MANDATORY REPORTING

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BACKGROUND:

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

AIMS:

To ensure that children’s’ rights to be safe are maintained and each child is protected against physical and sexual abuse, and neglect.

REPORTING:

1. All members of the Teaching Service are mandated by law to report signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, and neglect.
2. If you believe in good faith that a child is in need of protection, then you must make a report to Child Protection without delay (See contact details below). Seeking assistance or advice should not hold-up the reporting process. Furthermore, you should attempt to file the report on the same day as the belief is formed.
3. If you have some general concerns for the wellbeing of the child but have assessed that the child is not at immediate risk of harm, you can make a referral to Child FIRST.
4. You do not have to be able to prove that the child has been abused to notify The Department of Human Services.
5. It is your responsibility to report your belief – it is not the responsibility of your supervisor, principal, senior, or boss.
6. If the Principal does not share your belief that a child or young person is in need of protection, you must still notify The Department of Human Services of your belief. However, it is recommended that you inform the Principal that you have made a report.
7. If you are one of a group of mandated professional who share the belief, based on reasonable grounds, that a child or young person is in need of protection from physical or sexual abuse, then only one mandated person needs to make the report. However, you must be satisfied that the report is made promptly and that all of the reasonable grounds are included in the notification.
8. You are not legally required to notify Child First or Child Protection if you form a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection in your private life or when you are working in a capacity that is not directly related to the professional affiliation under which you are mandated, however such reports can be made voluntarily.
9. Details of a mandatory report should remain confidential.
1. New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures as part of their induction procedure.
2. Staff will be reminded of mandatory responsibilities annually.
3. The Principal will keep a record of all discussions about a student with whom there is a concern.
4. If a belief has been formed by a staff member that sexual or physical abuse has taken place, a written report must be completed, with a copy given to the principal. All concerns must be reported immediately to the principal, however note point 6. Above.
5. Members of the Department of 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 the Principal or Principal’s delegate.
6. All documentation will remain on file.
7. All reports, information sheets and subsequent discussions and information are to be recorded and remain strictly confidential.
8. All incidents to be monitored, and any subsequent signs or indications of abuse are also to be reported.
9. See flowchart and emergency numbers below – we are in the Hume region: