Creek Street Christian College

Child Safe Policy

Procedure No. 27
Procedure Owner: College Council
Responsible Person: Principal

Implemented: 2022

Contents

Creek Street Christian College Vision, Mission and Philosophy Statements 4
College Vision 4
College Mission 4
College Philosophy 4
Know and Understand… 4
Apply/do… 4
Collaborate… 4
Become… 4
Introduction 5
Purpose 5
Scope 5
Definitions 5
Child abuse 5
Child-connected work 5
Child safety 6
College environment 6
College staff 6
Statement of commitment to child safety and child safety principles 6
Child safety principles 7
Procedure 7
Actions to embed a child safe culture 7
Physical access to the College Campus 9
Network systems access 9
Online Cyber Safety 9
College Campus Security Camera's 9
Roles and responsibilities 10
Making a report or referral – the Four Critical Actions 10
Critical Action 1: Responding to an emergency 10
Critical Action 2: Reporting to authorities/referring to services 10
If the source of suspected abuse comes from within the College 11
If the source of suspected abuse comes from within the family or community 11
Critical Action 3: contacting parents/carers 11
Critical Action 4: providing ongoing support 11
Training and supervision 12
Reporting a child safety concern or complaint 12
The Reportable Conduct Scheme 13
Risk reduction and management 13
Listening to, communicating with, and empowering children 14
Actions taken to support Aboriginal students 14
LMS Record & Communication of Student Support 15

Communications 15
Confidentiality and privacy 15
Related policies and documents 15
Procedure evaluation and review 15
Appendix A 16

Creek Street Christian College Vision, Mission and Philosophy Statements

College Vision

Creek Street Christian College (hereafter 'the College') is a ministry of the Creek Street Church and has been established to provide Christian education and training to students so that they are equipped to impact their community, our nation, and the world for the Lord Jesus Christ.

College Mission

The College has been established to provide families with a Christian education, within a caring and disciplined environment that will enable students to fully develop their God-given talents and academic abilities, so that they are able to contribute effectively to the changing society of which they are a part.

The College encourages and supports students to develop a positive and wholesome outlook on life, to become self-disciplined people and to be responsible and caring members of the community, both locally and internationally.

College Philosophy

At the College, our approach to learning is holistic in nature. We have a commitment to the development of the whole student in a Christian environment. A Christian education provides unparalleled opportunities for students to discover their passions and nurture their talents. We teach, equip, activate, and release the students with the wisdom which comes from God.

Our four foundations of a true Christian Education are to learn to:

Know and Understand…

Our programs are designed to engage the learners by stimulating wonder and dynamic educational experiences. The students develop a deeper connection to content, understand that learning areas are related to each other and the world beyond the classroom. Our students take risks, become independent thinkers in a rapidly changing world, seeking and acquiring new skills and knowledge at every stage of life.

Apply/do...

Learning is developed through experience, action, and engagement. Through real-life experiential learning students at the College understand how to put their knowledge and skills into action in meaningful and positive ways locally, nationally, and globally. We believe the Bible is God's revelation to man and that it contains the principles and values that show us how to live and do what God has called us to do.

Collaborate...

God created us for relationships. In fact, the greatest commandment - love your God with all heart, all your soul, and all your mind (Mark 12:30-31) helps us build, maintain, and expand our relationship with God and others. At the College, much of what we learn is about ourselves in relation to experiences with others. Through this our students develop collaborative, interpersonal, social and language skills to help them develop an appreciation for the wider world and their place within it.

Become...

From Early Learning Centre (ELC) to Year 12, the students begin on a journey of discovering and embracing all God has made them to be and are helped to become their best versions of themselves. Students graduate from the College as open-minded, compassionate, balanced, resilient global citizens.

Introduction

This procedure is required and informed by clause 8 of *Ministerial Order No. 870 – Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in Schools*, which sets out what the Child Safe Standards mean in a school environment.

