

2021



Everyone Can Learn to Learn



FOSTER PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILD SAFE BOOKLET

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Expectations at Foster Primary School



CHILD SAFE STANDARDS WHAT TO EXPECT AT FOSTER PRIMARY SCHOOL



- Everyone connected to our school can help children be safe.
- We have zero tolerance of any abuse of children.
- We already have policies and processes in place to protect the care, safety and welfare of children. These are being strengthened to ensure a zero tolerance approach to child abuse.
- There are clear boundaries about how adults in our school community may interact with the children here.
- The child safe standards apply to school staff (including volunteers and contractors), visitors and students' family members.
- Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility.
- We want to ensure you know how we are keeping your children safe at school, and how we'd like you to support us (for families).
- Unsupervised contractors will be asked to present their Working With Children card as a condition of working with us if they work with children enrolled in the school (or that children can reasonably be expected to be present while they are at the school).
- Other people using our school facilities will be asked to comply with our child safe standards as a condition of using our facilities, if they involve children enrolled at the school (or that children can reasonably be expected to be present while their staff or other adults are at the school).

Contents

Child Safe Policy	4
Statement of Commitment	11
Mandatory Reporting Policy	12
What to do when an allegation of child abuse is made	13
Incident Report	21
Four critical actions for schools	24
Step by step guide to making a report	26
Responding to and reporting suspected child abuse	28
Code of Conduct for Staff, Volunteers and School Councillors – <i>to be read, signed and detached – please send to the office</i>	37

Child Safe Policy

Purpose

The child safe environments 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

All staff, volunteers, contractors and whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people. This policy will apply across all school environments including camps, excursions, online environments and outside of school hours activities.

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Foster Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making with particular attention paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability, and vulnerable children.

Foster Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse.

Foster Primary 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.

Every person involved in Foster Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she 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, Foster Primary School will:

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
4. Respect diversity in cultures, gender and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development
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 such issues

8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities
9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk
10. Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

Policy and procedures

Policies and procedures outlining school's approach to the Child Safe Standards are outlined below.

- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Role of a School Child Safety Officer/Leader
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy

The Child Safety Officer is responsible for ensuring staff, students, volunteers and community members adhere to the Child Safety Policy and associated policies. At Foster Primary School, the Child Safety Officer is the Principal.

Further information regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Child Safety Officer can be found in the [Child Safety Officer](#) role description.

Further resources and advice on child safety and the Child Safe Standards can be accessed from the Department of Education and Training's [PROTECT site](#).

Legislative responsibilities

This policy applies to allegations of disclosures of child abuse made by or in relation to a child, school staff, visitors or other persons connected to the school environment.

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

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/childprotectobligation.aspx>

- **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.

A child-safe culture

Foster Primary School's culture encourages staff to raise, discuss and scrutinise concerns making it more difficult for abuse to occur and remain hidden.

All members of the Foster Primary School Community are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to adhere to the core values of Be Respectful, Be a Learner, Be Caring and Be Safe. The school has created a learning environment that is supportive and enables students to develop self-discipline, team work, communications skills and a tolerance of other viewpoints and cultures.

The following are the strategies that Foster Primary School will implement to ensure a culture of child safety at our school:

- Staff will complete online [Mandatory Training modules](#) annually.
- The [4 Critical Actions posters](#) are displayed in staff work areas and on our OHS noticeboard.
- The Protect Child Safety posters are displayed on school notice boards and in classrooms for students.
- Child Safety is included in agendas for our staff meetings and professional development days.
- School Council Meeting agendas include updates and discussions about our commitment to child safety.
- Through our Health and Social Emotional Learning curricula we teach our students about School Wide Positive Behaviours, Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships and Protective Behaviours. We actively promote child safety, tolerance and respectful relationships.
- Our commitment to child safety and the relevant policies are available for the community on our school website.
- Our school recognises cultural events that are relevant to our community, and displays the Aboriginal and Australian flags at the front of the school.

Personnel understand their roles and responsibilities/ Code of Conduct

School leaders and managers will ensure that each person understands their role, responsibilities and behaviour expected in protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect. Staff will comply with the school's Code of Conduct. The school's Code of Conduct sets out clear awareness of the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

- The [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#) is included in staff induction and CRT information packs, and these staff members are instructed to familiarise themselves with the expectations set out in this document.
- The Code of Conduct is presented to all staff at the beginning of each school year, and staff are reminded of their responsibility to read this document and adhere to the expectations.
- The Code of Conduct is available on our website, in the front office for visitors, and is included in the staff handbook.
- All staff, visitors and School Councillors are expected to sign the Code of Conduct.

- Where breaches of the Code of Conduct are identified, these will be addressed in accordance with the Foster Primary School Child Safe Mandatory Reporting Policy and the DET reporting procedures.
- All visitors to the school are required to sign in and out on the Edupass in reception.
- Volunteers, and those coming to the school to work with children, are required to produce a current WWCC and asked to adhere to the Child Safety Code of Conduct as outlined on Edupass.

Human resources practices and training

Foster Primary School applies best practice 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.

- Staff are required to provide a copy of their current VIT registration or WWCC annually, and this information is filed by administration staff.
- When hiring new staff members, use of a pre-employment checklist is used and referees are asked if they have any concerns relating to child safety.
- The Child Safety Environments clause is used when hiring staff through Recruitment Online.
- The Child Safety Code of Conduct is included in staff induction and CRT information packs, and these staff members are instructed to familiarise themselves with the expectations set out in this document.

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

Foster Primary 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 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.

- All members of the teaching service are mandated by law to report signs of physical and sexual abuse and neglect (see [Child Safety Mandatory Reporting policy](#));
- The Child Safety Mandatory Reporting Policy is available on our website and staff are expected to familiarise themselves with this policy.
- The 4 Critical Actions posters are displayed in staff work areas and on our OHS noticeboard to assist staff in making a report.
- After any serious incidents the school will review all policies and procedures related to child safety.
- We have specific policies, processes and training in place that support our staff and volunteers to confidently make a report based on holding a 'reasonable belief' that a child is at risk of child abuse.

