	Oakleigh Grammar v9	
Procedure Document Name		**Mandatory Reporting Policy -** incorporating Child Abuse Allegation Procedure & Incident Report Form
Date Implemented		Dec 2016
Date for Review		Dec 2017

1. PREAMBLE

Oakleigh Grammar has a **zero-tolerance approach to child abuse**. The School must comply with the minimum standard for the care, safety and welfare of students as detailed in the **Child Safe Standards** specified by *Ministerial Order No. 870*. Underpinning the information and procedures discussed in this policy is the *Children, Youth and families Act 2005*.

All employees of the School undertake compulsory annual 'Mandatory Reporting' training.

2. PURPOSE

- The purpose of this document is to outline the Oakleigh Grammar (the School) responsibilities and approach to Child Protection Reporting.
- The Policy provides the School, its Staff, Contractors and Volunteers with an outline of what to do in the event of incidents, disclosures or allegations of child abuse against a student or child in the care of the School.
- The Policy must be read in conjunction with the Child Safe Policy.

3. POLICY

3.1 Policy Scope

The policies and procedures contained in this documents cover both contemporary and historical Child Abuse Matters. The document applies to all Staff, Contractors, Volunteers and all students at Oakleigh Grammar.

All School Staff, Contractors and Volunteers must familiarise themselves with this Policy document and respond appropriately and in accordance with the provisions of the Policy.

Where a student is over the age of 18 and discloses or is the alleged victim of any type of abuse, as outlined in this policy, the School will provide support to the student and contact the Police immediately for further investigation.

3.2 Policy Statement

The School recognises that it is essential that the safety, health, welfare and wellbeing of its students are safeguarded at all times. Every person working or visiting the School is responsible for the ongoing care and protection of its students.

The School is committed to ensuring all incidents, disclosures or allegations of Child Abuse are reported immediately to the appropriate authorities and the child's wellbeing is at the centre of any actions or decisions that ensue.

The school adheres to the Child Safe Standards and Mandatory reporting legislation. All School personnel, teachers, either voluntary or paid, who have formed a belief based on reasonable grounds of child abuse are to contact the relevant Child Safe Officer and collectively make a Mandatory Report.

In addition to Mandatory reporting the School requires **all** School Staff members, contractors and volunteers, whether required by the legislation or not, who have formed a belief on reasonable grounds of any child abuse (sexual, physical, emotional/psychological, neglect, grooming or domestic violence), or who have had a student disclose child abuse directly to them or indirectly through a friend, are to report to a Child Safe Officer (HOS or DP) immediately.

4. REPORTING PROCEDURES

The Child Safe Standards require schools to have processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse. This procedure 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.

4.1 If a child discloses an incident of abuse to you

- Try and separate them from the other children discreetly and listen to them carefully.
- Let the child use their own words to explain what has occurred.
- Reassure the child that you take what they are saying seriously, and it is not their fault and that they are doing the right thing.
- Explain to them that this information may need to be shared with others, such as with their parent/carer and specific people in the School.
- Do 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.
- Do not leave the child in a distressed state. If they seem at ease in your company, stay with them. Take measures to protect the child until the allegation has been resolved.
- Provide them with an Incident Report Form to complete, or complete it together, if you think the child is able to do this.
- As soon as possible after the disclosure, record the information using the child's own words if this has not already been done, and report the disclosure to a Child Safe Officer (relevant Head of School (HOS) or Deputy Principal if HOS is absent) and together inform Child First or Child Protection.
- Ensure the disclosure is recorded accurately on an Incident Report Form, and that the record is stored securely in a central file.

4.2 If a parent/carer says their child has been abused at School or raises a concern

- Explain that the School has processes to ensure all abuse allegations are taken very seriously.
- Ask about the wellbeing of the child.
- Allow the parent/carer to talk through the incident in their own words.
- Advise the parent/carer that you will take notes during the discussion to capture all details.
- Explain to them the information may need to be repeated to authorities or others, including the relevant Child Safe Officer (HOS), Child First or Child Protection.
- Do not make promises at this early stage, except that you will do your best to keep the child safe.
- Provide them with an Incident Report Form to complete, or complete it together.
- Ask them what action they would like to take and advise them of what the immediate next steps will be.
- As soon as possible report the disclosure to a Child Safe Officer (relevant Head of School (HOS) or Deputy Principal if HOS is absent) and together inform Child First or Child Protection.
- Ensure the report is recorded accurately, and that the record is stored securely in a central file.

