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.

AIMS:
All members of the Teaching Service are mandated by law to report signs of physical and/or sexual abuse and neglect to the Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Protection. Staff should make a report to Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Protection when there is a reasonable belief that a student is in need of protection from harm. Staff in consultation with principal class should make a referral to Child First when there is a significant concern for a student’s wellbeing but there is no belief the student needs protection.

IMPLEMENTATION:
- New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures as part of the induction process
- Staff will be reminded of mandatory responsibilities annually and will complete all departmental Mandatory Reporting modules
- If a belief is formed that a student is in need of protection, the teacher/Principal class officer will contact the Department of Human Services as soon as possible to make an official notification on:
  DHS Number: 1300664977
- Proof is not required to form a belief. It is not the responsibility of teachers or educational personnel to determine if child abuse or neglect exists: that is the responsibility of DHS or the police
- Mandated staff who fail to report a disclosable incident are liable by law and may face legal ramifications
- If teachers are unsure whether or not to make a report they should discuss their concerns with the Principal or ring DHS for advice
- 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
- If members of the Department of Human Services, or associated support or intervention services visit the school following a notification, they will interview staff and student/s only in the presence of a Principal class member or his/her nominee
- Teachers must respect confidentiality when dealing with a case of child abuse and neglect and must only discuss identity and case details with those with bona fide involvement in the management of the situation
- Teachers should seek parental/caregiver consent before sharing information where this is possible and where this does not place the student at risk
- Teachers should only share information as authorised by the Children Youth and Families Act 2005 where a student is subject to Child Protection Investigation, Child Protection Intervention or a Children’s Court Protection Order. In other cases they should abide by the Information Privacy Act 2000
- Staff should monitor all incidents. Any subsequent signs or indications of abuse must also be reported
- While only mandated by law to report incidents of neglect and physical and sexual abuse; teachers are also encouraged to report incidents of emotional abuse or neglect to the Principal
- The Principal/teacher should keep a record of all discussions about a student with whom there is a concern
- A student of concern will have an indication or reference on school records/student cumulative file and an end of year handover sheet for the next year’s teacher
- Where a disclosure of an alleged sexual assault is made to a staff member, the staff member must inform the Principal as soon as possible on the same day. Principals should follow the required Departmental procedures for responding to allegations of student sexual assault.

Ratified by School Council Feb 16 2016
Review date Feb 16 2017
EVALUATION:
This policy shall be reviewed as part of the ongoing policy and process review

REFERENCE:
DET Mandatory Reporting Policy

Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Protection

Child First

Children’s Court Protection Order

Children Youth and Families Act 2005

DET Child Protection Protocol

Privacy Act 2000

Protecting the safety of children and young people Mandatory Reporting Professional Learning module

APPENDICES:
Mandatory Reporting Information Sheet
Whittlesea Network Managing critical incidents flow chart
### Mandatory Reporting Information Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher making the report:</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>Time:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact Name at DHS:</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Student:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Year Level:</th>
<th>DOB:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Siblings:</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Concern:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Signature:</th>
<th>Principal Signature:</th>
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