- All staff and School Council members are expected to complete the Mandatory Reporting e-Learning module. This is monitored by the Child Safety Officer.

The school's policy and procedures for reporting a child safety concern or complaint can be found in the [Child Safety Mandatory Reporting Policy](#).

Risk reduction and management

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. Risk management processes are reviewed annually or pre/post events/excursions/incidents.

- The [risk assessment matrix](#) is reviewed annually and ratified by the Foster Primary School School Council
- The school's approach to Child Safety risk reduction and management can be found in the [Risk Assessment Policy](#).
- School Council members are educated on their obligations when reviewing and endorsing Child Safe Policies at the first meeting each year. School Council members are required to complete the [Mandatory reporting online modules](#) each year.

Listening to children

The school has developed a safe, inclusive and supportive environment that involves and communicates with children, young people and their parents/carers. We encourage child and parent/carer involvement and engagement that informs safe school operations and builds the capability of children and parents/carers to understand their rights and their responsibilities. Foster Primary School promotes student voice through the Student Representative Council and through classroom discussions around risks and events.

- We will work to ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues.
- We are committed to 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.

To support or assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse the school will:

- Establish regular communication between staff and the child's parent/ guardian/carer (if this is appropriate) to discuss a child's wellbeing and the effectiveness of planned strategies.
- Convene a Student Support Group to plan ongoing monitoring, support, and follow-up of the child's health and wellbeing.

- Develop and implement a Student Support Plan, which documents the planned support strategies and includes timeframes for review (where possible, these support strategies should be informed by allied health and wellbeing professional with expertise in addressing child abuse and trauma).
- Students are educated on protective behaviours through the implementation of the RRRR curriculum, tailored to their year level.
- The PROTECT Child Safety posters are displayed on school notice boards and communicated to the school community via the school newsletter.

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

Confidentiality and privacy

Foster Primary School collects, uses and discloses information about particular children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy law. The collection, use and storage of information is included in school policies.

- All allegations of abuse and safety concerns will be reported to a member of the leadership team. The information will be documented using our 'confidential summary form' and stored securely. Updates will be added to this document and relevant stakeholders informed.

Policy evaluation and review

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed in the context of school self-evaluation undertaken as part of the school accountability framework. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.

Definitions

A full list of definitions for Ministerial Order No. 870 is available at

www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes

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 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)

Related policies and Documents

[School Policy Advisory Guide – Duty of Care](#)

[School Policy Advisory Guide – Child Protection Reporting Obligations](#)

Statement of Commitment

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Foster Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children (see [Child Safe Policy](#)) in all school environments (physical or online). This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making with particular attention paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability, and all vulnerable children.

Foster Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse

Foster Primary School is committed to providing a child safe environment (see [child Safe Environment Policy](#)) where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.

Every person involved in Foster Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she 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, Foster Primary School will:

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives
3. Develop and build a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
4. Respect diversity in cultures, gender and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development
7. Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable, supported and encouraged to raise such issues
8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities and encourage all members of our school community to do so as well
9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk
10. Value the input of and communicate regularly about 'Child Safety' with families and carers.

Mandatory Reporting Policy

Rationale:

All children have a right to feel safe and to be safe. As educators, we have a legal and moral responsibility to respond to serious incidences involving abuse and neglect of the children with whom we have contact, and to report instances that we believe involve any form of abuse or neglect.

Aims:

To ensure that children's rights to be safe are maintained and each child is protected against all forms of abuse and neglect.

Implementation:

- All members of the Teaching Service are mandated by law to report signs of physical and sexual, abuse and neglect.
- New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures through the induction process at the beginning of the year or as employed.
- All members of the Teaching Service are required to complete on line Mandatory Reporting Training annually. Education Support staff members also have this training available and are encouraged to complete it annually.
- All concerns must be reported immediately to the Principal, or in his/her absence, the Officer in Charge.
- The Principal will keep a record of all discussions about a student with whom there is a concern.
- The teacher and/or the Principal class officer will contact the Department of Health & Human Services by telephone as soon as possible to make an official notification on:
1800 020202 or after school hours crisis line 131278
- Members of the Department of Human Services, or associated support or intervention services that visit the school following a notification, will interview staff and children only in the presence of a Principal class member or his/her nominee.
- All reports, information sheets and subsequent discussions and information are to be recorded and remain strictly confidential.
- All incidents to be monitored, and any subsequent signs or indications of abuse are also to be reported.
- While only mandated by law to report incidents of physical and sexual abuse, and neglect; teachers are also encouraged to report incidents of emotional abuse or neglect.
- Students, who disclose to staff a desire to harm themselves or others, must be reported by staff to the principal.

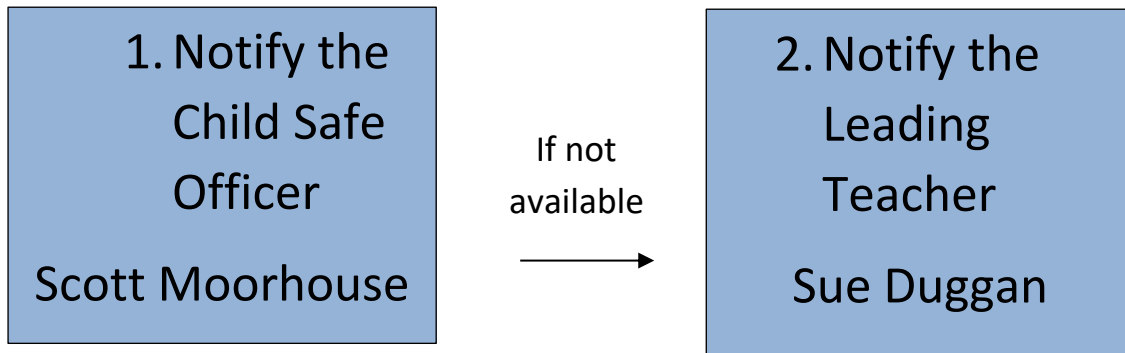
Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed annually or following an incident.

