

CASTLEMAINE NORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING POLICY

Purpose:

1. Staff members have a duty of care to protect the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care and are legally required under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 to report suspected abuse.
2. If a staff member has concerns about the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care it is important that immediate action is taken.
3. For the purpose of this policy, mandatory reporters are teachers who are registered to teach and the principal of the school.

Aims:

1. To define the roles and responsibilities of school staff in protecting the safety and wellbeing of children.
2. To enable staff to identify the indicators of a child who may be in need of protection.
3. To enable staff to make a report of a child who may be in need of protection.

Implementation:

4. All staff will be provided with a copy of this policy at the first staff meeting of each year.
5. All staff will complete the online Mandatory Reporting training on an annual basis.
6. If a staff member has a significant concern for the wellbeing of a child they are encouraged to report their concerns to Department of Health and Human Services Child Protection or Child FIRST.
7. In cases where staff have concerns about a child, they should discuss their concerns with the principal.
8. Mandatory reporters must make a report as soon as practical if, in the course of practising their profession or carrying out their duties, they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection, having suffered or is likely to suffer physical injury or sexual abuse, and the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child. Teachers/Principals must make a report on each occasion on which he or she becomes aware of any further reasonable grounds for the belief.
9. It is the responsibility of individual teachers to report the belief.
10. The teacher must notify DHHS even if the Principal does not share the belief.

11. Another mandated reporter may report on the teacher's belief but the teacher must be satisfied that the report is made promptly and that all reasonable grounds have been reported.
12. A teacher can make a referral to Child FIRST when he or she has a significant concern for a child's wellbeing but does not believe that the child needs protection. The Principal should be informed of the details of the concern.
13. Staff are to follow the DET guidelines as to the correct procedure in making a report. These guidelines are available on the DET website:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/childprotection.aspx>

A summary of these guidelines include:

- a) Keeping comprehensive notes that are dated and include a description of the concern.
- b) Discussing their concerns with the principal but making their own assessment as to whether or not to make a report to DHS Child Protection.
- c) Advising the principal if they have made a report.

REFERENCE

1. "Protecting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People" (Department of Health and Human Services Child Protection, DET, Licensed Children's Services and Victorian Schools)
2. Child Protection – Mandatory Reporting, DET
3. Children, Youth and Families Act 2005

EVALUATION

This policy is to be reviewed triennially as part of the School Council's review cycle.

This policy was ratified by School Council 2015

Principal

School Council President

Date Ratified: 2015

Review Cycle Date: 2018

