

PREAMBLE

School staff have a duty of care to protect the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care. The Child Safe Standards apply to Mill Park Secondary College in order to protect children from all forms of abuse. If a staff member has concerns about the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care it is mandatory to take immediate action.

AIM

- To define the roles and responsibilities of school staff in protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- To enable staff to identify the indicators of a child or young person who may be in need of protection from any of the following types of abuse; physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, medical neglect, family violence, human trafficking (including forced marriage) or sexual exploitation (including pornography or prostitution).
- To enable staff to make a report of a child or young person who may be in need of protection.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Mandatory reporters include:
 - 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
- All teaching staff are required to complete the Mandatory Reporting module in term one of each year via the following link: <http://www.elearn.com.au/deecd/mandatoryreporting/>
- Mandatory reporters, who believe on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse, must report their concerns to Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) Child Protection.
- All other school staff who believe on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection are encouraged to report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police.
- School staff who believe on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of therapeutic treatment are encouraged to report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection.
- If staff have significant concerns for the wellbeing of a child or young person they are encouraged to report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection or Child FIRST.
- In cases where staff have concerns about a child or young person, they should discuss their concerns with the Principal or a member of the school leadership and welfare teams.
- Where a report needs to be made, staff should refer to the Mill Park Mandatory Report Procedures document.
- Failure to report physical and sexual child abuse may amount to a criminal offence.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- *Mill Park Mandatory Report Procedures*
- *Child Safety Policy*
- *Duty of Care Policy*

EXTERNAL LINKS

- *Reporting and Legal Obligations:*
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/reportobligations.aspx>
- *Identifying Child Abuse:*
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/identify.aspx>
- *Reporting Child Abuse in Schools:*
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/report.aspx>
- *Four Critical Actions for Schools – responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse*
https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/FourCriticalActions_ChildAbuse.pdf
- *Child Protection and Child Safe Standards (PROTECT):*
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/default.aspx>

RATIFIED DATE

This Policy was ratified by School Council on 29 October 2019.

REVIEW DATE

This Policy will be reviewed as part of the College's three year review cycle.