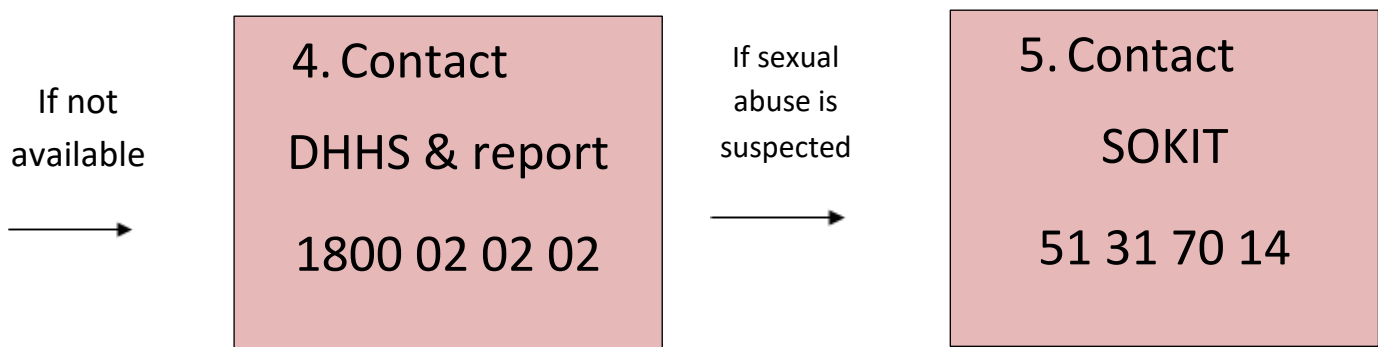
Fulfilling the roles & responsibilities contained in responding to allegations of suspected child abuse does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.

What to do when an allegation of child abuse is made

If you suspect a child is being abused:



3. Use paperwork in your Child Safe folder to record incident details and your action taken.



6. Ensure support/safety of the affected child. DHHS/SOKIT will advise.

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Advancing quality, safety and innovation

What to do when an allegation of child abuse is made

Child Safe Standards toolkit: Resource 5



The Child Safe Standards require organisations that provide services or facilities for children to have processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse. Your organisation may have existing processes. This resource is designed to provide guidance on what to do if a child discloses an incident of abuse, or if a parent/carer raises a concern or allegation of abuse which may have taken place in your organisation.

Responding to a child

If a child discloses an incident of abuse, there are a number of key actions that you and your organisation should undertake to effectively respond.

Action One – Respond to an emergency

If there is no immediate harm to the child or young person, proceed to Action Two.

If a child's immediate safety is compromised, a child is at risk of harm or a child is involved in any risk taking activity that poses a high risk to the child, you must take reasonable steps to protect them.

This includes:

- ensuring the child's immediate health and safety is supported by an appropriate staff member
 - if the child seems at ease in your company, stay with them
- ensuring the alleged offender does not have access to the child
- arranging and providing urgent medical assistance where necessary by:
 - administering first aid assistance
 - calling 000 for an ambulance and following any instructions from emergency service officers/paramedics
- calling 000 for urgent police assistance if the person who is alleged to have engaged in the abuse poses an immediate risk to the health and safety of any person
 - you should also identify a contact person at the organisation for future liaison with police
- taking reasonable steps to preserve evidence, such as the environment, clothing, other items, and potential witnesses until the police or other relevant authorities arrive on the premises.

Action Two - Provide support to the child

If a child has experienced or disclosed abuse or serious neglect, you should:

- listen to them carefully and let the child use their own words to explain what has occurred
- reassure the child that you are taking what they are saying seriously, that it is not their fault and that they are doing the right thing
- explain to them that this information will need to be shared with others, such as their parent/carer, specific people in your organisation, Child Protection and the police
- not make promises to the child, such as promising not to tell anyone about the incident, except that you will do your best to keep them safe
- as appropriate, complete an incident form with or on behalf of the child or young person.

Action Three – Report

As soon as the child's immediate safety concerns are addressed, you must report all incidents or disclosures of abuse or serious neglect. You may be committing a criminal offence if you fail to report allegations of physical or sexual abuse of a child (refer to Mandatory Reporting on page 5).

The process for reporting should be outlined in your organisation's policy for responding to and reporting child abuse. Reports should be made to the Chief Executive Officer or appropriate senior staff, such as a child safety officer. This may also include reporting to:

- Victoria Police (via [your local police station](#) <http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document_ID=7>) with information provided to include if the client has a cognitive disability or mental illness and will need support of an independent third person during interview or when a statement is being taken
- [Child Protection](#) <<https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-protection-contacts>> if you believe a child is at risk of significant harm and/or in need of protection. Please refer to the [Professionals' reporting guide](#) <<http://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/advice-and-protocols/protocols/professionals-reporting-guide>> for further information.
- the Commission for Children and Young People if the matter is reportable conduct, and ensuring the report is made [within the required timeframes](#) <<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/assets/resources/Responsibilities-of-the-head-of-an-organisation.docx>>. See below for further information about the reportable conduct scheme
- the government department which funds and/or regulates your organisation, such as the Department of Health and Human Services (the department) or the Department of Education and Training.

As soon as possible after the incident or disclosure, record the information using the child's words while ensuring that the documentation is recorded accurately and stored securely. Likewise, ensure that any incident report, if required, is submitted within the appropriate timeframes.

Action Four - Contact parents, carers or guardians

The process for contacting parents, carers or guardians of the child should be outlined in your organisation's policy for responding to and reporting child abuse.

Organisations should advise Child Protection and/or Victoria Police when a child has disclosed allegations of abuse perpetrated by their parent, carer, guardian or another family member. This is critical to ensuring the safety of the child as well as to avoid compromising any investigations conducted by the relevant authorities or agencies.

