



Cranbourne East Primary School

CHILD SAFE POLICY

Cranbourne East Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all students at the school. It will implement the Child Safe Standards to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students at the school and promote an organisational culture that manages the risk of child abuse and neglect.

Our School has developed policies and procedures that aim to keep children safe. The standards will provide a framework to identify gaps and improve policy and practices around child safety.

RATIONALE

On 26 November 2015, the Victorian Parliament passed the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2015 to introduce child safe standards into law. The standards aim to promote cultural change in the way organisations working with children manage the risk of child abuse and neglect.

The child safe standards are part of the Victorian Government's response to the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and other Non-Government Organisations. The Betrayal of Trust Report found that while the majority of children are safe in organisations and in the community, more work could be done to strengthen existing approaches to child safety.

The child safe standards aim to drive cultural change in organisations that provide services for children so that protecting children from abuse is embedded in everyday thinking and practice.

THE CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

To create and maintain a child safe organisation, an entity to which the standards apply must have:

Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements (See appendix 1)

Standard 2: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety (See Appendix 2: Our Commitment to Child Safety)

Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children (see Appendix 3)

Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel (See VIT and Working with Children Policies)

Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse (DET Mandatory Reporting policy which can be found at

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/childprotection.aspx>)

Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse (Appendix 4)

Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children (See our existing Student Engagement Policy)

CHILD SAFE DEFINITIONS

A full list of definitions for Ministerial Order No. 870 is available at www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes.

ETR Act The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (as amended from time to time).

Child A child enrolled as a student at the school under the age of 18.

Child-connected work Work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Child abuse includes

- Any act committed against a child involving a sexual offence; or
 - An offence under section 49B(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming); and
- The infliction, on a child, of
 - Physical violence; or
 - Serious emotional or psychological harm; and serious neglect of a child.

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.

Proprietor

In relation to a school, means the person who is ultimately responsible for the way the school is managed and conducted:

- In the case of a Government school, the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training in the case of a non-Government school, the proprietor of the school.

School environment

Any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- A campus of the school;
- Online school environments (including email and intranet systems); and
- Other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).

School governing authority

- The proprietor of a school, including a person authorised to act for or on behalf of the proprietor; or
- The governing body for a school (however described), as authorised by the proprietor of a school or the ETR Act or
- The principal, as authorised by the proprietor of a school, the school governing body, or the ETR Act.

Explanatory note: There are a wide variety of school governance arrangements. Depending on the way a school is constituted and operated, the governing body for a school may be the school board, the school council, or some other person or entity. The school governing authorities may share or assign responsibility for discharging the requirements imposed by this Order, in accordance with the school's internal governance arrangements.

School staff

In a Government school, an individual working in a school environment who is:

- Employed under Part 2.4 of the ETR Act in the government teaching service; or
- Employed under a contract of service by the council of the school under Part 2.3 of the ETR Act; or
- A volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary).

Appendix One:

Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety

SCHOOL GOVERNING AUTHORITY

The Primary school Council and leadership team will

- Communicate that they have **zero tolerance of child abuse** (in any form).
- Ensure child safety strategies are developed and enhanced through ongoing review of the effectiveness of practice.
- Oversee the implementation and improvement of child safety strategies.
- Communicate with the school community about the school's child safety strategies and their implementation.
- Report on child safety in the annual report.

SCHOOL STAFF (INCLUDES CONTRACTORS AND VOLUNTEERS)

Our school will:

- Promote awareness of child safety strategies and allocated roles and responsibilities.
- Conduct pre-employment reference checks that include checking for child safety.
- Check the identification for staff as part of recruitment.
- Ensure that staff have been registered through VIT, who conduct Criminal history checks, and confirm currency of Working with Children Check or Victorian Institute of Teaching registration.
- Obtain verified academic transcripts for staff as part of recruitment.
- Query gaps in employment history.
- Provide Induction in child safety for all staff and visitors.
- Train staff to detect inappropriate behaviour.
- Encourage staff to report inappropriate behaviour.
- Foster a culture of openness with approachable and supportive managers.

CHILDREN

- Students will be made aware of how to detect and report inappropriate behaviour.
- Students will be encouraged to report inappropriate behaviour.
- Students will be made aware of the key staff they can approach in relation to child safety.
- The school has child safety reporting procedures.
- The school provides counselling and other resources to support children.