4.3 Useful information

You need to be aware that some people from culturally and/or linguistically and/or intellectually 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. You need to be sensitive to these issues and meet people's needs where possible, such as having an interpreter present (who could be a friend or family member).

If an allegation of abuse involves an Aboriginal child, you will need to ensure a culturally appropriate response. A way to help ensure this could include engaging with parents of Aboriginal children, local Aboriginal communities or an Aboriginal community controlled organisation to review policies and procedures.

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.

If a staff member believes a child is at immediate risk of abuse they are to contact the relevant Child Safe Officer (HOS or DP) and collectively make the following call:
1. During office hours contact CHILD FIRST 1300 762 125 (Eastern Metropolitan) for wellbeing/neglect issues
2. Contact CHILD PROTECTION 1300 360 391 for a child in danger of abuse or significant harm
Child First / Child Protection will contact police if required.

5. LEGAL RESOPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Circumstances under which a mandated reporter must make a report

While the child safe standards focus on organisations, every adult who reasonably believes that a child has been abused, whether in their organisation or not, has an obligation to report that belief to authorities.

Fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained in this procedure does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.

The **failure to disclose** criminal offence requires all adults (aged 18 and over) who hold a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 to disclose that information to police (unless they have a reasonable excuse not to, for example because they fear for their safety or the safety of another).

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

Mandatory reporters (doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers (including early childhood teachers), principals and police) 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.

The **failure to protect** criminal offence (commenced on 1 July 2015) applies where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 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 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.

6. Step-by-step guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST

See pages 4&5 of this document.

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 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*

STEP 2 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

STEP 3 MAKING A REFERRAL TO Child FIRST

Child Wellbeing Referral

1. Contact your local Child FIRST provider.
   - See over for contact list for local Child FIRST phone numbers.
2. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details.

STEP 4 MAKE A REPORT TO CHILD PROTECTION

Mandatory/Protective Report*

1. Contact your local Child Protection Intake provider immediately.
   - 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.

* *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,*

Contact Numbers

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

METROPOLITAN REGIONS	
Eastern	(03) 9265 2400
Northern	(03) 9488 9488
Western	(03) 9291 6500
Southern	(03) 9794 3555
RURAL REGIONS	
Barwon South Western	5225 1000
Gippsland	5127 0400
Grampians	5337 8444
Hume	5761 2100
Loddon Mallee	5440 3111

Office for Children and Licensed Children's Services:

METROPOLITAN REGIONS	
Eastern	(03) 9265 2400
Northern	(03) 9412 5333
Western	(03) 9275 7000
Southern	(03) 9096 9555
RURAL REGIONS	
Barwon South Western	5225 1000
Gippsland	5127 0400
Grampians	5337 8444
Hume	5761 2100
Loddon Mallee	5440 3111

Important information for government schools

Principals of Victorian Government schools must report all incidents to the Emergency and Security Management Unit on **03 9589 6266**.

Victorian Government schools should contact the Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit (SCIAU), Student Wellbeing Division, for advice and support when responding to allegations of student sexual assault or inappropriate sexual behaviours.

The SCIAU can be contacted on **03 9637 2934** or **03 9637 2487**.