Where appropriate, a senior representative of the organisation should make sensitive and professional contact with parents, carers or guardians of the child as soon as possible on the day of the incident or disclosure.

Where it is suspected that a child has been, or is at risk of being abused, a parent, carer or guardian of the child must be notified as soon as practicable. This is not applicable where it is known or suspected that the parent, carer or guardian is the alleged perpetrator of harm or abuse and/or is unlikely to protect the child. This enables parents, carers and guardians to take steps to:

- prevent or limit their child's exposure to further abuse; and
- ensure that their child receives the support that they require.

During this conversation, it is important to:

- remain calm
- be empathic to feelings
- validate concerns

- provide appropriate details of the incident, disclosure and/or suspicion of child abuse
- outline the action the organisation has taken to date
- inform them of who the incident, disclosure and/or suspicion has been reported to
- where relevant, provide the name and contact telephone number of Child Protection and/or the investigating police officer and advise as to whether they are likely to be contacted by these authorities
- inform them the investigation may take some time and ask what further information they would like and how staff can assist them
- offer for the organisation to provide support to the child
- inform them that the organisation can make referrals to support services
- if possible, invite the parents, carers or guardians to attend a meeting where a support plan can be prepared to ensure appropriate support can be provided for their child.

Action Five - Provide ongoing support

Experiences of child abuse can cause trauma and significantly impact the mental health and wellbeing of children.

In addition to reporting and referral to relevant authorities, organisations that provide services to children can play a central role in addressing this trauma and have a responsibility to ensure that children feel safe and supported. This should be done in partnership and with the consent of parents, carers or guardians.

Support can include referral to wellbeing professionals and community services (such as counselling) and may involve the development of a support plan.

Support in the form of debriefing should also be provided to any impacted staff members.

Responding to a parent, carer or guardian of a child

If a parent, carer or guardian says their child has been abused in your organisation or raises a concern, you should:

- explain that your organisation has processes to ensure all abuse allegations are taken very seriously
- ask about the safety and wellbeing of the child
- allow the parent, carer or guardian to talk through the incident in their own words
- advise the parent, carer or guardian that you will take notes during the discussion to capture all details
- explain to them that you will need to follow the organisation's reporting process which includes informing the organisation's management or child safety officer and where appropriate, Child Protection and/or Victoria Police
- not make promises except that you will do your best to keep the child safe
- provide them with any incident reports
- ask them what action they would like the organisation to take about the disclosure and advise them of what the immediate next steps will be
- ensure that the report is recorded accurately and stored securely
- report and provide ongoing support as per Actions Three and Five above.

Overarching principles

- When dealing with disclosures of abuse, consider the principles underpinning the Child Safe Standards.

Be aware that some people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds may face barriers in reporting allegations of abuse. For example, people from some cultures may experience anxiety when talking with police, and communicating in English may be a barrier for some individuals. You must be sensitive to these issues and address people's needs where possible, such as having an interpreter present.

To ensure a culturally appropriate response to abuse against an Aboriginal child, consider engaging with parents of Aboriginal children, local Aboriginal communities or an Aboriginal community controlled organisation to review policies and procedures to ensure that they provide an appropriate response.

Some children with a disability may experience barriers disclosing an incident. For example, children with hearing or cognitive impairments may need support to help them explain the incident, including through sign language interpreters. Advice on [communicating with people with a disability](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/communicate-and-consult-people-disability) <<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/communicate-and-consult-people-disability>> can be found on the department's website.

What is child abuse?

Child abuse:

- can include physical violence, sexual offences (including grooming), serious emotional or psychological harm and serious neglect
- does not have to involve physical contact or force (e.g. child sexual abuse can include talking to a child in a sexually explicit way)
- can be committed by any member of the community, including someone within a child's family or someone within the school setting.

The trauma associated with child abuse can significantly impact upon the wellbeing and development of the child. It is critical that there is an immediate response to any incident, disclosure or suspected abuse.

Adopt a risk management approach

All organisations have a duty of care to protect the children they are involved with.

Creating a child safe organisation begins with a clear, evidence-informed understanding of the potential risks to children in the service setting.

Taking a preventative approach means identifying potential risks of child abuse in your organisation and reducing or removing those risks. This may range from the impact of the physical environment and how it affects the supervision of staff and children to how the organisation conducts staff recruitment.

Despite the implementation of best-practice approaches, risks always exist for children who access organisations. Organisations are in the best position to know where their vulnerabilities and risks for child abuse are located, the activities undertaken and how to plan to prevent them. By adopting a risk management approach, organisations can act in a preventative manner and can reduce the likelihood of risks becoming realised.

Develop a risk management plan

To reduce the likelihood of harm or abuse to children, consider and identify your organisation's risks. This includes the areas of risk to child safety within your organisation as a whole, or for any specific program or activity. It is important to involve children in this process, as they may have different ideas about what makes them feel unsafe.

Legal responsibilities

Although the Child Safe Standards focus on the obligations of organisations, adults also have several obligations to report allegations and suspicions of abuse against a child, whether or not that child is involved with their organisation.

Failure to disclose

All adults (aged 18 years or over) who hold a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 years must disclose that information to Victoria Police as soon as possible. Failing to disclose this information is a criminal offence, unless the adult who holds the belief has a reasonable excuse not to disclose the information, such as they fear for their safety or that of another person.

More information about [failure to disclose](https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/failure-to-disclose-offence) <<https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/failure-to-disclose-offence>> is available on the Department of Justice and Regulation's website.

While the offence of failure to disclose only covers child sexual abuse, all adults should report other forms of child abuse to authorities. Failure to disclose legislation does not change mandatory reporting responsibilities.

Mandatory reporting

Mandatory reporters (doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers -including early childhood teachers-, principals and police officers) must report to Child Protection if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse. More information about [mandatory reporting](http://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/advice-and-protocols/advice/intake/mandatory-reporting) <www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/advice-and-protocols/advice/intake/mandatory-reporting> is available in the department's Child Protection Manual.