Purpose

The Child Safety Procedure sets out the College's commitment and approach to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe and provides the procedure framework for the College's approach to the Child Safe Standards.

In the 21st Century, diversity has become an exceedingly important consideration for schools. A focus on diversity can increase inclusion and create a fairer and more inclusive community.

The College has a diverse community and is therefore sensitive to the diversity and characteristics of the College community, including, but not limited to gender, race, ethnicity, age, experience, socioeconomic status, ability, sexual orientation, cultural background, religion, skill, political belief or educational background/status.

The College will not tolerate unlawful discrimination or harassment based on the above-mentioned characteristics.

Scope

This procedure applies to complaints or concerns relating to child abuse, as well as any other concerns about children, made by or in relation to a child or student, staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors, or other persons while connected to the College. This procedure also applies to College Council members.

This policy also endeavours to clearly describe the actions that will be taken to respond to a complaint or concern relating to child abuse, including actions to:

- protect any child or student connected to the complaint or concern relating to child abuse until the complaint or concern is resolved
- make, secure, and retain records of the complaint or concern and the response of the College's services.

The procedure will apply to the College environment (see Definitions section). The procedure covers both school hours and outside of school hours.

Definitions

Child abuse

Child abuse includes:

- any act committed against a child involving:
    - a sexual offence; or
    - grooming; and
- the infliction, on a child, of:
    - physical violence; or
    - serious emotional or psychological harm; and
- serious neglect of a child.

Child-connected work

Child-connected work means work authorised by the College, College Council, or Secretary of the

Department of Education and Training and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Child safety

Child safety encompasses 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 incidents or allegations of child abuse. Staff and volunteers are trained annually to be attuned to the signs of harm, and how they facilitate appropriate ways for children and students to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.

College environment

The College environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the College for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a campus of the College
- online College environments (including email and intranet systems
- other locations provided by the College for students' use.

College staff

College staff means an individual working in a College environment who is:

- employed by the College
- directly appointed by the College Council or
- a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary or not).

Statement of commitment to child safety and child safety principles

The College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

The College's approach to creating and maintaining a child safe College environment is guided by our College philosophy and values.

At the College our values guide the decisions and behaviours of all members of our College community, including in relation to child safety:

D	**Devotion**	'Till I come, devote yourself to reading, to exhortation and to teaching and instilling doctrine.' 1 Timothy 4:13 AMP
I	**Integrity**	'Joyful are people of integrity, who follow the instructions of the Lord.' Psalm 119:1 NLT
S	**Service**	'God has given each of you a gift form his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.' 1 Peter 4:10 NLT
C	**Compassion**	'Therefore as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.' Colossians 3:12 NIV
O	**Optimism**	'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. 'Philippians 4:13 NKJV
V	**Vision**	'Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.' Proverbs 29:18 KJV
E	**Excellence**	'And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritances; for you serve the Lord Christ.' Colossians 3:23-24. NKJV
R	**Respect**	'Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honour the king.' 1 Peter 2:17 NIV

The College has zero tolerance for child abuse, and this includes abuse within an online environment.

We are committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, procedures, strategies, and practices will be inclusive of the needs of all children, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable.

Every person involved in the College has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

Child safety principles

In its planning, decision-making and operations, the College will:

- Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety
- Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives
- Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
- Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount
- Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children
- Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development
- Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such concerns
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds including those of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds
- Ensure that children with a disability, with diverse needs and children who are vulnerable are safe and can participate equally and have strategies provided to support them
- Report suspected abuse, neglect, or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities
- Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk and
- Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

Procedure

Actions to embed a child safe culture

The College's culture encourages staff, students, parents, and the College community to raise, discuss and scrutinise child safety concerns. This makes it more difficult for abuse to occur and remain hidden.