ENVIRONMENT

- The school will have child safety strategies in place for all physical school environments that include: regularly reviewing the physical environment to ensure all risks are identified and managed, assessing new or changed physical environments for child safety risks, supervising or monitoring activities.
- The school has child safety strategies for its online environments (eg intranets, online learning systems, social media) including:
 - Clear boundaries of roles between staff and children that are proactive strategies to detect inappropriate behaviour such as online searches (Google, Facebook etc).
 - A Social Media policy which is promoted to all families and staff
- Visitors are appropriately screened, supervised and made aware of the school's child safety strategies.

Appendix Two:

Our commitment to child safety

Cranbourne East Primary School is committed to child safety.

- We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.
- We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently in accordance with our policies and procedures.
- We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.
- Our school is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.
- Our school has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.
- Our school is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.
- We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.
- We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

Our children

This policy is intended to empower children who are vital and active participants in our school. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance in our school, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:

- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

Our staff and volunteers

This policy guides our staff and volunteers on how to behave with children in our school.

All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct, which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children.

Training and supervision

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in our school understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our school culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents or carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect children from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

New employees and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand our school's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to this school's code of conduct to understand appropriate behaviour further). Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

Recruitment

We take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. We develop selection criteria and advertisements, which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. Our school understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

All people engaged in child-related work, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check. Please see the [Working with Children Check](#) website.

We carry out reference checks and use VIT to conduct police record checks to ensure that we are recruiting the right people. Police record checks, conducted via VIT are used only for the purposes of recruitment.

Fair procedures for personnel

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to personnel. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns, including investigation updates. All records are securely stored.

Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.

Legislative responsibilities

Our school takes our legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- All Victorian Teachers have a legal responsibility to report incidents where children's safety is at risk. Victorian Government School employees are expected to follow the DET Mandatory Reporting policy which can be found at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/childprotection.aspx>
- **Failure to disclose:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.
- **Failure to protect:** People of authority in our school will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.
- Any personnel who are mandatory reporters must comply with their duties.

Risk management

In Victoria, schools are required to protect children when a risk is identified (see information about failure to protect above). In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments, and online environments (for example, no staff or volunteer is to have contact with a child on social media unless it is part of an approved educational context; and staff are advised not to have ex-students as friends on social media within two years of the student leaving the school).

Allegations, concerns and complaints

Our school takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our staff and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

We work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place.

If an adult has a **reasonable belief** that an incident has occurred then they must report the incident. Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

- A child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)
- Behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed
- Someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it
- Observing suspicious behaviour.

An adult may make a report him/herself or may choose to ask a member of the school leadership or welfare team to make a report.

Regular review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following significant incidents if they occur. We will ensure that families and children have the opportunity to contribute. Where possible we do our best to work with local Aboriginal communities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.

Appendix Three:

Cranbourne East Primary School Child Safety Code of Conduct

The following child safety code of conduct clearly spells out the professional boundaries and acceptable and unacceptable adult and child relationships and behaviours. All staff members at our school and other adults who work at our school in a paid or voluntary capacity are expected to have read and to implement the following 'Child Safety Code of Conduct' at all times.

Principles which will guide an adult's behaviour in undertaking child-connected work:

- The adult/child relationship should be professional at all times
- An adult's response to a child's behaviour or circumstance should be commensurate with the child's age and vulnerability and the adult's responsibility for the care, safety and welfare of the child
- An adult should not be alone with a child unless there is line of sight to other adults
- An adult should not initiate or seek physical contact or contact with children outside school.

ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

Acceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers and school council members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- Adhering to the school's child safe policy and upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- Treating everyone in the school community with respect
- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety or the safety of another child.
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child's self-identification)

- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- Ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse to the school's leadership
- Understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the *Crimes Act 1958*
- Reporting any child safety concerns to the school's leadership
- If an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child or children are safe
- Reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offence by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.

Unacceptable behaviours

Staff and volunteers must not:

- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- Develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- Exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps)
- Put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- Use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- Discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- Have contact with a child or their family outside of school without the school's leadership knowledge or consent or the school council's approval (for example, unauthorised after hours tutoring, private instrumental or other lessons or sport coaching). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate.
- Have any online contact with a child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc) or their family (unless necessary eg by providing families with e-newsletters or assisting students with their school work)
- Use any personal communication channels or device such as a personal email account
- Exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses
- Photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- Work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Consume alcohol or drugs at school or at school events in the presence of children.

