MARYSVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL 1273

Mandatory Reporting POLICY
(Child Safe Standard 5)

Rationale

All children have a right to feel safe and to be safe. In schools, 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.
School staff have a duty of care to protect the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care. If a staff member has concerns about the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care they should take immediate action.

Aim

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

Implementation

- All members of the Teaching Service are mandated by law to report signs or risks of harm, disclosures of abuse or neglect, or a reasonable belief a student is subjected to sexual abuse or physical harm.
- 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 and Human Services (DHHS) Child Protection.
- All other staff members who form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person:
  - is in need of protection, should report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police
  - is displaying sexually abusive behaviours and is in need of therapeutic treatment should report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection
- If staff have significant concerns for the wellbeing of a child or young person they should report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection or Child FIRST. (See attachment for process)
- In cases where staff have concerns about a child or young person, they should also discuss their concerns with the principal or a member of the school leadership team.
- New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures as part of their induction procedure.
- Staff will be reminded of mandatory responsibilities annually.
- All concerns must be reported immediately to the Principal, or in his/her absence, or most senior staff member.
- 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 a mandatory report must be made, a "Mandatory Reporting Information Sheet" available from the Principal must be completed and filed in the Principal's office.
- The teacher and/or the Principal class officer will contact the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) by telephone as soon as possible to make an official notification on:

  - **(03) 9479 6222 or after school hours crisis line 131278**
  - **North-East Region Benalla Office on 8392 9500**

- 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.
- Members of Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS), 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 "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 or neglect.
- Students, who disclose to staff a desire to harm themselves or others, must be reported by staff to the principal.
- Legal Obligations – see Appendix A

Failure to disclose

Any staff member who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 has an obligation to report 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.

See Appendix B for additional information

Principal

President of School Council

Date: 27/March 18

Review date/cycle: March 2020

This policy will be reviewed every three years and following significant incidents if they occur.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on....