Child safety is everyone's responsibility. **All College staff** are required to:

- Act in accordance with the College's Child Safety procedure, which clearly sets out the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- Consider the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, children who are vulnerable, children who are unable to live at home, living internationally, and children who may identify as LGBTIQ+ when implementing the Child Safe Standards
- Act in accordance with the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Procedure including following the Four Critical Actions for Schools (Appendix A) procedure when reporting
- Undertake annual guidance and training on child safety
- Act in accordance with their legal obligations, including:

- Failure to disclose offence (applies to all adults)
- Duty of care (applies to all College staff)
- Mandatory reporting obligations (applies to all mandatory reporters, including teachers, principals, registered psychologists, and registered doctors and nurses)
- Failure to protect offence (applies to a person in a position of authority within the College)
- Reportable conduct obligations (applies to all College staff in reporting conduct to the principal, and applies to the principal in reporting to Employee Conduct Branch)
- Organisational duty of care (applies to the College as an organisation)
- For more information on these obligations, see Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Colleges.

As part of The College's child safe culture, **College leadership** (including the Principal and Assistant Principals) will:

- Consider the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, children who are vulnerable, children who are unable to live at home, living internationally, and children who may identify as LGBTIQ+ when implementing the Child Safe Standards
- Ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at College leadership meetings and staff meetings
- Encourage and enable staff professional learning and training to build deeper understandings of child safety and prevention of abuse
- Ensure that no one is prohibited or discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to a person external to the College or from making records of any allegation.

As part of the College's child safe culture, **College mandatory reporting staff** are required to:

- Complete the Protecting Children – Mandatory reporting and other obligations online module every year (Note that it is a DET requirement that mandatory reporters complete this training annually. It also helps with demonstrating compliance with the Child Safe Standards)
- Read the College's Child Safety Code of Conduct on induction, and maintain familiarity with that document
- Read the College's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Procedure and Procedures on induction, and maintain familiarity with that document
- Read the College's Child Safety Procedure (this document) on induction and maintain familiarity with that document.

As part of the College's child safe culture, in performing the functions and powers given to them under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, **College Council members** will:

- Ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at College council meetings (Note that there is no requirement to discuss child safety at every College council meeting, but it is best practice to have child safety on the agenda at some meetings to show that the College is embedding a culture of child safety and College council members are informed and understand the issues)
- Consider the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable, when making decisions regarding the Child Safe Standards
- Undertake annual guidance and training on child safety
- Approve the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to College council employees and members, and if updated, note the new document in its College council meeting minutes
- When hiring employees, ensure that selection, supervision, and management practices are child safe (unless delegated to the principal).

College leadership will maintain records of the above processes.

Physical access to the College Campus

- Visitors and contractors wishing to enter the College campus or adjacent Church buildings must sign in via the 'Visitor Access Management Tablet (VAMT)'
- This device is located at the Colleges main reception are where all visitors are to report for access
- The VAMT captures the following information:
    - Person's name, contact number and reason for visit
    - Working With Childrens Check in date card number
- The VAMT conducts live checks of these cards and notifies appropriate college staff if not current
- A name and reason for visit label is printed for visitors to wear on their clothing once approved for entry. This helps identify them to others on campus
- Visitors and contractors sign out via the VAMT when leaving the College
- Visitor Management System in use – PassTab.

Network systems access

- All students have personal username and passwords provided which allows access to the College's network. These credentials are used for internet access, Microsoft Office products, Compass Learning Management System, printing, and other cloud-based tools where the College enforces Single Sign On (SSO) logins
- Separate VLAN's (local networks) are in place at the College. This allows for more micromanaging of access/usage by users. For example – students are on their own network, which is separate from any staff, guests and other systems
- The College network has multiple firewalls installed which separate our networks and internet services from the wider web. This has appropriate rules in place to protect users, data and infrastructure.

