other appropriate welfare support for the child
- providing ongoing support to the child and young person – this may include attending DHHS Child Protection Case Planning meetings, and convening regular Student Support Group meetings
- sharing information with other school based staff who will also be responsible for monitoring and providing ongoing support to the child or young person.

#### **Child Safe Standards**

The Child Safe Standards are compulsory minimum standards for all Victorian early childhood services and schools to ensure they are well prepared to protect children from abuse and neglect. The Standards support all Victorian early childhood services and schools

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to embed a culture of no tolerance for child abuse but, where necessary, to respond appropriately to actual or suspected abuse.

### **Training Obligations**

School staff play a vital role in protecting children from harm and are well placed to observe signs or behaviours that may indicate risks of child abuse, neglect or exploitation.

The [Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations eLearning module](#) (the module) is an essential professional learning resource that assists schools to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

The module provides detailed information for identifying and responding to child abuse, and includes case studies and practical scenarios to assist staff fulfil their reporting obligations.

Staff in schools who are:

- mandated reporters must undertake the training once per calendar year
- not mandated reporters are strongly encouraged to undertake the training once per calendar year.

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## MAKING A REPORT

Child abuse can have a significant effect on a child's physical or emotional health, development and wellbeing. There are many indicators of child abuse and neglect. The presence of a single indicator, or even several indicators, does not prove that abuse or neglect has occurred. However, the repeated occurrence of an indicator, or the occurrence of several indicators together, should alert staff to the possibility of child abuse and neglect.

Types of child abuse include:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect
- medical neglect
- family violence
- human trafficking (including forced marriage)
- sexual exploitation (including pornography and prostitution).

The following table indicates who should be contacted when there is a concern that a child or a young person has been, is being, or is at risk of being abused.

Type of Reporting	Reporter	Report to
Mandatory	Mandatory Reporters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHHS Child Protection</li> </ul>
Failure to Disclose	All Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHHS Child Protection</li> <li>• Victoria Police</li> </ul>
Failure to Protect	Adults in a position of Authority (Principal, Assistant Principal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHHS Child Protection</li> <li>• Victoria Police</li> </ul>
Child in Need of Protection	Any Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHHS Child Protection</li> <li>• Victoria Police</li> </ul>
Child in Need of Therapeutic Treatment	Any Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHHS Child Protection</li> </ul>
Significant Concerns for the Wellbeing of a Child	Any Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHHS Child Protection</li> <li>• Child First</li> </ul>

There are Four Critical Actions that schools should take where a staff members forms a reasonable belief that a child is a victim of child abuse, see: The Four Critical Actions: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse (Appendix A).

To ensure you have clear and comprehensive notes, and to assist you in making the report, use the Reporting Templates (Appendix B – for Child Abuse, or Appendix C – for Student Sexual Offending).

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## **Potential Consequence of Making a Report**

### **Confidentiality**

The identity of a reporter must remain confidential unless:

- the reporter chooses to inform the child, young person or parent of the report
- the reporter consents in writing to their identity being disclosed
- a Court or Tribunal decides that it necessary for the identity of the reporter to be disclosed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child
- a Court or Tribunal decides that, in the interests of justice, the reporter is required to provide evidence

### **Professional Protection**

If a report is made in good faith:

- it does not constitute unprofessional conduct or a breach of professional ethics on the part of the reporter
- the reporter cannot be held legally liable in respect of the report

### **Interviews**

DHHS Child Protection and/or Victoria Police

- may conduct interviews of children and young people at the school without the parent's knowledge or consent. Interviewing children and young people at school should only occur in exceptional circumstances and if it is in the best interests of the child or young person to proceed in this manner
- will notify the principal or a member of the leadership team of their intention to interview the child or young person on the school premises

When officers from DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police come to the school premises, the principal or a member of the leadership team should request to see identification before permitting them to have access to the child or young person.

When a child or young person is being interviewed by DHHS Child Protection and/or Victoria Police, school staff must arrange to have a supportive adult present with the child or young person.

### **Support for the Child or Young Person**

The roles and responsibilities of staff members in supporting children and young people who are involved with DHHS Child Protection may include the following:

- acting as a support person for the child or young person
- attending DHHS Child Protection case planning meetings
- observing and monitoring the child or young person's behaviour
- liaising with professionals.

### **Requests for Information**

DHHS Child Protection and/or Child FIRST and/or Victoria Police may request information about the child or family for the purpose of investigating a report and assessing the risk to the child or young person.

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In certain circumstances, DHHS Child Protection can also direct school staff and Department staff to provide information or documents about the protection or development of the child. Such directions should be in writing and only be made by authorised persons within DHHS Child Protection.