Please refer to the department's website for information about [how to make a report to child protection](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/making-report-child-protection) <<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/making-report-child-protection>>.

Failure to protect

The offence of failure to protect applies where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 years under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation. A relevant organisation is an organisation that exercises care, supervision or authority over children, whether as its primary function or otherwise. A person in a position of authority in the organisation will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently failed to do so.

Further information about [failure to protect](https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/failure-to-protect-a-new-criminal-offence-to) <<https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/failure-to-protect-a-new-criminal-offence-to>> can be found on the Department of Justice and Regulation's website, and in the [Failure to protect offence factsheet](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/failure-protect-offence-factsheet-word) <<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/failure-protect-offence-factsheet-word>> on the department's website.

Reportable conduct scheme

The reportable conduct scheme requires [in scope organisations](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/for-organisations/#TOC-5) <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/for-organisations/#TOC-5> to report any allegations of sexual and physical abuse, sexual misconduct, significant emotional or psychological harm, or significant neglect by an employee towards a child in their care.

In scope organisations must ensure that the [head of the organisation](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/assets/resources/Responsibilities-of-the-head-of-an-organisation.docx) <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/assets/resources/Responsibilities-of-the-head-of-an-organisation.docx> is made aware of the allegation and that there are procedures for appropriately responding to and investigating the allegation. Notifications of reportable conduct must be made to the Commission for Children and Young People:

The reportable conduct scheme commenced on 1 July 2017 and is being implemented in three phases. Phase 1 commenced on 1 July 2017 and focused on organisations that operate schools and provide government services. Phase 2 commenced on 1 January 2018 and includes religious bodies, boarding schools, school camps and health and disability services. Phase 3 will commence on 1 January 2019 and includes kindergartens, after hour care services, children's services and certain art centres, libraries, museums, zoos, parks and gardens. Further information about the [reportable conduct scheme](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme) <https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme> can be found on the department's website and the [Reportable Conduct Scheme page](#) of the Commission for Children and Young People's website.

Duty of care

On 1 July 2017, organisations that exercise care, supervision or authority over children became subject to a new statutory duty of care to take 'reasonable precautions' to prevent the abuse of children committed by individuals associated with the organisation. If a child is abused by an individual associated with the organisation, the organisation is presumed to have breached its duty unless it can prove it took 'reasonable precautions' to prevent the abuse in question.

Further information about the new [organisational duty of care](#) <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/betrayal-of-trust-fact-sheet-the-new> can be found on the Department of Justice and Regulation's website.

Further information

Further information about the [Child Safe Standards](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards) <https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards> can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services (the department) website. This includes additional resources that have been designed for organisations that are funded and/or regulated by the department. In particular, an [overview of the Victoria Child Safe Standards](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/overview-victorian-child-safe-standards-word) <https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/overview-victorian-child-safe-standards-word> has information to help organisations to understand the requirements of each of the Child Safe Standards.

All organisations may also refer to the information and resources available on the [Child Safety page](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/) <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/> on the Commission for Children and Young People's website.

Disclaimer

This resource provides general guidance only on the Child Safe Standards. The department does not guarantee that the examples provided in this document are sufficient for the purposes of an organisation's compliance with the Child Safe Standards.

To receive this publication in an accessible format, email [Child Safe Orgs](mailto:ChildSafeOrgs@dhhs.vic.gov.au) <childsafeargs@dhhs.vic.gov.au>.

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In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 'Indigenous' or 'Koori/Koorie' is retained when part of the title of a report, program or quotation.

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Available at <<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards>>



Incident report

The child safe standards require organisations that provide services for children¹ to have processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.² This resource can be provided to a child or their family if they disclose an allegation of abuse or safety concern at Foster Primary School. Staff can also use this resource to record disclosures.

All incident reports must be stored securely at the office.

Incident details

Date of incident:	
Time of incident:	
Location of incident:	
Name(s) of child/children involved:	
Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved:	

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

Does the child identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

No Yes, Aboriginal Yes, Torres Strait Islander

Please categorise the incident

Physical violence	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual offence	<input type="checkbox"/>
Serious emotional or psychological abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>
Serious neglect	<input type="checkbox"/>

¹ For a [list of the organisations in scope](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/in-scope-organisations-for-child-safe-standards) for the child safe standards, please see the Department of Health and Human Services website: <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/in-scope-organisations-for-child-safe-standards>.

² The child safe standards aim to protect children from abuse in organisations, including physical violence, sexual offences, serious emotional or psychological abuse and serious neglect. For further explanation of the different types of child abuse, please see see [An Overview of the Victorian child safe standards](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards_overview.doc): <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards_overview.doc>.

Please describe the incident

When did it take place?	
Who was involved?	
What did you see?	
Other information	

Parent/carer/child use

Date of incident:	
Time of incident:	
Location of incident:	
Name(s) of child/children involved:	
Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved:	

Office use:

Date incident report received:	
Staff member managing incident:	
Follow-up date:	
Incident ref. number:	

Has the incident been reported?

Child protection	
Police	
Another third party (please specify):	

Incident reporter wishes to remain anonymous?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

Yes No

Further information

Further information on [child safe standards](#) can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services' website <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/projects-and-initiatives/children,-youth-and-family-services/creating-child-safe-organisations>.

Additional resources for organisations in the child safe standards toolkit can be found on the [Department of Health and Human Services website](#): <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards>. In particular, [An Overview to the Victorian child safe standards](#), has information to help organisations understand the requirements of each of the child safe standards, including examples of measures organisations can put in place, a self-audit tool and a glossary of key terms: <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards_overview.doc>

Note for registered schools: a forthcoming Ministerial Order under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* will contain the minimum actions that schools must take to meet each of the child safe standards. There will be a lead in time before regulation will commence to allow schools time to prepare. The Department of Education and Training and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority will provide information and materials specifically for schools to assist with capacity building and compliance.