MANDATORY REPORTING POLICY

Implementation

- All members of the Teaching Service are mandated by law to report signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, and neglect.
- 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 Student Welfare Officer (AP), or in her absence, another Assistant Principal or the Principal.
- The Student Welfare Officer 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 sexual or physical abuse has taken place a “Mandatory Reporting Information Sheet” available from the Student Welfare Officer or in her absence, an Assistant Principal or the Principal must be completed and filed in the Principal’s office.
- The teacher and/or the Principal class officer (or his nominee) will contact the Department of Human Services by telephone as soon as possible to make an official notification on:

Southern Metropolitan Intake Unit (Child Protection) 1300 655 795 or after school hours crisis line 131278. Dandenong DHS 8765 5444

- Members of the Department of Health and Human Services, 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 nominee. Children will be advised of their right to have a supportive adult present during interviews. It is the responsibility of the Child Protection Service to advise the parents or caregivers of the interview at the earliest possible opportunity.
- All “Mandatory Reporting Information Sheets” remain filed in the Principal’s office.
- All reports, information sheets and subsequent discussions and information are to be dated, recorded and remain strictly confidential.
- All incidents are 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.

When Do You Report?

By law, you must report when you have formed a belief based on REASONABLE GROUNDS that there has been a case of child abuse. You have reasonable grounds to notify when:

- A child tells you they have been abused.
- Someone else, such as a sibling, relative, friend or acquaintance, tells you that a child has been or is being abused.
- A child tells you that they know someone who is being abused (the child could be referring to themselves). Your own observations of the child’s physical or emotional condition or behaviour lead you to suspect that the child has suffered abuse.
- Other circumstances lead you to suspect that a child had been abused.

You do not have to prove that abuse occurred to report

The law does not require proof. The law requires that you report suspected abuse.

The Status of the Notifier

Your identity as a notifier will remain confidential under the Children and Young Persons Act, unless:

- You choose to inform the child and/or family of the notification yourself
- You consent in writing to your identity being disclosed

- The court decides it needs this information in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child
- The court decides in the interests of justice, it requires that the evidence be given.

Support for and assistance to staff is ensured throughout this process.

Reporting criminal child sexual abuse - failure to disclose offence

Any staff member who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 must disclose 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.

The offence applies to **all adults** in Victoria, not just professionals who work with children. To read more information about the 'failure to disclose' offence, see: [Department of Justice and Regulation – Failure to disclose offence](#)

Duty of care

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.

In the case of a child who may be in need of protection or therapeutic treatment, or where there are significant concerns about the wellbeing of a child, school staff can discharge this duty of care by taking action, which includes the following:

- Reporting their concerns to the DHHS Child Protection or another appropriate agency (as identified above)
- Notifying the principal or a member of the school leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns.

Protecting children from the risk of sexual abuse - failure to protect offence

Any staff member in a position of authority, who becomes aware that an adult associated with their organisation (such as an employee, contractor, volunteer or visitor) poses a risk of sexual abuse to a child under the care, authority or supervision of the organisation, must take all reasonable steps to remove or reduce that risk. This may include, for example, removing the adult from child-related work pending investigation. If a staff member in a position of authority fails to take reasonable steps in these circumstances, this may amount to a criminal offence.

The offence applies only to **adults in a position of authority** within an organisation, including Principals, senior school staff, regional directors and other senior managers.

FORMING A 'REASONABLE BELIEF'

A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof but is more than mere rumour or speculation.

A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. For example, a 'reasonable belief' might be formed if:

- A child states that they have been physically or sexually abused
- A child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves)
- Someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused

- Professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused
- Signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused.

Types of child abuse and indicators of harm

Child abuse can have a significant effect on a child's physical or emotional health, development and wellbeing.

Types of child abuse include:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Medical neglect
- Family violence
- Human trafficking (including forced marriage)
- Sexual exploitation (including pornography and prostitution).

A report should be made to DHHS Child Protection in circumstances where, for example:

- The child is engaging in risk-taking behaviour
- Female genital mutilation has occurred, or there is a risk of it occurring
- There is a risk to an unborn child
- A child or young person is exhibiting sexually-abusive behaviours
- There are indications that a child is being groomed. For information see: [Department of Justice and Regulation – Grooming offence.](#)

There are many indicators of child abuse and neglect. The presence of a single indicator, or even several indicators, does not prove that abuse or neglect has occurred. However, the repeated occurrence of an indicator, or the occurrence of several indicators together, should alert teachers to the possibility of child abuse and neglect.

