Child Safe Policy

Featherbrook P-9 College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all students at the school and the College Council is responsible for ensuring a culture of child safety is embedded at the school.

Rationale and Background
On 26 November 2015, the Victorian Parliament passed the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2015 to introduce child safe standards into law. The standards commenced on 1 January 2016 for organisations working with children, with the aim of promoting cultural change in the way organisations manage the risk of child abuse and neglect.

The child safe standards are part of the Victorian Government’s response to the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and other Non-Government Organisations. The Betrayal of Trust Report found that while the majority of children are safe in organisations and in the community, more work could be done to strengthen existing approaches to child safety.

Definition
The child safe policy defines and sets out the school’s approach to creating a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe; and provides the policy framework for the school’s approach to the Child Safe Standards.

Aim
The child safe standards aim to drive cultural change in organisations that provide services for children so that protecting children from abuse is embedded in everyday thinking and practice.

The Child Safe Standards
To create and maintain a child safe organisation, an entity to which the standards apply must have:

Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements (See appendix 1)

Standard 2: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety (See Appendix 2)

Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children (see appendix 3)

Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel (see Featherbrook College Duty of Care and Working with Children Check Policies and appendix 4)
**Standard 5:** Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse (see Featherbrook College Mandatory Reporting Policy and appendix 5)

**Standard 6:** Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse (Appendix 6)

**Standard 7:**
Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children (See Featherbrook College Duty of Care and Student Engagement Policies and appendix 7)

Featherbrook College will implement the Child Safe Standards to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students at the College and promote an organisational culture that manages the risk of child abuse and neglect.

Our School has developed policies and procedures that aim to keep children safe. The standards will provide a framework to identify gaps and improve policy and practices specific to child safety.

Reference Featherbrook College Policies:

Ratified School Council 14 – 11-2017
Appendix One – Standard one

1. STRATEGIES TO EMBED A CULTURE OF CHILD SAFETY AT THE SCHOOL

The following will be embedded to inform the culture of a Child Safe school where staff, students and parents all work cohesively to create such a culture.

1.1 The diverse needs of children in the school are to be recognised. It is important that our school is an inclusive and culturally safe place for children and parents. Young children and children with a disability may need greater levels of support and consideration. (See Featherbrook College Duty of Care and Student Engagement Policies)

1.2 Include child safety as a standing item on Leadership Team and Staff Meeting agendas and periodically at College Council meetings.

1.3 Key people in the school are allocated to undertake child safety roles and responsibilities. See School Child Safety Leader Role and Responsibilities (point 3 below).

1.4 Communicate the school’s stand on Child Safety that informs all people in the school community of the school’s Child Safe Policy based on Ministerial Order 870. The school community will be informed of the strategies to embed a culture of child safety at the school, the roles and responsibilities for achieving the strategies allocated by the College Leadership and College Council, and how the strategies are being put into practice.

1.5 The child safety policy, statement of commitment to child safety (standard two), child safety code of conduct (standard three) and the school’s procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse (standard five) will be publicly available on the college’s website.

1.6 The College Council will ensure there is broad communication to the college community of the Child Safety strategies to embed a culture of child safety at the college. A mix of tools will be used to communicate the Child Safe Policy through the following: online (website, Facebook), paper-based available at College Office, verbally at information nights for parents, transition forums for new parents in the school and through school council’s communication - school council minutes and Policy Sub-Committee work.

1.7 The college community is a diverse group that includes members of the college council, principal, registered teachers, student wellbeing staff, administration staff, facilities manager, parents and families, volunteers, students and visitors to the school.

2. Key messages that will be communicated include:

2.1 Everyone connected to our school can help children be safe.
2.2 We have zero tolerance for any abuse of children.
2.3 We have policies and processes in place to protect the care, safety and welfare of children.
2.4 There are clear boundaries about how adults in our school community may interact with the children here.
2.5 The child safe standards apply to school staff (including volunteers and contractors), visitors and students’ family members.
2.6 Keeping children safe is everyone’s responsibility. Different people at our school have different roles and responsibilities for ensuring children’s safety.
2.7 We want to ensure families know how we are keeping children safe at school, and how the school needs families to support.
2.8 Staff members (including volunteers) will receive training and support to understand and carry out their responsibilities under the standards.

2.9 Unsupervised contractors will be asked about their child safety arrangements as a condition of working with the college if they work with children enrolled in the school (or children can reasonably be expected to be present while they are at the school).

2.10 Other people using the school facilities will be asked about their child safety arrangements as a condition of using the facilities if the use involves children enrolled at the school (or children can reasonably be expected to be present while their staff or other adults are at the school).

3. SCHOOL CHILD SAFETY LEADER ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES
The School Child Safety Leader will undertake the role and accompanying responsibilities to ensure the school embeds a culture of child safety and is compliant with Ministerial Order 870.

3.1 Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of child safety.

3.2 Liaise with the principal and school leaders to maintain the visibility of child safety.

3.3 Lead the development of the school’s child safety culture, including being a child safety champion and providing coordination in communicating, implementing, monitoring, enhancing and reporting on strategies to embed a culture of child safety.

Raise Awareness Across The School Including Staff, Students And Teachers And Others Who Come Into Contact With Children In The School

3.4 Ensure the school’s policies are known and used appropriately.

3.5 Ensure the school actions are reviewed as to the effectiveness of the strategies put into place and to revise accordingly.

3.6 Ensure the school’s child safety policy is reviewed in the context of school self-evaluation undertaken as part of the school accountability framework. This being incorporated into the Annual Implementation Plan, Strategic Pan and the 4 yearly Review process.

3.7 Conduct regular briefing sessions for school staff members to ensure a high degree of awareness of The Standards and the school’s Child Safe policy.

3.8 Ensure the Featherbrook College Mandatory Reporting Policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this. The policy will be uploaded onto the school’s website and will be evaluated as part of the policy cycle for all school policies unless changes in the Order dictates changes in the school’s policy. At the time of enrolment all new families will be directed to access the Featherbrook College website in order to read The Child Safe Policy.

3.9 Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers. The Child Safe Leader will be actively in communication with the broader leadership team regarding potentially vulnerable and at risk children. ‘Child Safe’ will be a standing item on both the Leadership Team’s meeting agenda and the Consultative Committee’s agenda to ensure regular forums do support embedding a child safe culture in the school.

3.10 Encourage among all staff a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measures to protect them.

3.11 Work with teachers to include, where appropriate, supporting teaching points into curriculum programs ie cyber safety programs, School Wide Positive Behaviour System framework, Respectful Relationships program, health and wellbeing related programs to build a culture of pro-activity and healthy relationships.
The Child Safe Lead Will Be Trained and Have Capabilities To Support The School To Embed A Child Safe Culture

And be authoritative in providing advice by:

3.12 keeping their skills up to date with appropriate training
3.13 having a working knowledge of how the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Community Service Organisations conduct a child protection case conference to be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
3.14 being able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.

Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school’s child safety policy and procedures, especially new, part time staff and CRTs. Make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest DHHS and DET policies and guidance.

CHILD SAFE LEAD

Childf Safe Leader needs to be aware of and use resources and responsibilities to support role and responsibilities:


Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority (2016) Information Sheet. CHILD SAFETY STANDARD 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety.


Protecting Children - Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations - elearning module
Appendix Two – Standard two

Child Safe Environment Policy

Purpose
The child safe policy sets out the school’s approach to creating a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe; and provides the policy framework for the school’s approach to the Child Safe Standards.

Scope and Audience
The policy covers all staff, volunteers, contractors (where they come into contact with children and applies to all school related activities including those beyond the school environment ie camps, excursions, outside hours care, holiday programs (YMCA as a partner provider)

1. Our commitment to child safety
Featherbrook College is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. The school has zero tolerance for child abuse. The school is 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. Particular attention will be paid to cultural safety of Aboriginal children, young children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Every person involved in the school has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role s/he plays 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.

