



MANDATORY REPORTING POLICY

Rationale:

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

Aim:

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

Implementation:

- It is the law to report signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, and neglect for all members of the Teaching Service.
- New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures as part of their induction procedure.
- Staff will be reminded of mandatory reporting responsibilities annually.
- All concerns must be reported immediately to the Principal, or in his/her absence, the Campus Principal.
- The Principal will keep a record of all discussions about a student with whom there is a concern.
- If a belief has been formed by a staff member that sexual or physical abuse has taken place a "Mandatory Reporting Information Sheet" available from the Principal will be completed and filed in the Principal's office.
- The Principal or teacher (if applicable) will contact the Department of Health and Human Services by telephone as soon as possible to make an official notification on **(03) 9479 6222 or after school hours crisis line 131278**
- Members of the Department of Health and 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 the Principal or his/her nominee.
- All "Mandatory Reporting Information Sheets" remain filed in the Principal's office.
- 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.
- Staff must report to the Principal, students who disclose to staff a desire to harm themselves or others.

Evaluation:

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

Emerson School Council last ratified this policy in September 2017