When to Report

The following table sets out when to report a concern that a child or a young person has been abused, or is in need of protection.

| Type of Reporting | By Whom | To Whom |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Mandatory Reporting - DHHS Child Protection</p> <p>Mandatory reporters must make a report as soon as practicable if, in the course of practising their profession or carrying out their duties, they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection, as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse, and the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.</p> | <p><i>Mandatory reporters</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teachers registered to teach or who have permission to teach pursuant to the <i>Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)</i> ▪ Principals of government and non-government schools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DHHS Child Protection |

- Registered medical practitioners
- Nurses
- All members of the police force

Child in need of protection

Any person may make a report if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection for any of the following reasons:

- The child has been abandoned and there is no other suitable person who is willing and able to care for the child.
- The child's parents are dead or incapacitated and there is no other suitable person who is willing and able to care for the child.
- The child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of physical injury and the parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.
- The child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of sexual abuse and their parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.
- The child has suffered or is likely to suffer emotional or psychological harm and the parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.
- The child's physical development or health has been, or is likely to be significantly harmed and the parents are unable or unwilling to provide basic care, or effective medical or other remedial care.

- DHHS Child Protection
- Victoria Police

- Any person

Child displaying sexually abusive behaviours and in need of therapeutic treatment

Any person may make a report if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child who is 10 years of age or over, but under 15 years of age, is in need of therapeutic treatment because he or she has exhibited sexually-abusive behaviours.

- Any person

- DHHS Child Protection

Significant concerns about wellbeing of a child

Any person may make a report if they have significant concerns for the wellbeing of a child.

- Any person

- DHHS Child Protection
- Child FIRST

Reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16.

Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual

offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 must report that information to police. It is a criminal offence not to make a report, except in the following circumstances:

- The victim is 16 years of age or older and does not have an intellectual disability that limits his/her capacity to make an informed decision; and he/she does not want the information reported to the police
- The victim has disclosed the information in confidence in the course of a therapeutic relationship with you as a registered medical practitioner or counsellor.
- The victim turned 16 years of age before 27 October 2014.

Reasonable excuses for failing to comply with the requirement include:

- A reasonable belief that the information has already been reported to police or DHHS Child Protection disclosing all of the information
- A reasonable fear that the disclosure will place someone (other than the alleged perpetrator) at risk of harm

MAKING A REPORT

This table describes how to make a mandatory report, to report child abuse or child protection concerns.

Step Description

In case of emergency or if a child is in immediate danger contact Triple Zero (000) or the local police station.

Alternatively, to report concerns about the immediate safety of a child within their family unit to DHHS Child Protection, call the Child Protection Crisis Line on 13 12 78 (24 hours 7 days, toll free). Keep comprehensive notes that are dated and include the following information:

- Information that has led to concerns about the child's safety (e.g. physical injuries, student behaviour)
- The source of this information (e.g. observation of behaviour, report from child or another person)
- The actions taken as a result of the concerns (e.g. consultation with principal, report to DHHS Child Protection etc.).

Discuss any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of students with the principal or a member of the school leadership team. The individual staff member should then make their own assessment about whether they should make a report about the child or young person and to whom the report should be made. Gather the relevant information necessary to make the report. This should include the following information:

- Full name, date of birth, and residential address of the child or young person
- The details of the concerns and the reasons for those concerns
- The individual staff member's involvement with the child and young person

- Details of any other agencies who may be involved with the child or young person, if known.

Make a report to the relevant agency

To report concerns that are life threatening phone 000 or the local police station. To find the nearest Victoria Police

Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team contact your local police station or [click here](#))

To report concerns about the immediate safety of a child within their family unit to DHS Child Protection, call the Child Protection Crisis Line on 13 12 78 (24 hours 7 days, toll free)

To report concerns to DHHS Child Protection, contact your local child protection office.

Make a written record of the report, which includes the following information:

- The date and time of the report and a summary of what was reported
- The name and position of the person who made the report and the person who received the report.

Notify relevant school staff and/or Department staff of a report to DHHS Child Protection or Child FIRST. For Victorian government schools, the allegations must be reported to the:

- Principal or member of the school leadership team
- Department's Security Services Unit on (03) 9589 6266
- Relevant Regional Office
- Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit on (03) 9637 2934 or (03) 9637 2487.

In the case of international students, the principal must notify the International Education Division on (03) 9637 2990 to ensure that appropriate support is arranged for the student.

In the case of Koorie students, the principal must notify the Regional Office to ensure that the regional Koorie Education Support Officer can arrange appropriate support for the student.