In its planning, decision – making and operations Featherbrook College will:
1.1 take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety
1.2 value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives
1.3 foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children. This will be supported by all staff understanding their child safety role, being mindful of and building respectful and safe relationships between children and their teachers and other school staff
1.4 respect diversity in cultures and child rearing while keeping child safety paramount
1.5 provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children
1.6 engage only the most suitable people to work with children and high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development
1.7 ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise issues. Featherbrook College is structured around learning neighbourhoods and so all children will be able to forge strong and respectful relationships in their learning spaces with multiple teachers thereby giving them opportunities to seek support from a number of significant others in their immediate day to day learning environment.
Policy and Procedures
Policies and procedures outlining the school’s approach to the Child Safe Standards are outlined below. The school’s Child Safe Leader whose role and responsibilities (Appendix one) may be contacted for more information.

2. A Child Safe Culture
The school’s culture encourages staff to raise, discuss and scrutinise concerns making it more difficult for abuse to occur and remain hidden.
   2.1 Featherbrook College is committed to child safety.
   2.2 We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.
   2.3 We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.
   2.4 We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.
   2.5 We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child’s safety, which we follow rigorously.
   2.6 Our school is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.
   2.7 Our school has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.
   2.8 Our school is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.
   2.9 We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, young children and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.
   2.10 We have policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

If there is a belief that a child is in immediate risk of abuse, phone 000.

3. Our children
This policy is intended to empower children who are vital and active participants in our school. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.
We promote diversity and tolerance in our school, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:
   3.1 promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children
   3.2 promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
   3.3 ensure that the safety of particularly young children is considered
   3.4 ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally

4. Our staff and volunteers
This policy guides staff and volunteers on how to behave with children in the school.

All staff and volunteers must agree to abide by the code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children. All staff and volunteers, as well as children and their
families, are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the code of conduct. (Appendix three)

The school’s plan for creating a child safe culture can be found on the school’s website, along with all relevant school policies.

4.1 Personnel understand their roles and responsibilities/Code of Conduct
School leaders and managers will ensure that each person understands their role, responsibilities and behaviour in protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect. Staff will comply with the school’s Code of Conduct. The Code will be discussed and a shared/collective staff understanding of the Code’s content will form part of the first curriculum day of each school year, to tune staff into their child safe responsibilities. New staff will have the Code of Conduct provided to them as part of their induction, so that they too will have the same understanding as all other staff, and in turn, apply it accordingly. The school’s Code of Conduct sets out clear awareness of the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour and can be found on the school’s website alongside the Child Safe Policy.

4.2 Human Resources, Practices and Training
The school applies best practice and standards in the recruitment and screening of staff, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. We will ensure that staff induction, education and training programs are a vital part of our commitment to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect. All prospective staff and volunteers are required to undergo National Criminal History Records check and maintain a valid Working With Children Check. We take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. Our school understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

We carry out reference checks and police record checks to ensure that we are recruiting the right people. Police record checks are used only for the purposes of recruitment. If during the recruitment process a person’s records indicate a criminal history then the person will be given the opportunity to provide further information and context.

4.3 Training and supervision
4.3.1 Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in our school understands that child safety is everyone’s responsibility.
4.3.2 Our school culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.
4.3.3 We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect children from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.
4.3.4 New employees and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand our school’s commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to this school’s code of conduct to understand appropriate behaviour further). Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate
channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

4.3.5 The school’s approach to human resources practices that ensure child safety can be found on the school’s website along with all other relevant school policies.

4.4 Allegations, Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

4.4.1 The school has clear expectations for staff and volunteers in making a report about a child or young person who may be in need of protection. Immediate action should include reporting their concerns to the DHHS.

4.4.2 Child Protection or another appropriate agency and notifying the principal or a member of the school leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns. The school will take action to respond to a complaint.

4.4.3 The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to personnel. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

4.4.4 We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns including investigation updates. All records are securely stored. The school’s policy and procedures for reporting a child safety concern or complaint can be found on the school’s website along with all other school policies.

4.4.5 Our school takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and promptly. Our staff and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

4.4.6 We work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

4.4.7 We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place.

4.4.8 If an adult has a reasonable belief that an incident has occurred then they must report the incident. Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

4.4.8.1 a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)

4.4.8.2 behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed

4.4.8.3 someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it

4.4.8.4 observing suspicious behaviour

5. Legislative responsibilities

- **Failure to disclose:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.

- **Failure to protect:** People of authority in our school will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.

- Any personnel who are mandatory reporters must comply with their duties.

5.1 Risk Reduction and Management

5.1.1 Our school takes our legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- All Victorian Teachers have a legal responsibility to report incidents where children’s safety is at risk. Victorian Government School employees are expected to follow the DET Mandatory Reporting policy which can be found at [http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/profdev/Pages/mandatoryreporting.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/profdev/Pages/mandatoryreporting.aspx)
5.1.2 The school believes the wellbeing of children and young people is paramount, and is vigilant in ensuring proper risk management processes. The school recognises there are potential risks to children and young people and will take a risk management approach by undertaking preventative measures.

5.1.3 In Victoria, schools are required to protect children when a risk is identified. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

5.1.4 We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments (for example, any doors that can lock), and online environments (for example, no staff or volunteer is to have contact with a student on social media).

5.1.5 The school’s approach to Child Safety risk reduction and management can be found on the school’s website along with all other school policies.

6. **Child safety can be improved by removing or reducing the risk of harm.**

   The College has the following in place to reduce the risk of harm to children:

   6.1 A child safety policy that outlines a commitment to child safety and provides guidance on how to create a child safe environment.

   6.2 Enforce a code of conduct that sets clear expectations about appropriate behaviour towards children and obligations for reporting a breach of the code.

   6.3 Ensures all new staff and volunteers are appropriately screened, including reference checks, before commencing employment with the organisation (in addition to Working with Children Checks or Victorian Institute of Teaching registration).

   6.4 Provides training to staff in prevention, identification and response to child safety risks, including reporting requirements and procedures.

   If staff / other school personnel are unsure whether to take action, or what action they are to discuss this with the Principal and/or Child Safe Leaders and make contact with authorities for further advice.

7. **Communication Approaches for Volunteers and Contractors**

   Volunteers and contractors may be engaged in work at a school regularly or occasionally, for long or short periods of time. Volunteers and contractors need to understand their responsibilities for child safety and the college’s arrangements under standard one and standard two.

   These approaches include:

   7.1 Providing advice on the website about what to expect if working in or volunteering at the school eg that volunteers are required to adhere to the Featherbrook College Volunteer Policy

   7.2 Child safety information in volunteer and contractor advice available on the school website

   7.3 Forming part of the role of the Spotless Facilities Manager when they induct contractors before beginning work within the school

   7.4 Clear notices about contractor and volunteer responsibilities in areas they are likely to spend time in such as the canteen, assembly hall, sports stadium

   7.5 Including relevant child safety information in tendering and contracting information packages and volunteer induction kits.
8. **Communication with Families**
The college has a number of measures in place to communicate with families of children enrolled at the school. These measures are likely to include the college website, website blog, and Compass (online communication portal) for individual and group messages, college assemblies and information evenings to share information.

Communications strategies to inform families of the school’s arrangements may include:

8.1 asking families to acknowledge they have read information sent to them with either a reply email
8.2 Include information about Child Safe standards in parent information evenings ie Prep transition parent evenings and orientation events for new students and families
8.3 adapting the examples provided in the VRQA Child Safety Code of Conduct – Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviour information sheet to show the standards in day-to-day application within the school community
8.4 providing translations of key messages from the standards for families into one or more languages other than English, depending on the school’s community

9. **Communicating Child Safe Expectations to Visitors**
Visitors to the college form part of the college community. Communication approaches include:

9.1 providing advice on the website about what to expect if visiting the school
9.2 displaying clear notices about visitor and volunteer responsibilities in areas they are likely to frequent, such as the canteen, assembly hall, sports stadium.

