



Copperfield
COLLEGE

CHILD PROTECTION-REPORTING OBLIGATIONS POLICY

Rationale

Copperfield College upholds the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority Child Safe Standards as listed in Ministerial Order No. 870 in order to prevent and respond to child abuse in our community.

Statement

The aim of this policy is to create and maintain a school environment with an organizational culture committed to the safety of all students and staff.

Implementation

- A mandatory report is warranted if we form a reasonable belief that the abuse has occurred and there is current/ongoing risk of the young person not being safe.
- “Child abuse” refers to physical, psychological, and sexual abuse, or neglect by primary caregivers
- As individual teachers and adults working in a school we have a mandatory legal responsibility to report child sexual and physical abuse to the appropriate authorities: the Department of Health and Human Services 1300 664 977, or Victoria Police.
- Neglect is to be reported to Child First 1300 138 180.
- Despite a young person being older than the 17 years reporting is mandated, police and DHS still wish to be notified of any reasonable belief that a student is being abused/is not safe.
- Wellbeing Team staff will annually remind teaching staff of their mandatory reporting obligations.

- The College’s employment procedures ensure employees and all those engaged in child-connected work have a Working with Children check, proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications, and have investigated a prospective worker’s work history involving children including references addressing that applicant’s suitability for the job and working with children.
- Allegations of child abuse will be taken seriously and acted on expeditiously.
- The Leadership Team and Wellbeing Staff will monitor College compliance with this policy.
- The College will make, secure, and retain records of allegations of child abuse and its responses to it.
- Children connected with allegations of child abuse will be protected by the College until the allegation is resolved.
- The College will ensure that the children develop the necessary knowledge to identify abuse, are clear about how to report it, and feel safe to report it and any concerns about child safety.

Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s 2020 Strategic Plan review cycle.

Definitions

- **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.
- **Child abuse** includes`
 - (a) Any act committed against a child involving –
 - (i) a sexual offence; or
 - (ii) an offence under Section 49B (2) of the *Crimes Act 1958* (grooming); and
 - (b) The infliction, on a child, of –
 - (i) physical violence; or
 - (ii) serious emotional or psychological harm; and
 - (c) Serious neglect of a child.
- **School environment** means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:
 - (a) A campus of the school;
 - (b) Online environments of the school (including email and intranet systems); and
 - (c) Other locations provided by the school for the child’s use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).

- **School staff** means an individual working in a school environment who is:
 - (i) employed under Part 2.4 of the ETR Act in the Government Teaching Service
 - (ii) employed under a contract of service by the School Council under Part 2.3 of the ETR Act; or
 - (iii) a volunteer or a contracted service provider.

References

- *Working With Children Act 2005*
- *VRQA Child Safe Standards*
- *Child Safe Standards School Guide*
- *Protect: Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools*
- *Copperfield College Child Safety Policy*
- *Copperfield College Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct*
- *Copperfield College Child Protection – Reporting Obligations*

Policy Version

This policy was ratified by Copperfield College School Council on 24/10/2016