Mandatory Reporting
POLICY

Rationale
All students have a right to feel safe and to be safe. As teachers, we have a legal and moral responsibility to respond to serious incidences involving abuse and neglect of the students with whom we have contact, and to report instances that we believe involve physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect.

Aim
- To ensure that a student’s right to be safe is maintained and each student is protected against physical abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

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 reporting responsibilities annually.
- All concerns must be reported immediately to the Principal, or in his/her absence, the Assistant Principal.
- The Principal 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 Principal) must be completed and filed in the Principal’s office.
- The teacher and/or the Principal must contact the Department of Human Services by telephone as soon as possible to make an official notification. The Department can be contacted on (03) 9479 6222 or after hours on the After School Hours Crisis Line on 131 278.
- Members of the Department of Human Services, or associated support or intervention services that visit the school following a notification, will interview staff and students only in the presence of the Principal or his/her nominee.
- All ‘Mandatory Reporting Information Sheets’ are to remain filed in the Principal’s office.
- All reports, information sheets and subsequent discussions and information are to be 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.
- Students, who disclose to staff a desire to harm themselves or others, must be reported by staff to the Principal.
References

- Executive Memo 2002/010 – Child Protection
- Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide
- Circular 298/2005 – Mandatory Reporting

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every three (3) years or as deemed necessary.