10. **Confidentiality and Privacy**
The school collects, uses and discloses information about particular children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws. All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone’s safety. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.

Definitions

*Child abuse* includes—
- any act committed against a child involving—
  - a sexual offence or
  - an offence under section 49B(2) of the *Crimes Act 1958* (grooming)
- the infliction, on a child, of—
  - physical violence or
  - serious emotional or psychological harm
- serious neglect of a child

*Child-connected work* means work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

*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.
**School environment** means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a campus of the school
- online school environments (including email and intranet systems)
- other locations provided by the school for a child’s use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).

**School staff** means:

- in a government school, an individual working in a school environment who is:
  - employed under Part 2.4 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (ETR Act) in the government teaching service or
  - employed under a contract of service by the council of the school under Part 2.3 of the ETR Act or
  - a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary).

- in a non-government school, an individual working in a school environment who is:
  - directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority
  - a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary)
  - a minister of religion

- **School governing authority** means:
  - The proprietor of a school, including a person authorised to act for or on behalf of the proprietor
  - The governing body for a school (however described), as authorised by the proprietor of a school or the ETR Act
  - The principal, as authorised by the proprietor of a school, the school governing body, or the ETR Act.

**References and Resources**


Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority (2016) Information Sheet. CHILD SAFETY STANDARD 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety.

Appendix Three – Standard three

1. Code of Conduct

The objective of this Code of Conduct is to guide school staff in identifying and regulating their own behaviour and the behaviour of other school staff, and to protect children from abuse in the school environment. Featherbrook College will develop, adopt, review and maintain a Child Safety Code of Conduct and have this endorsed by the School Council (interim council). The Code of Conduct will be published on the school’s website on an ongoing basis and will form part of embedding the Code of Conduct into the Child Safe culture of the school.

The Code of Conduct is consistent with school policies related to student supervision, duty of care, volunteers, camps and excursions, anti-bullying policy and disciplinary procedures described in the Student Engagement Policy.

Featherbrook College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, Department policy, school policies and procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The Principal and school leaders of Featherbrook College will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly schools and other learning environments. The Principal and school leaders of the school will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, contractors, volunteers and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below. The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school camps and in the use of digital technology and social media.

2. Embedding the Code of Conduct

To ensure the Code is fully appreciated, understood and applied by all school staff (employees, contractors and volunteers) and parents the following actions will be taken:

2.1 Ensure that all school staff (employees, contractors and volunteers) and parents are aware of the code and how it applies
2.2 Inclusion of the Code as part of the induction for new staff
2.3 Inclusion of the Code in induction for all pre-service teachers
2.4 Inclusion of the Code as part of annual training for existing school staff (employees, contractors and volunteers)
2.5 Communication of the Code through school communication channels including email, Compass, shared drive, team meetings and Consultative Committee meetings; as well as shared spaces including the staff room and administration areas
2.6 Informing parents/carers and other persons associated with the school of the expected behaviour for the school’s leadership, staff, contractors and volunteers
2.7 Using the school’s and the Department’s reporting procedures should breaches of the Code be suspected or identified
2.8 Including the Code in employment advertisements and service contractors to ensure compliance
2.9 Communication to students in an appropriate way

3. **Acceptable behaviours**

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work individually, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

3.1 upholding the school’s statement of commitment to child safety at all times, adhering to the school’s child safe policy
3.2 creating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school environment as part of normal social and community activities
3.3 listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
3.4 promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
3.5 promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
3.6 promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
3.7 promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of young children
3.8 reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the school’s leadership or Child Safety Leader
3.9 understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse
3.10 if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm

4. **Unacceptable behaviours**

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work we must not:

4.1 ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
4.2 develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to ‘grooming’ behaviour (for example, offering gifts)
4.3 exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context
4.4 ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
4.5 discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting
4.6 treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.
4.7 communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
4.8 photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes. The school must obtain consent before taking
and publishing photos of a student. Parents are to provide consent via Compass Course Confirmations upon enrolment. This consent applies for excursions and school activities.

4.9 in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

5. **Making a professional judgement**

Adults at Featherbrook College will;

5.1 Make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the child

5.2 Discuss any misunderstandings, accidents or threats with a member of School Leadership or Child Safe Leader

5.3 Be aware of their position of trust and ensure an unequal balance of power is not used for their own or others personal advantage or gratification

5.4 Not use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children

5.5 Maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others

5.6 Not promote relationships which create a personal friendship or are of an inappropriate nature.

6. **Personal/living space**

Adults at Featherbrook College will:

6.1 Not invite a child into their home or any home or domestic setting frequented by them, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents and School Leadership or the home has been designated as a work place e.g. childminders, foster carers

6.2 Be vigilant in maintaining their own privacy and mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations

6.3 Not ask children to undertake personal jobs or errands

6.4 Maintain professional boundaries

7. **Gifts, rewards and favouritism**

Adults at Featherbrook College will:

7.1 Be aware of the DET’s policy on the giving and receiving of gifts

7.2 Ensure that gifts received or given in situations that may be misconstrued are declared

7.3 Gift giving to an individual as part of a reward system should be avoided, instead, be based on collective or team based positive reinforcement.

7.4 Ensure that if operating reward/award systems, methods and criteria for selection of children for awards are fair and transparent.

8. **Infatuations**

Adults at Featherbrook College will;

8.1 Deal with infatuations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned

8.2 Make sure their own behaviour is beyond reproach

8.3 If they become aware of an infatuation developing or any indications that it may, record it and discuss it with a School Leadership member or the Child Safe Leader so that action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment.

Ratified School Council 14 – 11-2017
9. **Communication (including the use of technology)**
   Adults at Featherbrook College will:
   9.1 Ensure communication takes place within clear and explicit professional boundaries this includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites, and blogs
   9.2 Not share any personal information with a child
   9.3 Not request, or respond to, any personal information from a child, other than that which may be appropriate as part of their professional role
   9.4 Not give their personal contact details to children, including their mobile number, home phone or personal e-mail address, unless the need to do so is agreed with School Leadership and parents
   9.5 Only use equipment e.g. mobile phones, provided by their organisation to communicate with children, making sure that parents/carers have given permission for this form of communication to be used
   9.6 Only make contact with children for professional reasons and in accordance with school policy
   9.7 Only use text messaging as a last resort when no other forms of communication are possible
   9.8 Not use internet, web-based or social media communication channels to send messages
   9.9 Use internal e-mail systems in accordance with the school’s policy.

10. **Social Contact**
    Adults at Featherbrook College will;
    10.1 Not have social contact with children unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with School Leadership
    10.2 Not have secret social contact with children and/or their parent(s);
    10.3 Always approve any planned social contact with children with School Leadership
    10.4 Advise School Leadership or Child Safe Leader of any social contact that has occurred which may raise concern
    10.5 Report and record any situation which may place a child at risk or may compromise the organisation or their own professional standing.

