



Dandenong South PS

Mandatory Reporting Policy

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.

Dandenong South Primary School is committed to child safety. We have a zero tolerance to child abuse. Our school actively promotes the safety and wellbeing of all students, and all school staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in the school environment in accordance with their legal obligations including the Child Safe Standards.

Aims:

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

Implementation:

- Any person who is registered as a teacher under the *Education and Training Reform Act (2006)*, or any person who has been granted to teach under the Act, including Principals, is mandated to make a report to the Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Protection. All concerns must be reported immediately to the Principal, or Assistant Principal.
(Teachers and Principals are mandated by law under section 184 of the *Children Youth and Families Act 2005 (CYFA)* to make a report to child protection)
- Non-mandated staff members who, on reasonable grounds, believe that a child is in need of protection are encouraged to speak to their Principal, as well as being able to make a report to DHS Child Protection.
- Types of abuse to be reported include: physical, emotional, neglect, medical neglect, sexual abuse, family violence, female genital mutilation and risk taking behavior.
- School staff should discuss any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of students with the school Principal or member of the school leadership team; especially if they have a suspicion of possible abuse. Teachers must make a report if they have formed a belief that the child is being harmed. School staff who have concerns about a child or young person because they have been made aware of possible harm via their involvement in the community external to their professional role may also make a (protective) report to DHS Child Protection.
- New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures as part of their induction procedure.
- Staff are expected to complete the mandatory reporting online modules annually.
- The Principal, Assistant Principals or Wellbeing Officer will keep a record of all discussions about a student with whom there is a concern. Information will be recorded and retained in secure storage and remain strictly confidential.
- All incidents are to be monitored, and any subsequent signs or indications of abuse are to be reported.

- Support will be provided for students impacted by abuse; this may include development of a Student Support Plan.
- 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: **1 300 655 795**
- Members of the Department of Human Services, or associated support or intervention services that visit the school following a notification, will interview children only in the presence of a Principal class member or his/her nominee.
- The challenge of protecting children is everyone's responsibility: parents, schools, communities, governments and businesses. The Department of Education strongly encourages all school staff to protect and preserve the safety, health and wellbeing of all children and young people

Evaluation:

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

References: Circular S062-2013 Mandatory Reporting,
Schools Policy and Advisory Guide (SPAG) Mandatory Reporting

This policy was last ratified by School Council on....

12/05/17