Registered schools can contact the Department of Education and Training: child.safe.schools@edumail.vic.gov.au

Early childhood services operating under the *National Quality Framework* or *Children's Services Act 1996* should contact: licensed.childrens.services@edumail.vic.gov.au

Licensed children's services enquiry line: 1300 307 415

Disclaimer

This document provides general guidance only on the child safe standards. The Department of Health and Human Services does not guarantee that the examples provided in the document are sufficient for the purposes of an organisation's compliance with existing regulatory or government funding requirements.

To receive this publication in an accessible format email childsafestandards@dhhs.vic.gov.au

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Where the term 'Aboriginal' is used it refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Indigenous is retained when it is part of the title of a report, program or quotation. Throughout this paper we refer to 'Aboriginal peoples' rather than 'Aboriginal people' to reflect the plurality and diversity of Victorian Aboriginal communities.

Available at: www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards

FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse

1 RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY

If there is no risk of immediate harm go to **Action 2**

If a child is at immediate risk of harm you **must** ensure their safety by:

- separating alleged victims and others involved
 - administering first aid
 - calling **000 for urgent medical and/or police assistance** to respond to immediate health or safety concerns
 - identifying a contact person at the school for future liaison with Police.
- Where necessary you may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve evidence.

2 REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES / REFERRING TO SERVICES

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

Q: Where does the source of suspected abuse come from?

WITHIN THE SCHOOL

VICTORIA POLICE

You **must** report all instances of suspected child abuse involving a school staff member, contractor, volunteer or visitor to Victoria Police.

You **must also** report internally to:

- GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**
 - School principal and/or leadership team
 - Employee Conduct Branch
 - DET Security Services Unit
- CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**
 - School principal and/or leadership team
 - Diocesan education office.
- INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**
 - School principal and/or school changeover
 - Commission for Children and Young People on **1300 782 978**

All allegations of reportable conduct **must** be reported as soon as possible to:

- GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**
 - Employee Conduct Branch
- CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**
 - Diocesan education office
- INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**
 - Commission for Children and Young People on **1300 782 978**

WITHIN THE FAMILY OR COMMUNITY

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION

You **must** report to DHHS Child Protection if a child is considered to be:

- at risk of protection from child abuse
- at risk of being harmed (or has been harmed) and the harm has had or is likely to have a serious impact on the child's safety, stability or development.

VICTORIA POLICE

You **must also** report all instances of suspected sexual abuse (including grooming) to Victoria Police.

You **must also** report internally to:

- GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**
 - School principal and/or leadership team
 - DET Security Services Unit
- CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**
 - School principal and/or leadership team
 - Diocesan education office
- INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**
 - School principal and/or chairperson.

3 CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS

Your principal **must** consult with DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers. They may advise:

- not to contact** the parent/carer (e.g. in circumstances where the parents are alleged to have engaged in the abuse, or the child is a foster carer and does not wish for their parent/carer to be contacted)
- to contact** the parent/carer and provide agreed information (this must be done as soon as possible, preferably on the same day of the incident, discuss it in person) or
- how to communicate** with relevant parties with consideration for their safety

4 PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT

Your school **must** provide support for children impacted by abuse. This should include the development of a **Student Support Plan** in consultation with wellbeing professionals. This is an essential part of your duty of care requirements. Strategies may include development of a safety plan, direct support and referral to wellbeing professionals and to support.

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

YOU MUST TAKE ACTION

As a school staff member, you play a **critical role** in protecting children in your care.

- It is a **strongly recommended** that you use the **Responding to Suspected Child Abuse template** to keep clear and comprehensive notes, even if you think a decision not to report.

*A reasonable belief is a deliberately low threshold. This enables authorities to investigate and take action.



CONTACT

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION ABEA North Division 1300 664 977 South Division 1300 655 795 East Division 1300 360 351 West Division (Bussell) 1800 075 559 West Division (Metro) 1300 664 977	VICTORIA POLICE 000 or your local police station SECURITY SERVICES UNIT (03) 5959 6286 STUDENT INCIDENT AND RECOVERY UNIT (03) 9651 3622 EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH (03) 9637 2595 DIOCESAN OFFICE Melbourne (03) 9267 0228 Ballarat (03) 5337 7105 Sale (03) 5622 6920 Sandhurst (03) 5443 2377	INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS VICTORIA (03) 9625 7200 THE LOOKOUT The LOOKOUT has a service directory, information and evidence based guidance to help you respond to family violence: bit.ly/lookoutlogos Family violence victims/narrators can be referred to 1800 Respect for counselling, information and a referral service: 1800 737 732
CHILD FIRST www.childfirst.vic.gov.au/ SAFE AND SUPPORT SERVICES	ORANGE DOOR www.orange-door.vic.gov.au/ SAFE AND SUPPORT SERVICES	



FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

Responding to Student Sexual Offending

PROTECT

THE EDUCATION STATE

VICTORIA | Education and Training
Department

CCCV
Child Crisis Centre Victoria
a member of Childline Australia

Child Protection

YOU MUST TAKE ACTION

- As a school staff member, you play a **critical role** in protecting children in your care.
- You **must** act by following the 4 critical actions as soon as you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a suspicion that a student is a victim of a student sexual offending and/or a student has engaged in sexual offending.
 - You **must** use the **Responding to Student Sexual Offending** template to keep clear and comprehensive notes.

1 IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO AN INCIDENT

- If there is no risk of immediate harm go to **Action 2** 
- If a child is at immediate risk of harm you **must** ensure their safety by:
- separating alleged victims and others involved
 - administering first aid
 - calling **000 for urgent medical and/or police assistance** to respond to immediate health or safety concerns
 - identifying a contact person at the school for future liaison with Police

Where necessary you may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve evidence.

2 REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed you **must** report incidents, suspicions and disclosures of student sexual offending as soon as possible.