11. **Sexual Contact**
    Adults at Featherbrook College will:
    11.1 Not engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of a child, or cause or incite a child to engage in or watch sexual activity, to do so would be considered a criminal offence
    11.2 Not have any form of communication which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative or make sexual remarks to, or about a child either verbally, written or electronically
    11.3 Not discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of children
    11.4 Ensure relationships take place within boundaries of respect and professionalism
    11.5 Ensure language, attitudes and demeanour do not give rise to comment or speculation
    11.6 Be aware that consistently displaying special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as part of a grooming process, and as such will give rise to concerns about behaviour
12. **Physical Contact**  
Adults at Featherbrook College will;  
12.1 Be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described  
12.2 Only have physical contact with a child when it is necessary and in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities, never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent  
12.3 Be aware of the child’s reactions or feelings and, as far as possible, only use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child and for the minimum time necessary  
12.4 Seek permission from the child or the parent, if the child is very young, before physical contact is made and agree what contact is acceptable  
12.5 Not assume that when a child is distressed they seek physical comfort;  
12.6 Always be prepared to report and explain actions and accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny  
12.7 Always encourage children, where possible to undertake self-care tasks independently  
12.8 Be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to issues of gender  
12.9 Where there is regular physical contact needed, the nature of this must be agreed with School Leadership and the parent as part of a formally agreed plan  
12.10 Where a child initiates inappropriate physical contact, you must sensitively deter them and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries

13. **Behaviour Management**  
Adults at Featherbrook College will;  
13.1 Not use any form of degrading treatment towards a child  
13.2 Not use sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments  
13.3 Ensure any sanctions and rewards are part of an agreed behaviour management policy  
13.4 Try to defuse situations before they escalate  
13.5 Never use corporal punishment  
13.6 Follow the behaviour policy and only use physical intervention in exceptional circumstances and as a last resort, when other behaviour management strategies have failed and where there is a risk of physical injury or serious damage to property  
13.7 When using physical intervention, use the minimum force necessary and techniques in line with recommended policy and practice and always report and document the incident  
13.8 Be mindful of other factors which may be impacting on a child’s behaviour, eg: bullying, changes in home circumstances

*Note: the use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.*

14. **Personal/Intimate Care**  
Adults at Featherbrook College will;  
14.1 Adhere to the school’s Code of Conduct  
14.2 Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken  
14.3 Explain to the child what is happening  
14.4 Carefully and sensitively observe the emotional responses of the child, and record and report any concerns to School Leadership and parents, if appropriate  
14.5 Respect children’s privacy at all times  
14.6 Avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress, other than as part of an agreed care plan  
14.7 Not change, in the same place as children  
14.8 Not shower or bathe with children  
14.9 Not assist with any personal care task which a child can undertake themselves.

Ratified School Council 14 – 11-2017
15. **One to one situations/home visits**

Adults at Featherbrook College will:

15.1 Ensure that, when lone working is an integral part of their role, full and appropriate risk assessments have been agreed

15.2 Avoid meetings with a child in secluded areas

15.3 Always inform colleagues and/or parents about one to one contact beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by

15.4 Avoid the use of ‘engaged’ or equivalent signs, where ever possible, these create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy

15.5 Carefully consider the need of the child when in one to one situation and always report any situation where the child becomes distressed or angry towards you

15.6 Gain approval from school leadership for any home visit ensuring it is integral part of your role

15.7 Never put yourself into a one to one situation when little or no information is available about the child.

16. **Transporting**

Adults at Featherbrook College will:

16.1 Ensure requirements specific to seat belts and car seats are adhered to

16.2 Not offer lifts outside normal working duties unless this has been brought to the attention of school leadership and been agreed with parents

16.3 Ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine that is likely to impair judgement or ability to drive

16.4 Record details of the journey in accordance with agreed DET procedures

16.5 Ensure that there are proper procedures in place for vehicle, passenger and driver safety, including appropriate insurance

16.6 Ensure that any impromptu or emergency lifts are recorded and can be justified if questioned

17. **Excursions and Camps**

Adults at Featherbrook College will:

17.1 Recognise that they are in a position of trust and ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays clearly within defined boundaries

17.2 Ensure staff/child ratios and gender mix are appropriate

17.3 Always have another adult present in out of work activities, unless otherwise agreed with by school leadership

17.4 Ensure risk assessments are undertaken

17.5 Have parental consent to the activity

17.6 Never share beds with children

17.7 Not share bedrooms unless it is a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been agreed with a school leadership, parents and children.

18. **Photography and Videos**

Adults at Featherbrook College will:

18.1 Be clear about the purpose of any activity involving photography and what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded

18.2 Be able to justify the reason for having images of children in their possession

18.3 Avoid making images in one to one situations or situations that may be construed as secretive or which show a single child with no surrounding context

18.4 Only use equipment provided or authorised by their school

18.5 Immediately report any concerns if any inappropriate or intrusive images are found

18.6 Have parental consent to take, display and/or distribute any images of children

18.7 Not use images that may cause distress or offence
19. **Access to inappropriate images and internet usage**

Adults at Featherbrook College will:

19.1 Not access, make or store indecent images of children on the internet, to do so would be illegal and lead to a criminal investigation

19.2 Not make or store images of children, gathered as a result of their work, on personal equipment

19.3 Follow their school’s guidance on the use of digital technologies

19.4 Ensure that children are not exposed to unsuitable material through ICT

19.5 Ensure that any materials shown to children are age appropriate

19.6 Immediately report any concerns, if any inappropriate or intrusive images are found, to the school leadership and follow mandatory reporting policy.

**Appendix Four - Standard Four**

**Child Safety Risk Management Program**

**School staff selection, supervision and management practices**

At Featherbrook College our child safety risk management strategy is a formal and structured approach to managing risks associated with child safety. Our school Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct clearly outline our commitment to implementing the 7 standards for child safety as outlined in the Ministerial Order No. 870.

**Implementing child safe standard 4 - Departmental and school actions**

The table below outlines the steps that will be implemented to meet the requirements of Standard 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Departmental action</th>
<th>School action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Each job or category of jobs for both teaching staff and non-teaching staff that involves child connected work must have clear statements regarding the child safety requirements of the role and the expectations of the occupant | The ‘Recruitment in Schools’ Guide has been updated and requires that position descriptions for all new positions advertised from 1 August 2016 include the following standard ‘Child safe environments’ clause:  

> “Victorian government schools are child safe environments. Our schools actively promote 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. The school’s Child Safety Code of Conduct is available on the school’s website.”  

In the near future, position descriptions generated in Recruitment Online (ROL) will be automated to include a standard clause regarding child safety.

The Principal Class Contract of Employment has been updated to include the text italicised in the below: - Preamble: | Ensure that position descriptions for all new positions include the standard ‘Child safe environments’ clause as provided in the ‘Recruitment in Schools’ Guide.

For existing staff, the school will promote and embed the Child Safety Code of Conduct in accordance with Standard 3.

Note that the Principal Class Contract of Employment has been updated to include reference to the Standards, and all contracts offered on or after 1 August will include the revised wording. |
2. All applicants for jobs (either teaching or non-teaching) that involve child connected work for the school must be informed about the school’s child safety practices (including the code of conduct).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>All applicants for jobs that involve child connected work for the school must be informed about the school’s child safety practices (including the code of conduct).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. In accordance with any applicable legal requirement or school policy, the school must make reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child connected work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>In accordance with any applicable legal requirement or school policy, the school must make reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child connected work:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. The school need not comply with the requirements in step (3) above if it has already made reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the information about a particular individual within the previous 12 months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>The school need not comply with the requirements in step (3) above if it has already made reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the information about a particular individual within the previous 12 months.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. The school must ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to induction and continuing suitability for child connected work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The school must ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to induction and continuing suitability for child connected work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. The school must implement practices that enable the school governing authority to be satisfied that people engaged in child-connected work perform appropriately in relation to child safety.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>The school must implement practices that enable the school governing authority to be satisfied that people engaged in child-connected work perform appropriately in relation to child safety.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix Five – Standard Five

1. Responding to allegations of suspected child abuse

School staff members (teaching and non-teaching) and others associated with the school (e.g. maintenance person, contractor, visitor etc.) have a duty to take reasonable steps to protect children under the school’s care and to protect them from harm that is reasonably foreseeable. The question of what constitutes “reasonable steps” will depend on the individual circumstances of each case. In relation to suspected child abuse, reasonable steps may include (but are not necessarily limited to):

1.1 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
1.2 reporting the suspected child abuse to appropriate authorities such as the Victoria Police and DHHS Child Protection arranging counselling and/or other appropriate welfare support for the child providing on-going support to the child – this may include attending DHHS Child Protection Case Planning meetings, and convening regular Student Support Group meetings
1.3 sharing information with other school based staff who will also be responsible for monitoring and providing on-going support to the child. It is particularly important for visitors and/or others associated with the school such as contractors, maintenance personnel etc. to seek out school personnel who can assist and advise regarding further steps that need to be taken.