Online Cyber Safety

- The college partners with Linewize (By Qoria). This vendor and product provide the college with internet content filtering and reporting.
    - All student devices must pass by the Linewize system before accessing online material
    - College students are blocked from accessing inappropriate sites which are regularly updated by Linewize and the College. These sites can include, but not limited too – Offensive behavior, violence, sexual themes, pornography, sensitive content, gambling, social media, dating, peer to peer sharing and gaming
    - The College also provides an online safety hub for students, parents and staff to access - Resources - Creek Street Christian College (VIC) - Hub (onlinesafetyhub.com.au)

College Campus Security Camera's

- The College has initiated a project to install a closed-circuit television system (CCTV) for the following reasons.
    - To reassure students, staff and visitors that they are protected when on college campus.
    - Acts as a deterrent and help reduce the likelihood of vandalism and theft.
    - To help verify incidents on college campus to support an evidence-based response.
- The college CCTV cameras **ARE NOT** installed in the following areas:
    - Toilets
    - Change Rooms

    - Dressing Rooms
    - Showers
    - Other areas where individual privacy is paramount
- No hidden surveillance is permitted
- Via the College newsletter, the College community has been informed of the intention to install CCTV cameras in appropriate areas on an ongoing basis. This will be communicated again over time
- CCTV signage is located at each main entrance of the College and main building to notify students, staff, visitors and contractors
- CCTV footage is not monitored – it is recorded either 24/7 or via camera area trigger depending on location
- CCTV recorded footage is stored on a secure server within the College on premise communications room. (no third party, cloud-based storage in use)
- Access to CCTV server is only available by College Principal and Technical Services Manager. (These roles may be called upon for situations requiring further detail on an agreed relevant incident and configuration changes)

Roles and responsibilities

College leaders will ensure that each person understands their role, responsibilities and behaviour expected in protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect. Staff will comply with the College's Child Safety Code of Conduct, which sets out clearly the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

Specific child safety responsibilities:

- The Principal or delegate is responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safety Procedure every 3 years.
- The Assistant Principal: Student Well-Being is responsible for monitoring the College's compliance with the Child Safety Procedure. The College community should approach the College if they have any concerns about the College's compliance with the Child Safety Procedure.
- The Principal or delegate is responsible for informing the College community about this procedure and making it publicly available.
- Other specific roles and responsibilities are named in the College's other child safety policies and procedures.

Making a report or referral – the Four Critical Actions

Critical Action 1: Responding to an emergency

If there is no risk of immediate harm, go to Critical Action 2.
If a child is at immediate risk of harm, staff 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.

Staff may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve evidence.

Critical Action 2: Reporting to authorities/referring to services

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed staff must report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures of child abuse as soon as practicable. Failure to report physical and sexual child abuse may amount to a criminal offence.

If the source of suspected abuse comes from within the College

Victoria Police

Staff must report all instances of suspected child abuse involving a staff member, contractor or volunteer to Victoria Police (call 000 or the local police station). Staff must also report internally to the College Principal and/or College Executive Team.

If the source of suspected abuse comes from within the family or community

Child Protection

Staff must report to Child Protection if they form the belief on reasonable grounds that a child is:

- 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 and the parents have not protected or are unlikely to protect the child.

Victoria Police

Staff must also report all instances of suspected sexual abuse (including grooming) to Victoria Police (call 000 or the local police station).
Staff must also report internally to the College Principal and/or College Executive Team.

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 report or referral to or seeking advice from:

- Child FIRST or The Orange Door (in circumstances where the school staff member believes the family is open to receiving support)
- Safe and Equal – for information and guidance to help respond to family violence
- family violence victims/survivors can be referred to 1800 Respect for counselling, information and a referral service – 1800 737 732
- Child Protection
- Victoria Police — call 000 or the local police station.

Critical Action 3: contacting parents/carers

The principal must consult with Child Protection or Victoria Police (call 000 or the local police station) to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers. They may advise:

- not to contact the parents/carers (for example, 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 or 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.

Where the alleged perpetrator is an adult connected to the College as a volunteer, staff member or contractor, the principal must consider whether there are risks that other students may have been impacted by the abuse. After conducting a risk assessment, it may be necessary to communicate more broadly with the College community. Legal Division can provide further advice about communications.