Victorian Government School Principals should refer to the flowchart – *Responding to Allegations of Student Sexual Assault Compulsory Actions for Principals* at:
http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/childprotection/childprotection.htm

Department of Human Services Child Protection

METROPOLITAN REGIONS		METROPOLITAN REGIONS	
Intake Unit		Regional Office	
Eastern	1300 360 391	Box Hill	(03) 9843 6000
North and West	1300 664 977	Preston Footscray	1300 664 977 1300 360 462
Southern	1300 655 795	Dandenong	(03) 9213 2111

RURAL REGIONS			
Intake Unit		Regional Office	
Barwon South Western	1800 075 599	Geelong	(03) 5226 4540
Gippsland	1800 020 202	Traralgon	(03) 5177 2500
Grampians	1800 000 551	Ballarat	(03) 5333 6530
Hume	1800 650 227	Wangaratta Wodonga	(03) 5722 0555 (02) 6055 7777
Loddon Mallee	1800 675 598	Bendigo	(03) 5434 5555

After hours Child Protection Emergency Services (AHCPES)	
Statewide number for all emergency child protection matters outside of normal business hours (24 hours, 7 days a week):	**131 278**

Victoria Police	000

Catholic Education Offices

Catholic Education Office, Melbourne	(03) 9267 0228
Catholic Education Office, Ballarat Diocese	5337 7135
Catholic Education Office, Sale Diocese	5622 6600
Catholic Education Office, Sandhurst Diocese	5443 2377

Independent Schools Victoria	(03) 9825 7200

Other

Victorian 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

CHILD FIRST

Local Catchment Area		Contact
Barwon South Western	Greater Geelong, Queenscliff, Surf Coast	1300 551 948
	Colac – Otway, Corangamite	5232 5500
	Warrnambool, Moyne, Glenelg, Southern Grampians	1300 889 713
Gippsland	East Gippsland	5152 0052
	Wellington	5144 7777
	La Trobe, Baw Baw	1800 339 100
	South Gippsland, Bass Coast	5662 5150
Grampians	Northern Grampians, West Wimmera, Hindmarsh, Yarrambat, Horsham	1800 195 114
	Ararat, Pyrenees, Hepburn, Ballarat, Golden Plains, Moorabool	1300 783 341
Hume	Wodonga, Towong, Indigo	1800 705 211
	Alpine, Benalla, Mansfield, Wangaratta	1800 705 211
	Greater Shepparton, Strathbogie, Moira	1300 854 944
	Mitchell, Murrindindi	1800 663 107
Loddon Mallee	Greater Bendigo, Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Loddon, Macedon Ranges, Mount Alexander	1800 260 338
	Buloke, Goonawarra, Swan Hill, Mildura	1800 625 533 1800 MALLEE
Eastern Metropolitan	Yarra Ranges, Knox, Maroondah	1300 369 146
	Monash, Whitehorse, Manningham, Booroondarra	1300 762 125
North and West Metropolitan	Nillumbik, Whittlesea, Banyule, Yarra and Darebin	(03) 9450 0955
	Brimbank, Melton	1300 138 180
	Hume, Moreland	1300 786 433
	Hobson's Bay, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Moonee Valley and Wyndham	1300 775 160
Southern Metropolitan	Casey, Cardinia, Greater Dandenong	(03) 9705 3939
	Aboriginal children and families (Casey, Cardinia and Great Dandenong)	(03) 9794 5973
	Frankston, Mornington Peninsula	1300 721 383
	Kingston, Bayside, Glen Eira, Stonington, Port Phillip	1300 367 441

Oakleigh Grammar

Incident Report Form

(6)

This incident report form can be provided to a child or their family if they disclose an allegation of abuse or safety concern. Oakleigh Grammar staff can also use this form to record disclosures.

All incident reports must be stored securely in a central file.

Incident details

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

If a staff member believes a child is at immediate risk of abuse they are to contact the relevant Child Safe Officer (HOS or DP) and collectively make the following call:
1. During office hours contact CHILD FIRST 1300 762 125 (Eastern Metropolitan) for wellbeing/neglect issues
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Child First / Child Protection will contact police if required.

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	☐
Sexual offence	☐
Grooming	☐
Serious emotional or psychological abuse	☐
Serious neglect	☐

Please describe the incident

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

Parent/carer/child use (if required)

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 reference number:	

Name of child	
Address	
Date of birth	

Has the incident been reported?

Child First	
Child Protection	
Police	
Another third party (please specify):	

Incident reporter wishes to remain anonymous?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

Yes ☐ **No** ☐