NB. Duty of care also extends to students who are:
- aged 17 years and over In circumstances where you suspect that a student over the age of 17 is subject to abuse you should still follow the Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures or Suspicions of Child Abuse (pg. 21). Although DHHS Child Protection work with children under 17 they can still be contacted with concerns relating to students 17 and over for referral and advice.
- involved in student sexual offending You have a duty of care towards all students involved in student sexual offending, including the alleged victim, assailant and any other students in the school who may have witnessed and/or been affected by the abusive behaviour.

2. Different types of abuse and recognising the possible physical and behavioural indicators of:
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- sexual exploitation
- grooming
- emotional or physiological harm
- neglect
- family violence
- human trafficking (including forced marriage)

Definitions of the different types of abuse – source:

3. What is physical child abuse?
Physical child abuse can consist of any non-accidental infliction of physical violence on a child by any person. Examples of physical abuse may include beating, shaking or burning, assault with implements and female genital mutilation (FGM).
4. **PHYSICAL indicators of physical child abuse include (but are not limited to):**
   4.1 bruises or welts on facial areas and other areas of the body, e.g. back, bottom, legs, arms and inner thighs
   4.2 bruises or welts in unusual configurations, or those that look like the object used to make the injury, e.g. fingerprints, handprints, buckles, iron or teeth
   4.3 burns from boiling water, oil or flames or burns that show the shape of the object used to make them, e.g. iron, grill, cigarette
   4.4 fractures of the skull, jaw, nose and limbs (especially those not consistent with the explanation offered, or the type of injury possible at the child’s age of development)
   4.5 cuts and grazes to the mouth, lips, gums, eye area, ears and external genitalia
   4.6 bald patches where hair has been pulled out
   4.7 multiple injuries, old and new
   4.8 effects of poisoning
   4.9 internal injuries

5. **Behavioural indicators of physical child abuse:**
   5.1 disclosure of an injury inflicted by someone else (parent, carer or guardian), or an inconsistent or unlikely explanation or inability to remember the cause of injury
   5.2 unusual fear of physical contact with adults
   5.3 aggressive behaviour
   5.4 disproportionate reaction to events
   5.5 wearing clothes unsuitable for weather conditions to hide injuries
   5.6 wariness or fear of a parent, carer or guardian
   5.7 reluctance to go home
   5.8 no reaction or little emotion displayed when being hurt or threatened
   5.9 habitual absences from school without reasonable explanation
   5.10 overly compliant, shy, withdrawn, passive and uncommunicative
   5.11 unusually nervous, hyperactive, aggressive, disruptive and destructive to self and/or others
   5.12 poor sleeping patterns, fear of the dark or nightmares and regressive behaviour, e.g. bed-wetting
   5.13 drug or alcohol misuse, suicide or self-harm

6. **What is child sexual abuse?**

   Child sexual abuse:
   6.1 is when a person uses power or authority over a child to involve them in sexual activity
   6.2 can include a wide range of sexual activity including fondling the child’s genitals, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or other object, or exposure of the child to pornography.
   
   Child sexual abuse may not always include physical sexual contact (e.g. kissing or fondling a child in a sexual way, masturbation, oral sex or penetration) and can also include non-contact offences, for example:
   6.3 talking to a child in a sexually explicit way
   6.4 sending sexual messages or emails to a child
   6.5 exposing a sexual body part to a child
   6.6 forcing a child to watch a sexual act (including showing pornography to a child)
   6.7 having a child pose or perform in a sexual manner (including child sexual exploitation).

   Child sexual abuse does not always involve force. In some circumstances a child may be manipulated into believing that they have brought the abuse on themselves, or that the abuse is an expression of love, through a process of grooming.
7. Who is most at risk of child sexual abuse?
Any child can be victim to sexual abuse, however children who are vulnerable, isolated and/or have a disability are much more likely to become victim, and are disproportionately abused. Perpetrators can include (but are not limited to):
- a family member (this is known as intra family abuse and can include sibling abuse)
- a school staff member, coach or other carer
- a peer/child 10 years or more in age
- a family friend or stranger
- a person via a forced marriage (where a student is subject to a marriage without their consent, arranged for by their immediate or extended family - this constitutes a criminal offence and must be reported)

*Unwanted sexual behaviour toward a student by a person 10 years or over can constitute a sexual offence and is referred to as student-to-student sexual offending.
Please note that a child who is under 10 years of age is not considered to be capable of committing an offence. Any suspected sexual behaviours by children under 10 is referred to as problem sexual behaviour.

8. PHYSICAL indicators of sexual abuse include (but are not limited to):
8.1 injury to the genital or rectal area, e.g. bruising, bleeding, discharge, inflammation or infection
8.2 injury to areas of the body such as breasts, buttocks or upper thighs
8.3 discomfort in urinating or defecating
8.4 presence of foreign bodies in the vagina and/or rectum
8.5 sexually-transmitted diseases
8.6 frequent urinary tract infections
8.7 pregnancy, especially in very young adolescents
8.8 anxiety-related illnesses, e.g. anorexia or bulimia

9. BEHAVIOURAL indicators of sexual abuse include (but are not limited to):
9.1 disclosure of sexual abuse, either directly (from the alleged victim) or indirectly (by a third person or allusion)
9.2 persistent and age-inappropriate sexual activity, e.g. excessive masturbation or rubbing genitals against adults
9.3 drawings or descriptions in stories that are sexually explicit and not age-appropriate
9.4 fear of home, specific places or particular adults
9.5 poor/deteriorating relationships with adults and peers
9.6 poor self-care or personal hygiene.
9.7 complaining of headaches, stomach pains or nausea without physiological basis
9.8 sleeping difficulties
9.9 regressive behaviour, e.g. bed-wetting or speech loss
9.10 depression, self-harm, drug or alcohol abuse, prostitution or attempted suicide
9.11 sudden decline in academic performance, poor memory and concentration
9.12 promiscuity
9.13 wearing layers of clothing to hide injuries and bruises

10. BEHAVIOURAL indicators for perpetrators of child sexual abuse include (but are not limited to):
**Family Member (adult)**
10.1 attempts by one parent to alienate their child from the other parent
10.2 overprotective or volatile relationship between the child and one of their parents/family members
10.3 reluctance by the child to be alone with one of their parents/family members
Family Member (Sibling)
10.4 the child and a sibling behaving like boyfriend and girlfriend
10.5 reluctance by the child to be alone with a sibling
10.6 embarrassment by siblings if they are found alone together.

School staff member, coach or other carer
10.7 touching a child inappropriately
10.8 bringing up sexual material or personal disclosures into conversations with a student/s
10.9 inappropriately contacting the student/s, e.g. calls, emails, texts, social media
10.10 obvious or inappropriate preferential treatment of the student/s (making them feel “special”)  
10.11 giving of gifts to a student/s
10.12 having inappropriate social boundaries, e.g. telling the potential victims about their own personal problems etc.
10.13 offering to drive a student/s to or from school
10.14 inviting themselves over to their homes, calling them at night
10.15 befriending the parents themselves and making visits to their home
10.16 undermining the child’s reputation (so that the child won’t be believed).

