



Casterton Secondary College MANDATORY REPORTING PROTOCOL

RATIONALE

Everyone has a right to feel safe and to be safe. Teachers are required to report when, in the course of practising their profession, they form the belief based on reasonable grounds that a child with whom they have contact is in need of protection because they have suffered or are likely to suffer significant harm as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse. A child is defined as being less than 18 years of age.

STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE

If a student informs a teacher that they have been abused

- The teacher should accept the student's statement
- The teacher should not make promises that they will not tell anyone, because they may be legally obliged to do so.
- It is not the teacher's responsibility to investigate the situation

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING A DISCLOSURE

- There is a legal requirement that individual teachers are responsible for reporting specific disclosures. Additionally it is strongly recommended that incidents are reported to the Principal, or in his/ her absence, the Assistant Principal.
- If a belief has been formed by a staff member that abuse has taken place a the member of staff will write up the disclosure or reason for the belief that abuse has occurred and discuss with Principal or Assistant Principal.
- The teacher should contact the DHHS Child Protection by telephone as soon as possible after speaking to the Principal or Assistant Principal to make an official notification on: **1800 075 599**.
- It is recommended that another member of staff (Principal, Assistant Principal, Educational Leader) is present when the referring teacher is contacting the DHHS

(Prior to the phone conversation the teacher should be prepared with the personal details of the student, including their full name, date of birth, parent's names, address and phone numbers.)

PROCEDURE FOR MANAGING SUBSEQUENT INTERVIEWS

- Members of the DHHS, or associated support or intervention services, may visit the school following a notification. These staff can interview students at school without parent permission. They may want to interview teachers and children. This must be done only in the presence of a Principal class member or their nominee.
- Mandatory Reporting Information will be kept in student files and updated on Records of referrals administered by the Assistant Principal .
- All discussion and information in relation to a Mandatory Report is strictly confidential.

SUBSEQUENT STUDENT MANAGEMENT

- Any indications of further abuse must also be reported as a separate incident.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- While only mandated by law to report incidents of physical abuse or sexual abuse, teachers are also encouraged to report incidents of emotional abuse, neglect or self harm.

- The school offers to provide debriefing and support for staff involved in a mandatory reporting incident.
- All inquiries from parents regarding a notification must be directed to the Principal

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures as part of their induction procedure.
- Staff will be reminded on an ongoing basis of their mandatory reporting responsibilities.

Updated term 3, 2015

Last ratified by School Council: 10/8/2015

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