VICTORIA POLICE

All instances on **000**

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION

If you believe that:

- the victim's parent/carer are unable or unwilling to protect the child
- the student who is alleged to have engaged in the student sexual offending is:
 - aged over 10 and under 15 years and may be in need of therapeutic treatment to address these behaviours
 - may be displaying physical and behavioural indicators of being the victim of child abuse*

INTERNALLY

ALSO report internally to:

- School Principal and/or leadership team** (all instances)
- Government Schools**
DET Security Services Unit
- Catholic Schools**
Diocesan education office

3 CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS

Your Principal **must** consult with **Victoria Police** or **DHHS Child Protection** to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers of all impacted students. They may advise:

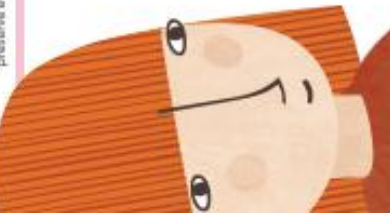
- not to contact the parents/carers** (e.g. in circumstances where contacting the parents/carers is likely to adversely affect a **Victoria Police** investigation or where the student is a mature minor and has requested that their parent/carer not be notified)
- to contact the parents/carers** and provide agreed information this must be done as soon as possible, preferably on the same day of the incident, disclosure or suspicion.

4 PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT

Your school **must** provide support for students who are victims to a student sexual offence AND students who have engaged in a sexual offence. This is an essential part of your duty of care requirements.

This support should include the development of a **Student Support Plan** in consultation with wellbeing professionals, outlining support strategies.

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



You must identify a contact person at the school for future liaison with Victoria Police and/or Child Protection and seek advice about contacting parents/carers (see **Action 3**).

*See the **Four Critical Steps for Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse** for further guidance in these circumstances.

CONTACT

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION AIEA	CHILD FIRST www.dhs.vic.gov.au	EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH (03) 9637 2595
North Division 1300 664 877	VICTORIA POLICE 000 or contact your local police station	DIOCESAN OFFICE Melbourne (03) 9267 0228
South Division 1300 655 795		Ballarat (03) 5337 7195
East Division 1300 360 381		Sale (03) 5622 8600
West Division (Rural) 1800 075 589		Sandhurst (03) 5443 2377
West Division (Metro) 1300 664 577		INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS
AFTER HOURS After hours, weekends, public holidays 13 12 78		VICTORIA (03) 9635 7200

A step-by-step guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST

Protective concerns

You are concerned about a child because you have:

- received a disclosure from a child about abuse or neglect
- observed indicators of abuse or neglect
- been made aware of possible harm via your involvement in the community external to your professional role.

At all times remember to:

- record your observations
- follow appropriate protocols
- consult notes and records
- consult with appropriate colleagues if necessary
- consult with other support agencies if necessary

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4
RESPONDING TO CONCERNS 1. If your concerns relate to a child in need of immediate protection, or you have formed a belief that a child is at significant risk of harm*. Go to Step 4 2. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Child FIRST for family services. Go to Step 3 3. In all other situations Go to Step 2 * Refer to Appendix 2. Definitions of child abuse and indicators of harm in the Protocol – Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people	FORMING A BELIEF ON REASONABLE GROUNDS 1. Consider the level of immediate danger to the child. Ask yourself: a) Have I formed a belief that the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm? YES / NO and b) Am I in doubt about the child's safety and the parent's ability to protect the child? YES / NO 2. If you answered yes to a) or b) Go to Step 4 3. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Child FIRST for family services. Go to Step 3	MAKING A REFERRAL TO Child FIRST Child Wellbeing Referral 1. Contact your local Child FIRST provider. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See over for contact list for local Child FIRST phone numbers. 2. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details.	MAKE A REPORT TO CHILD PROTECTION Mandatory/Protective Report* 1. Contact your local Child Protection Intake provider immediately. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See over for contact list for local Child Protection phone numbers. • For After Hours Child Protection Emergency Services, call 131 278. 2. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-mandated staff members who believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection are able to report their concerns to Child Protection

For further information refer to Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people – A joint protocol of the Department of Human Services Child Protection, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Licensed Children's Services and Victorian Schools

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development		Department of Human Services Child Protection	
METROPOLITAN REGIONS		METROPOLITAN REGIONS	METROPOLITAN REGIONS
Eastern	(03) 9285 2400	Intake Unit	Regional Office
Northern	(03) 9488 9488	Eastern	1300 360 391 Box Hill (03) 9843 6000
Western	(03) 9291 6500	North and West	1300 664 977 Preston 1300 664 977 Footscray 1300 360 462
Southern	(03) 9794 3555	Southern	1300 655 795 Dandenong (03) 9213 2111
RURAL REGIONS		RURAL REGIONS	
Barwon South Western	5225 1000	Intake Unit	Regional Office
Gippsland	5127 0400	Barwon South Western	1800 075 599 Geelong (03) 5226 4540
Grampians	5337 8444	Gippsland	1800 020 202 Traralgon (03) 5177 2500
Hume	5761 2100	Grampians	1800 000 551 Ballarat (03) 5333 6530
Loddon Mallee	5440 3111	Hume	1800 650 227 Wangaratta (03) 5722 0555
		Loddon Mallee	1800 675 598 Bendigo (03) 5434 5555
Office for Children and Licensed Children's Services:		After hours Child Protection Emergency Services (AHC/PES)	
METROPOLITAN REGIONS		Statewide number for all emergency child protection matters outside of normal business hours (24 hours, 7 days a week):	
Eastern	(03) 9285 2400	131 278	
Northern	(03) 9412 5333	Victoria Police 000	
Western	(03) 9275 7000	Catholic Education Offices	
Southern	(03) 9096 9555	Catholic Education Office, Melbourne (03) 9267 0228	
RURAL REGIONS		Catholic Education Office, Ballarat Diocese 5337 7135	
Barwon South Western	5225 1000	Catholic Education Office, Sale Diocese 5622 8600	
Gippsland	5127 0400	Catholic Education Office, Sandhurst Diocese 5443 2377	
Grampians	5337 8444	Independent Schools Victoria (03) 9823 7200	
Hume	5761 2100	Other	
Loddon Mallee	5440 3111	Victoria Aboriginal Education Association, Inc. (03) 9481 0800	
		Victoria Police Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Unit (03) 9247 6666	
		Centre Against Sexual Assault 1800 806 292	
		Gatehouse Centre, Royal Children's Hospital (for specialist counselling and medical assistance) (03) 9345 6391	
		Child Safety Commissioner (03) 8601 5884	
		Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (03) 8388 1855	
		http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/childprotection/childprotection.htm	