11. **What is grooming?**
Grooming is when a person engages in predatory conduct to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time. Grooming can include communicating and/or attempting to befriend or establish a relationship or other emotional connection with the child or their parent/carer.

Sometimes it is hard to see when someone is being groomed until after they have been sexually abused, because some grooming behaviour can look like “normal” caring behaviour.

12. **What is online grooming?**
Online grooming is a criminal offence and occurs when an adult uses electronic communication (including social media) in a predatory fashion to try to lower a child’s inhibitions, or heighten their curiosity regarding sex, with the aim of eventually meeting them in person for the purposes of sexual activity. This can include online chats, sexting, and other interactions.

13. **BEHAVIOURAL indicators that a child may be subject to grooming include (but are not limited to):**
   13.1 developing an unusually close connection with an older person
   13.2 displaying mood changes (hyperactive, secretive, hostile, aggressive, impatient, resentful, anxious, withdrawn, depressed)
   13.3 using street/different language; copying the way the new ‘friend’ may speak; talking about the new ‘friend’ who does not belong to his/ her normal social circle
   13.4 possessing jewellery, clothing or expensive items given by the ‘friend’
   13.5 possessing large amounts of money which s/he cannot account for
   13.6 using a new mobile phone (given by the ‘friend’) excessively to make calls, videos or send text messages
   13.7 being excessively secretive about their use of communications technologies, including social media
   13.8 frequently staying out overnight, especially if the relationship is with an older person
   13.9 being dishonest about where they’ve been and whom they’ve been with
   13.10 using drugs; physical evidence includes spoons, silver foil, ‘tabs’, ‘rocks’
   13.11 assuming a new name; being in possession of a false ID, stolen passport or driver’s license provided by the ‘friend’ to avoid detection
   13.12 being picked up in a car by the ‘friend’ from home/school or ‘down the street’
14. **What is emotional abuse?**
Emotional child abuse occurs when a child is repeatedly rejected, isolated or frightened by threats, or by witnessing family violence. It also includes hostility, derogatory name-calling and put-downs, and persistent coldness from a person, to the extent that the child suffers, or is likely to suffer, emotional or psychological harm to their physical or developmental health. Emotional abuse may occur with or without other forms of abuse.

15. **PHYSICAL indicators of emotional abuse include (but are not limited to):**
   15.1 speech disorders such as language delay, stuttering or selectively being mute (only speaking with certain people or in certain situations)
   15.2 delays in emotional, mental or physical development

16. **BEHAVIOURAL indicators of emotional abuse include (but are not limited to):**
   16.1 overly compliant, passive and undemanding behaviour
   16.2 extremely demanding, aggressive and attention-seeking behaviour or anti-social and destructive behaviour
   16.3 low tolerance or frustration
   16.4 poor self-image and low self-esteem
   16.5 unexplained mood swings, depression, self-harm or suicidal thoughts
   16.6 behaviours that are not age-appropriate, e.g. overly adult, or overly infantile
   16.7 fear of failure, overly high standards, and excessive neatness
   16.8 poor social and interpersonal skills
   16.9 violent drawings or writing
   16.10 lack of positive social contact with other children

17. **What is neglect?**
Neglect includes a failure to provide the child with an adequate standard of nutrition, medical care, clothing, shelter or supervision to the extent that the health or physical development of the child is significantly impaired or placed at serious risk.
In some circumstances the neglect of a child:
   17.1 can place the child's immediate safety and development at serious risk
   17.2 may not immediately compromise the safety of the child, but is likely to result in longer term cumulative harm.

18. **PHYSICAL indicators of neglect include (but are not limited to):**
   18.1 appearing consistently dirty and unwashed
   18.2 being consistently inappropriately dressed for weather conditions
   18.3 being at risk of injury or harm due to consistent lack of adequate supervision from parents
   18.4 being consistently hungry, tired and listless
   18.5 having unattended health problems and lack of routine medical care
   18.6 having inadequate shelter and unsafe or unsanitary conditions

19. **BEHAVIOURAL indicators of neglect include (but are not limited to):**
   19.1 gorging when food is available or inability to eat when extremely hungry
   19.2 begging for or stealing food
   19.3 appearing withdrawn, listless, pale and weak
   19.4 aggressive behaviour, irritability
   19.5 involvement in criminal activity
   19.6 little positive interaction with parent, carer or guardian
   19.7 poor socialising habits
   19.8 excessive friendliness towards strangers
19.9 indiscriminate acts of affection
19.10 poor, irregular or non-attendance at school
19.11 staying at school for long hours and refusing or being reluctant to go home
19.12 self-destructive behaviour
19.13 taking on an adult role of caring for parent.

20. What is family violence?
Family violence can include physical violence or threats, verbal abuse, emotional and physical abuse, sexual abuse and financial and social abuse.
A child’s exposure to family violence constitutes child abuse. This exposure can be very harmful and may result in long-term physical, psychological and emotional trauma. Action must be taken to protect the child, and to mitigate or limit their trauma.

21. PHYSICAL indicators of family violence include (but are not limited to):
21.1 speech disorders
21.2 delays in physical development
21.3 failure to thrive (without an organic cause)
21.4 bruises, cuts or welts on facial areas, and other parts of the body including back, bottom, legs, arms and inner thighs
21.5 any bruises or welts (old or new) in unusual configurations, or those that look like the object used to make the injury (such as fingerprints, handprints, buckles, iron or teeth)
21.6 internal injuries

22. BEHAVIOURAL indicators of family violence include (but are not limited to):
22.1 violent/aggressive behaviour and language
22.2 depression and anxiety and suicidal thoughts
22.3 appearing nervous and withdrawn, including wariness of adults
22.4 difficulty adjusting to change.
22.5 psychosomatic illness
22.6 bedwetting and sleeping disorders.
22.7 ‘acting out’, such as cruelty to animals
22.8 extremely demanding, attention-seeking behaviour
22.9 participating in dangerous risk-taking behaviours to impress peers
22.10 overly compliant, shy, withdrawn, passive and uncommunicative behaviour
22.11 taking on a caretaker role prematurely, trying to protect other family members
22.12 embarrassment about family
22.13 demonstrated fear of parents, carers or guardians, and of going home
22.14 disengagement from school and/or poor academic outcomes
22.15 parent-child conflict.

23. For older children and young people indicators can also include:
23.1 moving away/running away from home
23.2 entering a relationship early to escape the family home
23.3 experiencing violence in their own dating relationships
23.4 involvement in criminal activity
23.5 alcohol and substance abuse.

24. When identifying child abuse, it is critical to remember that:
• the trauma associated with child abuse can significantly impact upon the wellbeing and development of a child
• all concerns about the safety and wellbeing of a child, or the conduct of a staff member, contractor or volunteer must be acted upon as soon as practicable
With knowledge of the types of abuse and indicators of the respective abuse as described above, the following describes the 4 Critical Actions that MUST be followed by the school and those charged with the safety of the children in the school. These actions include informing appropriate authorities about the allegation, including but not limited to mandatory reporting. The Principal, Assistant Principal and/or Child Safe Leader are responsible for promptly managing the school’s response to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse, and ensuring that the allegation or disclosure is taken seriously. The Principal, Assistant Principal and/or Child Safe Leader are responsible for responding appropriately to a child who makes or is affected by an allegation of child abuse.

The Principal, Assistant Principal and /or Child Safe Leader is responsible for monitoring overall school compliance with this procedure. The school will use a part of its mandated curriculum day at the commencement of each school year or a PD session within the first 2 weeks of the year to allow the staff to undertake the on-line learning module: http://www.elearn.com.au/det/protectingchildren/schools/

Fulfilling these roles and responsibilities contained in the procedure, the Principal, Assistant Principal or Child Safe Leader does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.