### **Witness Summons**

If DHHS Child Protection makes a Protection Application in the Children's Court of Victoria, any party to the application may issue a Witness Summons to produce documents and/or to give evidence in the proceedings.

## **ESCALATION MECHANISMS**

Where a school staff member continues to have protective concerns about a child or young person after DHHS Child Protection has closed the case, the school may need to escalate their concerns.

In these cases, schools can escalate the matter by doing the following:

- using DHHS Child Protection's complaints management process. This process can be used to report urgent and important issues about an individual child or young person, as well as systemic issues about the provision of services
- principals of a Victorian Government school can also escalate their concerns to their regional Area Executive Director. The Area Executive Director can then share this information with their counterpart at the DHHS Child Protection.

To ensure that reports to DHHS Child Protection contain the necessary information for an intake worker to assess a report, schools should ensure all school staff use the PROTECT Reporting Template when recording a incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse.

## **RELATED POLICIES & REGISTRATION**

- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005
- Crimes Act 1958
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Victorian Institute of Teaching Act 2001

## **EVALUATION**

Review and updates of this policy and procedures will take place annually in line with the school's Evaluation of Policies Timetable and Child Safe best practice standards.

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## APPENDIX A

# PROTECT



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## FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

# Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse

### YOU MUST TAKE ACTION

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

- You **must** act, by following the 4 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.
- You **must** act if you form a suspicion/reasonable belief, even if you are unsure and have not directly observed child abuse (e.g. if the victim or another person tells you about the abuse).
- You **must** use the Responding to Suspected Child Abuse template to keep clear and comprehensive notes.

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



## 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.

## ACTION 2: REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES

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.

### IF THE SOURCE OF SUSPECTED ABUSE IS FROM WITHIN THE SCHOOL:

#### VICTORIA POLICE

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

You **must also** report **internally** to:

#### GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

- School Principal and/or leadership team
- Employee Conduct Branch
- DET Security Services Unit

#### CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

- School Principal and/or leadership team
- Diocesan education office

#### INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

- School Principal and/ or school chairperson

### IF THE SOURCE OF SUSPECTED ABUSE IS FROM WITHIN THE FAMILY OR COMMUNITY

#### DHHS CHILD PROTECTION

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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 Security Services Unit

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

- School Principal and/or leadership team
- Diocesan education office

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

- School Principal and/or chairperson

### **ACTION 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/carers (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 parents/carers 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).

### **ACTION 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 etc.

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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

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 (in circumstances where the family are open to receiving support), or to DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police.

## **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**

[www.dhs.vic.gov.au](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au)

### **VICTORIA POLICE**

**000** or contact your local police station

### **DET SECURITY SERVICES UNIT**

(03) 9589 6266

### **STUDENT INCIDENT AND RECOVERY UNIT**

(03) 9637 2934

### **EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH**

(03) 9637 2595

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## APPENDIX B

# PROTECT



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## RESPONDING TO SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE: 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. 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.

### 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.

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## RESPONDING TO AN INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE

*PLEASE NOTE: 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*

### 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

(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):

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**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, OR IS AT RISK OF ABUSE**

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

*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:

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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:

NOTHING IF THEY ARE WITHIN THE SCHOOL OR WITHIN THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY (THIS WILL IMPACT ON 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 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

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).

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 ON 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:

### REFERRALS(S):

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## 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 ACTION.

### SAFETY AND WELLBEING

#### CURRENT SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF THE CHILD

IS THE CHILD SAFE FROM ABUSE AND HARM?

- 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

*IF SO, CONSIDER HOW THESE CAN BE ADDRESSED AND CAPTURED WITHIN A STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN*

#### CURRENT WELLBEING OF IMPACTED STAFF MEMBERS

DOES THE STAFF MEMBER WHO MADE THE REPORT/ WITNESSED THE 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 SCHOLS: 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 AND 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



## APPENDIX C

# PROTECT



Education  
and Training



### Responding to suspected child abuse: 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. 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.

#### 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

*PLEASE NOTE: 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*

### 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

(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, OR IS AT RISK OF ABUSE

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

*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:

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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:

NOTHING IF THEY ARE WITHIN THE SCHOOL OR WITHIN THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY (THIS WILL IMPACT ON 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 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

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).

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 ON 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:

### REFERRALS(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 ACTION.

## SAFETY AND WELLBEING

### CURRENT SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF THE CHILD

IS THE CHILD SAFE FROM ABUSE AND HARM?

- 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

*IF SO, CONSIDER HOW THESE CAN BE ADDRESSED AND CAPTURED WITHIN A STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN*

### CURRENT WELLBEING OF IMPACTED STAFF MEMBERS

DOES THE STAFF MEMBER WHO MADE THE REPORT/ WITNESSED THE 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 SCHOLS: 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 AND 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