Critical Action 4: providing ongoing support

The College will provide support for children impacted by abuse. This can include the development of a student support plan in consultation with health and wellbeing professionals. This is an essential part of the College's duty of care requirements.

Strategies may include development of a safety plan, direct support and referral to health and wellbeing professionals and support services.

Other students at the College may also be impacted by allegations or charges against staff members, volunteers or contractors that have worked at the College. The College will provide appropriate referrals or support for those students.

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

Recruitment

The College uses the Department's Recruitment process, available on the Department's website, to guide us to ensure child safe recruitment practices are used.

The College employs teachers registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT), or those who have permission to teach under Part 2.6 of the Act.

All prospective volunteers are required to comply with our College's Volunteers Procedure, including in relation to assessing the suitability of prospective volunteers and obtaining checks required under this procedure.

Training and supervision

Training and education are important to ensure that everyone in the College understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our College culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in coming forward with any allegations or suspicions of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse. This training occurs annually or more often as required.

Ministerial Order on Child Safe Standards requires Colleges to ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to their staff and College council members "at least annually" on roles and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse, child abuse risks in the College environment, and the College's current child safety standards.

We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to develop their skills to protect children from abuse, to promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability and vulnerable children.

New employees and volunteers will be inducted into the College, including by being referred to the Child Safety Procedure (this document), and other documents related to child safety, including the Grievance Policy.

They will also be supervised regularly to ensure they understand our College's commitment to child safety, and that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate. All employees of our College will be monitored and assessed via regular performance review to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported by College staff to the Principal or Assistant Principals and will be managed in accordance with child safety procedures where required.

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

The College has clear expectations for all staff and volunteers (including homestay providers) in making a report about a child or young person who may need protection. All staff (including College council employees) must follow the College's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including

Mandatory Reporting) Procedure and Procedures, including following the Four Critical Actions for Schools if there is an incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse. Immediate actions should include reporting their concerns to DHHS Child Protection, Victoria Police and/or another appropriate agency and notifying the principal or a member of the College leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns.

The College will never prohibit or discourage College staff from reporting an allegation of child abuse. The College will always take action to respond to a complaint in accordance with the College's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Procedure and Procedures. In accordance with Action 4 of the Four Critical Actions for Schools, the College will provide ongoing support for students affected by child abuse.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme

The Reportable Conduct Scheme (the Scheme) seeks to improve organisations' responses to allegations of child abuse and neglect by their workers and volunteers. The Scheme is established by the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (the Act). Please note that the Scheme is separate to and has different obligations to Mandatory Reporting requirements.

The Scheme has been designed to ensure that the Commission is aware of every allegation of certain types of misconduct involving children in relevant organisations that exercise care, supervision, and authority over children. The Commission is also able to share information where appropriate, including with Working with Children Check Victoria, relevant regulators, and Victoria Police, to better prevent and protect children from abuse. Importantly, a finding that a person has engaged in reportable conduct can trigger an assessment of whether that person is suitable to continue to work or volunteer with children.

The Principal's role:

- Ensure that the Commission is notified of allegations of inappropriate conduct with children and child abuse and that allegation are investigated
- Have in place systems to prevent child abuse and, if child abuse is alleged, to ensure allegations can be brought to the attention of appropriate persons for investigation and response.

The Commission's role includes:

- Supporting and guiding organisations that receive allegations to promote fair, effective, timely and appropriate responses
- Independently overseeing, monitoring and, where appropriate, making recommendations to improve the responses of those organisations.

Creek Street Christian College Inc is required to comply with the Scheme in accordance with item 1 of Schedule 3 and item 2 of Schedule 4 of the Act.

The Commission has a number of Information Sheets which are useful for your understanding of the Scheme. In particular, Information Sheet 2: What isChild Safe Policy Reportable Conduct is useful to understand the five types of reportable conduct and what reasonable belief is.

