Carlton North Primary School
MANDATORY REPORTING POLICY

Rationale
Schools have an important role to play in:

- supporting students and their families and
- in protecting students who may be at risk of harm due to abuse or neglect.

Aims

- define the roles and responsibilities of school staff in protecting the safety and wellbeing of students and young people.
- enable staff to identify the indicators of a student or young person who may be in need of protection.
- enable staff to make a report of a student or young person who may in need of protection.

Implementation

The principal will ensure:

- A review by staff of this policy at the beginning of each year
- All teaching staff successfully undertake Mandatory Reporting Training annually.
- Review of performance against this policy annually
- School staff have a duty of care to protect the safety, health and wellbeing of students in their care.
- Report concerns regarding a student or young person is in need of protection or treatment in relation to any of the following indicators:
  - physical abuse
  - sexual abuse
  - emotional abuse
  - neglect
  - medical neglect
  - family violence.

Other reports to DHS Child Protection may be needed for:

- risk-taking behaviour
- female genital mutilation
- unborn child
- student or young person exhibiting sexually-abusive behaviours.

A record of all communications in relation to this policy is to be maintained in the relevant student’s file.

LINKS

This policy should be read in conjunction with the DEECD Mandatory reporting policy:

And “Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people” pdf

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed in 2016 or sooner if required

This policy was ratified by School Council in September 2014
Appendix A:

1. DUTY OF CARE

If a staff member has concerns about the safety, health and wellbeing of a student in their care it is important to take immediate action. In the case of a student who may be in need of protection or therapeutic treatment, or where there are significant concerns about the wellbeing of a student, school staff can discharge this duty of care by taking action which includes the following:

- Reporting their concerns to the DHS Child Protection or another appropriate agency
- Notifying the principal or a member of the school leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns.

2. REPORTING

In cases where staff have concerns about a student or young person, they should discuss their concerns with the principal or a member of the school leadership team.

Any person who is registered as a teacher under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, or any person who has been granted permission to teach under that Act, including principals, is mandated to make a report to Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Protection or Child FIRST if in the course of undertaking their professional duties, a belief is formed on reasonable grounds, that a student is in need of protection as a result of sexual abuse or physical injury and the student’s parent are unable or unwilling to protect the student.

All other school staff who believe on reasonable grounds that a student or young person is in need of:

- protection are encouraged to report their concerns to DHS Child Protection or Victoria Police.
- therapeutic treatment are encouraged to report their concerns to DHS Child Protection.

If staff have significant concerns for the wellbeing of a student or young person they are encouraged to report their concerns to DHS Child Protection or Child FIRST.

3. CHILD ABUSE AND INDICATORS OF HARM

Child abuse can have a significant effect on a student’s physical or emotional health, development and wellbeing. The younger a child the more vulnerable he/she is and the more serious the consequences are likely to be.

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.

Note: For full definitions for all of the types of child abuse and a comprehensive list of the indicators of harm, see: “Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people” pdf under Links in policy.

4. MAKING A REPORT

a) School staff should keep comprehensive notes that are dated and include the following information:

- Description of the concerns (e.g. physical injuries, student behaviour)
- Source of those concerns (e.g. observation, report from student or another person)
- Actions taken as a result of the concerns (e.g. consultation with principal, report to DHS Child Protection etc)

b) School staff should 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 must or may make a report about the student or young person.

c) School staff should 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 student or young person
- Details of the concerns and the reasons for those concerns
- The individual staff member’s involvement with the student and young person
- Details of any other agencies who may be involved with the student or young person.

d) Make a report to the relevant agency.

e) 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
• the person who received the report.

f) Notify relevant school staff and/or Departmental staff of the report.

• School staff should advise the principal or a member of the leadership team if they have made a report.
• In the case of international students, the principal must notify the International Education Division of the Department on (03) 9637 2990 to ensure that appropriate support is arranged for the student.
• In the case of Koorie students, the principal must notify the Regional Office to ensure that the regional Koorie support officer can arrange appropriate support for the student.

g) Notify the Victoria Police if there is concern that a criminal offence may have been committed.