If physical and/or behavioural indicators lead you to suspect that a child has or is being abused, or is at risk of abuse, you must respond as soon as practicable, by following the steps described below.

Responding to Incidents, Disclosures or Suspicions of Child Abuse
If you believe that a student is not being abused, but you still hold concerns for their safety or wellbeing, refer to advice about Responding to Other Concerns About the Wellbeing of a Child (see below) to determine who to consult with, when to make a report and when to engage other wellbeing professionals. Regardless of the suspected cause, all concerns about the wellbeing of a child (or their unborn child) should be taken seriously and acted upon. This includes concerns about the wellbeing of a child, which do not appear to be the result of abuse.

25. You should make a referral to Child FIRST if:
   25.1 you have a significant concern for a child’s wellbeing
   25.2 your concerns have a low-to-moderate impact on the child
   25.3 the child’s immediate safety is not compromised
   25.4 you/your school has discussed the referral with the family and they are supportive of it

26. You must contact Victoria Police if:
   26.1 there is any concern for a child’s immediate safety and/or
   26.2 a child is partaking in any risk taking activity that is illegal and extreme in nature or poses a high risk to the child

27. You should contact DHHS Child Protection if:
   27.1 after consideration of all of available information you form a view that the child is in need of protection
   27.2 you believe that the child’s parent/carers will not be open to support from family services to address their child’s wellbeing
All reporters who form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person:

27.3 is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse must report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police

27.4 is displaying sexually abusive behaviours and is in need of therapeutic treatment should report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection

The reporter must:

27.5 Make a report as soon as practicable
27.6 Make a report on each occasion that they form a belief or
27.7 Ensure that a report has been made in instances where another mandated reporter has undertaken to make the report.

Any significant concerns for the wellbeing of a child or young person should be reported to DHHS Child Protection or Child FIRST.

In cases where there are concerns about a child or young person, they should also be discussed with the principal or a member of the school leadership team.

Reporting criminal child sexual abuse - failure to disclose offence

28. **Any staff member or person associated with the school** (e.g. visitor, contractor, maintenance worker etc.) who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 must disclose that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence, except in limited circumstances such as where the information has already been reported to DHHS Child Protection.

The offence applies to all adults in Victoria, not just professionals who work with children. To read more information about the ‘failure to disclose' offence, see: Department of Justice and Regulation – Failure to disclose offence.

What should a person in authority do to reduce or remove the risk of child sexual abuse posed by an adult associated with their organisation?

- A person in authority in an organisation must take reasonable steps to reduce or remove a known substantial risk that an adult associated with their organisation will commit a sexual offence against a child.

Examples include:

27.1 A current employee who is known to pose a risk of sexual abuse to children in the organisation should be immediately removed from contact with children and reported to appropriate authorities and investigated.

27.2 A community member who is known to pose a risk of sexual abuse to children should not be allowed to volunteer in a role that involves direct contact with children at the organisation.

27.3 A parent who is known to pose a risk of sexual abuse to children in a school should not be allowed to attend overnight school camps as a parent helper.

27.4 Removing a suspected adult from child-related work pending investigation.

If an adult fails to take reasonable steps to protect a child from harm, this may amount to a criminal offence.
Action/notification to DHHS Child Protection must occur if a ‘reasonable belief’ has been formed. For example, a ‘reasonable belief’ might be formed if:

27.5 a child states that they have been physically or sexually abused
27.6 a child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves)
27.7 someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused
27.8 professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused
27.9 signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused

A report should be made to DHHS Child Protection in circumstances where, for example:

27.10 the child is engaging in risk-taking behaviour
27.11 female genital mutilation has occurred, or there is a risk of it occurring
27.12 there is a risk to an unborn child
27.13 a child or young person is exhibiting sexually-abusive behaviours
27.14 there are indications that a child is being groomed

If you need to report a child in immediate risk or danger of a sexual offence please call Triple Zero (000).

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 teachers to the possibility of child abuse and neglect.

The following table sets out when to report a concern that a child or a young person has been abused, or is in need of protection:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Reporting</th>
<th>By Whom</th>
<th>To Whom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mandatory Reporting - DHHS Child Protection</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mandatory reporters</strong></td>
<td>DHHS Child Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mandatory and non-mandatory reporters must make a report as soon as practicable</em> if, in the course of practising their profession or carrying out their duties, they form a belief on reasonable grounds 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.</td>
<td>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 All members of the police force</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child in need of protection</strong></td>
<td>Any person</td>
<td>DHHS Child Protection Victoria Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Any person must make a report as soon as practicable</em> if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection for any of the following reasons:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>Person Reporting</td>
<td>Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The child has been abandoned and there is no other suitable person who is willing and able to care for the child.</td>
<td>Any person</td>
<td>DHHS Child Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Any person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of physical injury and the parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.</td>
<td>Any person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of sexual abuse and their parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.</td>
<td>Any person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The child has suffered or is likely to suffer emotional or psychological harm and the parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.</td>
<td>Any person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Any person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child displaying sexually abusive behaviours and in need of therapeutic treatment</td>
<td>Any person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant concerns about wellbeing of a child</td>
<td>Any person</td>
<td>DHHS Child Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16.</td>
<td>Any person aged 18 or over</td>
<td>Victoria Police</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following table describes the steps in how to make a mandatory report, to report child abuse or child protection concerns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>In case of emergency or if a child is in immediate danger contact Triple Zero (000) or the local police station.</strong> Alternatively, to report concerns about the immediate safety of a child within their family unit to DHHS Child Protection, call the Child Protection Crisis Line on 13 12 78 (24 hours 7 days, toll free).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2    | Keep comprehensive notes that are dated and include the following information:  
1. information that has led to concerns about the child's safety (e.g. physical injuries, student behaviour)  
2. the source of this information (e.g. observation of behaviour, report from child or another person)  
3. the actions taken as a result of the concerns (e.g. consultation with principal, report to DHHS Child Protection etc.). |
| 3    | Discuss any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of students with the principal or a member of the school leadership team. The individual staff member should then make their own assessment about whether they should make a report about the child or young person and to whom the report should be made. |
| 4    | Gather the relevant information necessary to make the report. This should include the following information:  
- full name, date of birth, and residential address of the child or young person  
- the details of the concerns and the reasons for those concerns  
- the individual staff member’s involvement with the child and young person  
- details of any other agencies who may be involved with the child or young person, if known. |
| 5    | Make a report to the relevant agency  
To report concerns about the immediate safety of a child within their family unit to DHS Child Protection, call the Child Protection Crisis Line on 13 12 78 (24 hrs 7 days, toll free)  
To report concerns to DHHS Child Protection, contact your local child protection office. |
| 6    | Make a written record of the report which includes the following information:  
- the date and time of the report and a summary of what was reported  
- the name and position of the person who made the report and the person who received the report |
| 7    | Notify relevant school staff and/or Department staff of a report to DHHS Child Protection or Child FIRST.  
For Victorian government schools, the allegations must be reported to the:  
- principal or member of the school leadership team  
- Department’s Security Services Unit on (03) 9589 6266  
- relevant Regional Office (where applicable, the Koori support officer is to be notified)  
- Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit on (03) 9637 2934 or (03) 9637 2487.  
In the case of international students, the principal must notify the International Education Division on (03) 9637 2990 to ensure that appropriate support is arranged for the student. |
This table describes the potential consequences of making a report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential consequence</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 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 to proceed in this manner.  
                            DHHS Child Protection and/or Victoria Police 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 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’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.  
                            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. for more information see: [Requests for Information About Students](#) |
| 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. |
In certain circumstances, the Department offers Counselling Assistance Payments to former students who report having been sexually abused while attending, or in connection with, a Victorian government school.