Risk reduction and management

The College believes the wellbeing of children and young people is paramount, and is vigilant in ensuring proper risk management processes, found in the College's risk assessment register. The College recognises there are potential risks to children and young people and will take a risk management approach by undertaking preventative measures.

We will identify and mitigate the risks of child abuse in College environments by considering the nature of

each College environment, the activities expected to be conducted in that environment and the characteristics and needs of all children expected to be present in that environment.

The College monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the actions it takes to reduce or remove risks to child safety.

Listening to, communicating with, and empowering children

The College has developed a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment that involves and communicates with children, young people and their parents/carers. We encourage child and parent/carer involvement and engagement that informs safe College operations and builds the capability of children and parents/carers to understand their rights and their responsibilities. Our College is committed to supporting and encouraging students to use their voice to raise and share their concerns with a trusted adult at any time of need. Students can access information on how to report abuse with their Homeroom teachers, Assistant Principal: Student Well-Being, as well as Chaplains and the Principal.

When the College is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct with or abuse of a child, the College will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check understanding and keep the child (and/or their parents/carers, as appropriate) informed about progress.

The College will promote the Child Safe Standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children, including:

- All our child safety policies and procedures will be available for the students and parents at the College to read
- College newsletters will inform students and the College community about the College's commitment to child safety, and strategies or initiatives that the College is taking to ensure student safety
- Child Safe Standards will be discussed at most internal and external meetings.

The College will use its health and wellbeing programs to deliver appropriate education to its students about:

- standards of behaviour for students attending the College
- healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality)
- resilience
- child abuse awareness and prevention.

Actions taken to support Aboriginal students

	Actions Taken
Prior to commencement	Meetings to set up support. Use of the Student Hub Space regularly throughout the year. Students encouraged to be a part of formal assemblies and to present a 'Welcome to Country'. Students encouraged to share their cultural heritage, e.g. to play the didgeridoo at Assemblies.
Transition Programme	Connection with College Well-being Team and Student Service Officers
Term 1	Support with College Well-being Team and meeting with parents
Term 2	Support with College Well-being Team and meeting with parents to monitor progress
Term 3	Support with College Well-being Team and meeting with parents to monitor progress
Term 4	Support with College Well-being Team and meeting with parents to monitor progress

LMS Record & Communication of Student Support

Students are supported through the following means:

- Staff observations
- Well-being Team interactions
- Parent interviews, emails and telephone calls
- Meetings with parents/care givers
- Briefing information with staff
- 3 Way interviews (Student, parent and teacher)
- Mentor meetings
- Use of the Student Hub Space
- IEP (Individual Education Plan)
- SEP (Social Emotional Plan)
- Responsible Choices Class
- Letters of Commendation
- Specialist Reports
- First Aid issued
- Prescribed medication issued
- Student/ family internet agreement

Communications

This College is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the College community through:

- Ensuring that the Child Safety Procedure (this document), Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Procedure and Procedure
- Once per term reminders in the College newsletter of our College's commitment to child safety
- Ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at College leadership meetings and staff meetings for discussion

Confidentiality and privacy

This College collects, uses and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy law and other relevant laws. The principles regulating the collection, use and storage of information is included in the Department of Education and Training's Colleges' Privacy Procedure.

The College uses Compass to record student wellbeing and risk management matters. The College has a policy and/or procedure in relation to records relevant to child safety and wellbeing that accords with the Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards, including minimum retention periods.

Related policies and documents

Related policies and documents include:

- Code of Conduct
- Mandatory Child Safe Reporting and Responding Procedure
- Procedure for Retention of Records
- Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Colleges
- Four Critical Actions for Schools
- Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending
- Colleges' Privacy Procedure.
- CCYP | Reportable Conduct Scheme information sheets

Procedure evaluation and review

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this procedure will be reviewed every 3 years. The review will include feedback from students, parents/carers, and the College community.

Appendix A

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 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.
- 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).
- 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.

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

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.

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-teams

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) 9267 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**.

PROTECT