Potential consequences of making a report

This table describes the potential consequences of making a report.

| Potential Consequence | Description |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Confidentiality | <p>The identity of a reporter must remain confidential unless:</p> <p>The reporter chooses to inform the child, young person or parent of the report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The reporter consents in writing to their identity being disclosed. ▪ A Court or Tribunal decides that it necessary for the identity of the reporter to be disclosed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child. ▪ A Court or Tribunal decides that, in the interests of justice, the reporter is required to provide evidence. |
| Professional Protection | <p>If a report is made in good faith:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It does not constitute unprofessional conduct or a breach of professional ethics on the part of the reporter. ▪ The reporter cannot be held legally liable in respect of the report. |

- DHHS Child Protection and/or Victoria Police may conduct interviews of children and young people at the school without the parent's knowledge or consent.
- Interviewing children and young people at school should only occur in exceptional circumstances and if it is in the best interests of the child to proceed in this manner.
- DHHS Child Protection and/or Victoria Police will notify the principal or a member of the leadership team of their intention to interview the child or young person on the school premises.
- When officers from DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police come to the school premises, the principal or a member of the leadership team should request to see identification before permitting them to have access to the child or young person.
- When a child or young person is being interviewed by DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police, the school staff must arrange to have a supportive adult present with the child or young person.

For more information on these requests and school responsibilities, see: [Police and DHHS Interviews](#)

Interviews

The roles and responsibilities of staff members in supporting children who are involved with DHHS Child Protection may include the following:

Support for the child or young person

- Acting as a support person for the child or young person
- Attending DHHS Child Protection case planning meetings
- Observing and monitoring the child's behaviour
- Liaising with professionals.

DHHS Child Protection and/or Child FIRST and/or Victoria Police may request information about the child or family for the purpose of investigating a report and assessing the risk to the child or young person.

Requests for Information

In certain circumstances, DHHS Child Protection can also direct school staff and Department staff to provide information or documents about the protection or development of the child. Such directions should be in writing and only be made by authorised persons within DHHS Child Protection. For more information see: [Requests for Information About Students](#)

Witness Summons

If DHHS Child Protection makes a Protection Application in the Children's Court of Victoria, any party to the application may issue a Witness Summons to produce documents and/or give evidence in the Proceedings, see: [Subpoenas and Witness Summonses](#)

Counselling assistance for former students

In certain circumstances, the Department offers Counselling Assistance Payments to former students who report having been sexually abused while attending, or in connection with, a Victorian government school.

Schools that receive a report of sexual abuse from a former student should contact the Department's Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit on (03) 9637 2934.

MANDATORY REPORTING INFORMATION SHEET

The teacher and/or the Principal class officer (or his/her nominee) will contact the Department of Human Services by telephone as soon as possible to make an official notification on:

Southern Metropolitan Intake Unit 1300 655 795 or after school hours crisis line 131278

The following information will be required when making a notification

1. Name of the notifier:
2. Relationship to the child:
3. Name of the child: Year level:
4. Date of birth: Current age:
5. Address:
 - Indicators of harm: the reason for believing that the injury or behaviour is the result of abuse or neglect.
 - Reason for reporting: the reasons the call is being made at this point in time.
 - Safety assessment: assessment of the immediate danger to the child or children.
 - Description: description of the injury or behaviour observed.
 - Child's whereabouts: the current whereabouts of the child or young person.
 - Other services: knowledge of other services involved with family.
 - Family information: any other information about the family.
 - Cultural characteristics: any specific cultural or other details which will help the child, for example, interpreter or disability needs.

A notification should still be made, even if the notifier does not have all the necessary information.

Cranbourne East Primary School acknowledges that Child protection is a shared responsibility between all members of the community. The safety and wellbeing of our students form a central and fundamental responsibility of our School and compliments our vision and values of: Respect, Relationships, Resilience, Responsibility and Rigour.

We are committed to Zero tolerance of child abuse, including physical violence, sexual offences, serious emotional or psychological abuse and serious neglect. It is our moral and legal responsibility to create a nurturing school environment where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and they are safe and feel safe. All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse.

Advertising of employment positions on Recruitment On-line will include reference to our Child Safe Standards and Code of Conduct; *Victorian Government Schools are child safe environments.*

Our school actively promotes the safety and wellbeing of all students, and all school staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in the school environment, in accordance with their legal obligations including child safe standards. All schools including Cranbourne East Primary School have a Child Safety Code of Conduct consistent with the Department's exemplar available at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/protect/Pages/chilsafestandards.aspx>

Cranbourne East Primary School encourages applications from Aboriginal peoples and those from a culturally or linguistically diverse background in accordance with DET Policy.