Schools that receive a report of sexual abuse from a former student should contact the Department’s Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit on (03) 9637 2934.

With knowledge of the types of abuse and indicators of the respective abuse as described above, the following describes the 4 Critical Actions that MUST be followed by the school and those charged with the safety of the children in the school. These actions include informing appropriate authorities about the allegation, including but not limited to mandatory reporting.

The Principal, Assistant Principal and/or Child Safe Leader are responsible for promptly managing the school’s response to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse, and ensuring that the allegation or disclosure is taken seriously.

The Principal, Assistant Principal and/or Child Safe Leader are responsible for responding appropriately to a child who makes or is affected by an allegation of child abuse.

The Principal, Assistant Principal and/or Child Safe Leader is responsible for monitoring overall school compliance with this procedure. The school will use a part of its mandated curriculum day at the commencement of each school year or a PD session within the first 2 weeks of the year to allow the staff to undertake the on-line learning module:

The Principal, Assistant Principal and/or Child Safe Leader are responsible for managing an alternative procedure for responding to an allegation or disclosure if the person allocated responsibility under Ministerial Order clause 11 (3) (c) (ii) ie promptly managing the school’s response to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse, and ensuring that the allegation or disclosure is taken seriously; cannot perform his or her role.

Fulfilling these roles and responsibilities contained in the procedure, the Principal, Assistant Principal or Child Safe Leader does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.
Responding to suspected child abuse: for Victorian schools

School staff should use the template below to document any incident, disclosure or suspicion that a child has been, or is at risk of being abused. This document should be used in conjunction with the following: 4 Critical Actions For Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse.

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.

Recording and retaining the record

The Principal, Assistant Principal and/or Child Safe Leader will ensure the record of the allegation and the school’s response to it is made secure and retained. 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.

The aim is 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 assist later if required to provide evidence to support any decisions.

Ongoing staff training, awareness raising and promotion of the school observing and adhering to Child Safety, will support school staff to proactively and with knowledge, prioritise reporting an allegation of child abuse to a person external to the school; further the school will support the alleged victim by responding and acting in accordance with the Ministerial Order 870 and fulfil their legal obligation to report an incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse. Staff are not required to make judgement about the truth of the allegation or disclosure of child 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAFF MEMBER LEADING THE RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NAME:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OCCUPATION:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOCATION (SCHOOL ADDRESS):</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responding to an Emergency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DID THE CHILD REQUIRE FIRST AID? PROVIDE DETAILS IF 'YES'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO ADMINISTERED THIS? (NAME AND TITLE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DID THE CHILD REQUIRE FURTHER IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAME:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR LEVEL/CLASS:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARENT/CARER NAME/S:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARENT/CARER CONTACT:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANGUAGE(S) SPOKEN BY CHILD:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISABILITIES, MENTAL OR PHYSICAL HEALTH ISSUES:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Details of the incident, disclosure or suspicion

**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):

**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:
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 INTERAIAL 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME:</th>
<th>DATE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAMES:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME:</th>
<th>DATE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAMES:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HAVE YOU SOUGHT ADVICE FROM DHHS CHILD PROTECTION OR VICTORIA POLICE?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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 SCHOOLS: RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS, DISCLOSURES OR SUSPICIONS OF CHILD ABUSE?

WAS AN APPROPRIATE DECISION MADE IN RELATION TO WHEN TO ACT?

☐ NO
☐ YES

COULD THE SUSPECTED ABUSE HAVE BEEN DETECTED EARLIER?

☐ NO
☐ YES

ACTION 1

DID THE SCHOOL TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION IN AN EMERGENCY?

☐ NO
☐ YES

ACTION 2

WAS A REPORT MADE TO THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES AND INTERNALLY?

☐ NO
☐ YES

WERE SUBSEQUENT REPORTS MADE IF NECESSARY?

☐ NO
☐ YES

ACTION 3

DID THE SCHOOL CONTACT THE PARENTS/CARERS ASAP?

☐ NO
☐ YES

ACTION 4

HAS THE PARENTS CONTINUED TO BE ENGAGED IF APPROPRIATE?

☐ NO
☐ YES

HAVE THE PARENTS CONTINUED TO BE ENGAGED IF APPROPRIATE?

☐ 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 6, Appendix 6 (1) & Appendix 6 (2) Standard Six

Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.

Featherbrook College will mitigate, remove or reduce the risks of child abuse. The school will take into account the characteristics and needs of all children expected to be present in that environment.

The school’s plan (included in the Annual Implementation Plan - AIP), based on this policy (that will necessarily alter over time based on potential changes in the school), will include risks and the action(s) the school will take to reduce or remove the risks (risk controls). The plan will reflect arrangements for monitoring the risks, mitigation of the risks and actions taken accordingly; (part of the role of the College Council and Principal and as detailed in Standard One where the Child Safe Leader’s roles and responsibilities have been documented). The College Council will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls. This will form part of the AIP.

The plan will include training and education of staff and college council about their individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse and reference the Code Of Conduct, the 4 critical actions to be taken in response to an allegation of child abuse, and the Child Safe training, and training about abuse risks in the school, that must be undertaken as scheduled (beginning of the year induction) and as the need arises (eg after an incident).

The College Council will, as part of its role to develop, oversee and implement the AIP, apply Child Safe audit tool (Appendix 6(2)) to determine adherence to the Child Safe Policy (incorporating the 7 Standards).

See attached Appendix 6 (1) for the Risk Assessment Table
See attached Appendix 6 (2) for the Audit Tool

Appendix 7- Standard Seven

Strategies to promote child empowerment and participation

Child Safe Standard 7 requires the delivery of appropriate education about:

- Standards of behaviour for students attending the school
- Healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality)
- Resilience
- Child abuse awareness and prevention
The following programs/frameworks and Policy will be delivered by the school, working to complement their aims, intentions and requirements. School staff will be supported in their professional learning to ensure the observance and delivery of a Child Safe environment through such programs, frameworks and Policy. Curriculum documents and resources will be easily accessible to school staff through the Compass portal and Google Apps for Education; the 2 electronic platforms that will assist school staff accordingly.

**Student Engagement Policy**
The school’s Student Engagement Policy provides the basis on which it develops and maintains a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment. The policy articulates the expectations and aspirations of the school community in relation to student engagement, including strategies to address bullying, school attendance and behaviour. The Policy also references the Child Safe Policy and the Child Safe Code of Conduct.

**School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS)**
As a new school, the school intends to make central to the positive and safe culture of the school, the SWPBS framework. It is an evidence-based framework for preventing and responding to student behaviour. It aims to create a positive school climate, culture of student competence and an open, responsive management system for all community members. A team of teaching staff will be professionally developed through the SWPBS resource as a priority.


**Victorian Curriculum**
The relevant domains of the Victorian Curriculum will be provided as part of the mandated curriculum delivery. Specifically to address the Child Safe Standard 7, the following will support children at Point Cook P – 9 School to build resilience, healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality) and to gain insight into appropriate behaviour and what is not, hence being empowered to feel safe and to be safe.

The Personal and Social Capability curriculum aims to develop knowledge, understandings and skills to enable students to:

- recognise, understand and evaluate the expression of emotions
- demonstrate an awareness of their personal qualities and the factors that contribute to resilience
- develop empathy for and understanding of others and recognise the importance of supporting diversity for a cohesive community
- understand how relationships are developed and use interpersonal skills to establish and maintain respectful relationships
- work effectively in teams and develop strategies to manage challenging situations constructively

Other resources and programs to support the Child Safe Policy and to be compliant with Ministerial Order 870 will be considered and included as the school opens, grows and evolves.