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development		Department of Human Services Child Protection	
METROPOLITAN REGIONS		METROPOLITAN REGIONS	METROPOLITAN REGIONS
Eastern	(03) 9285 2400	Barwon South Western	1800 075 599 Geelong (03) 5226 4540
Northern	(03) 9488 9488	Gippsland	1800 020 202 Traralgon (03) 5177 2500
Western	(03) 9291 6500	Grampians	1800 000 551 Ballarat (03) 5333 6530
Southern	(03) 9794 3555	Hume	1800 650 227 Wangaratta (03) 5722 0555
RURAL REGIONS		Loddon Mallee	1800 675 598 Bendigo (03) 5434 5555
Barwon South Western	5225 1000	After hours Child Protection Emergency Services (AHC/PES)	
Gippsland	5127 0400	Statewide number for all emergency child protection matters outside of normal business hours (24 hours, 7 days a week):	
Grampians	5337 8444	131 278	
Hume	5761 2100	Victoria Police 000	
Loddon Mallee	5440 3111	Catholic Education Offices	
		Catholic Education Office, Melbourne (03) 9267 0228	
		Catholic Education Office, Ballarat Diocese 5337 7135	
		Catholic Education Office, Sale Diocese 5622 8600	
		Catholic Education Office, Sandhurst Diocese 5443 2377	
		Independent Schools Victoria (03) 9823 7200	
		Other	
		Victoria Aboriginal Education Association, Inc. (03) 9481 0800	
		Victoria Police Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Unit (03) 9247 6666	
		Centre Against Sexual Assault 1800 806 292	
		Gatehouse Centre, Royal Children's Hospital (for specialist counselling and medical assistance) (03) 9345 6391	
		Child Safety Commissioner (03) 8601 5884	
		Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (03) 8388 1855	
		http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/childprotection/childprotection.htm	

Responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

STAFF MEMBER LEADING THE RESPONSE

NAME:

OCCUPATION:

LOCATION (SCHOOL ADDRESS):

RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD:

critical action 1: immediate response to an incident

If anyone is in immediate danger school staff should report immediately to Victoria Police on 000.

RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY

DID THE CHILD REQUIRE FIRST AID? PROVIDE DETAILS IF 'YES'.

WHO ADMINISTERED THIS? (NAME AND TITLE)

DID THE CHILD REQUIRE FURTHER IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE?

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

PERSONAL DETAILS

NAME:

GENDER:

YEAR LEVEL/CLASS:

DATE OF BIRTH:

RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS:

PARENT/CARER NAME/S:

PARENT/CARER CONTACT:

LANGUAGE(S) SPOKEN BY CHILD:

DISABILITIES, MENTAL OR PHYSICAL HEALTH ISSUES:

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):

details of the incident, disclosure or suspicion

GROUNDINGS 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:

ANY BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS OF ABUSE:

<p>ANY PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOUR OR PRIOR CONCERNS LEADING UP TO AN INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION:</p>

DETAILS OF PERSONS ALLEGED TO HAVE COMMITTED THE ABUSE (IF KNOWN)	
NAME:	
GENDER	DATE OF BIRTH:
RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD: <small>NOTHING IF THEY ARE WITHIN THE SCHOOL OR WITHIN THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY (THIS WILL IMPACT ON WHO YOU REPORT TO)</small>	
ADDRESS:	
CONTACT DETAILS:	

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: <input type="checkbox"/> VICTORIA POLICE <input type="checkbox"/> DHHS CHILD PROTECTION <input type="checkbox"/> CHILD FIRST <input type="checkbox"/> 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 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

DATE:

TIME:

AUTHORITY:

OUTCOMES FROM THE REPORT:

REPORTING INTERNALLY

PROVIDE DETAILS OF YOUR DISCUSSION WITH SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

TIME:

DATE:

NAMES:

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

TIME:

DATE:

NAMES:

DISCUSSION OUTCOMES:

critical action 3: contacting parents/carers

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).

HAVE YOU SOUGHT ADVICE FROM DHHS CHILD PROTECTION OR VICTORIA POLICE?

- NO
- YES

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

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 SCHOLS: 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

HAVE THE PARENTS CONTINUED TO BE ENGAGED IF APPROPRIATE?

- NO
- YES

ACTION 4

HAS THE SCHOOL PROVIDED ADEQUATE SUPPORT FOR THE STUDENT?

- 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

Code of Conduct Policy

Foster Primary School 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 Foster Primary School will support the 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 Foster Primary School will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, contractors, volunteers, school councillors 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.

Acceptable Behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, school councillors 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:

- upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to the school's Child Safe policy.
- treating 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.
- 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.
- promoting the cultural safety, of all children regardless of gender, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability.
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of vulnerable students.
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the school's leadership or Child Safety Officer.
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

Unacceptable Behaviours

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

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse.
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts).
- 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.
- ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate.
- 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.
- treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.
- 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.
- photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes*.
- in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to school policy** or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

If you believe a child to be at risk, please contact the Principal or DHHS. If you feel a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed annually or in the event of an incident.

*SPAG: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/photoandfilm.aspx>.

**SPAG: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/alcohol.aspx>.

For further information and training on Child Safety and Mandatory Reporting

Elearning module from Department of Education and Training for Mandatory Reporting

<http://www.elearn.com.au/det/earlychildhood/>

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:

Name:

Signature:

Date: