

CHILD SAFETY AND MANDATORY REPORTING POLICY

Policy Statement

Kurnai College is committed to child safety and providing a safe, caring environment and culture which enables positive relationships to be formed amongst all students and staff and which encourages self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching.

Students and staff at the FLO and KYYP will have individual needs and requirements regarding this policy and these will be included as they arise.

This policy applies to all school staff, volunteers and school community members. It also applies to all staff and students engaged in any school and school council events, activities and services such as out of hours tutoring, excursions, camps etc.

A clear policy on Child Safety and Mandatory Reporting will inform the Kurnai College community that Child Safety is of paramount importance in the College and that Child Safety concerns will take priority in all school based activities.

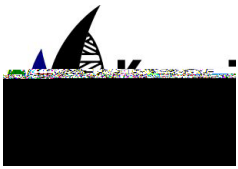
Kurnai College understands the important role our school plays in protecting children from abuse in all its forms including:

- * Physical abuse
- * Sexual abuse (including sexual exploitation)
- * Family violence
- * Emotional abuse
- * Neglect (including medical neglect)
- * Grooming

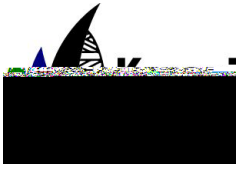
Definition Of Child Abuse.

For the purpose of this policy Child Abuse relates to

- x Any act committed against a child involving a sexual offence or an offence of grooming for the purposes of sex.
- x



College Principal will manage the alternative process. NB. If the College Principal's involvement is not

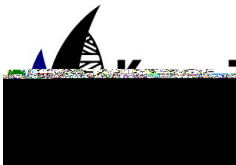


Implementation:

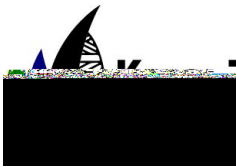
1. A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behavior with students

All Kurnai College staff, volunteers and school council board members are responsible for supporting the safety of students by:

- x Adhering to the Kurnai College Child Safe Policy and upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- x Taking all reasonable steps to protect students from abuse
- x



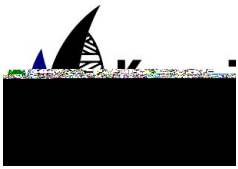
- x Have personal contact with a student or their family outside of school without the school's leadership's knowledge and/or consent or the school's governing authority's approval (unauthorized afterhours tutoring, private lessons, sports coaching.etc)



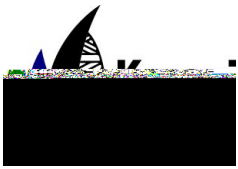
x If a student is connected to any abuse allegations every step will be taken to remove the student from harm immediately and will if deemed necessary be will be offered the services of the Campus Welfare and/or counselling team.

4. Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.

x Staff will undertake a risk assessment



- o Be clear, honest and realistic about the boundaries of a discussion and what can change.
 - o Give adequate time to consult and make sure the venue is appropriate.
 - o Listen to what you are being told by children they may have a very different view to you or what you expect acknowledge, value and take seriously the views put forward by children. Ensure adults involved are skilful in facilitating the participation of children.
 - o Be clear if the discussion will be confidential or if the outcomes will be made public.
 - o Monitor the impact your consultation may have had on the children involved.
 - o Ensure you have procedures in place to provide support to any child who may be distressed as a result of their involvement or disclosure of concerns.
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- x All staff will receive mandatory training on how to recognize and report abuse
 - x All staff to be made aware that protecting children and young people is our responsibility.
 - x Kurnai College will raise awareness in the school community about the rights of children. Through methods such as newsletters, website, posters and audience specific fact sheets.



A person may form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection after becoming aware that a child or young person's health, safety or wellbeing is at risk and the child's parents are unwilling or unable to protect the child.

There may be reasonable grounds for forming such a belief if:

- A child or young person states that they have been physically or sexually abused
- A child or young person states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves)
- Someone who knows the child or young person states that the child or young person has been physically or sexually abused
- A child shows signs of being physically or sexually abused.
- The staff member is aware of persistent family violence or parental substance misuse, psychiatric illness or intellectual disability that is impacting on the child or young person's safety, stability or development
- The staff member observes signs or indicators of abuse, including accidental or unexplained injury, persistent neglect, poor care or lack of appropriate supervision
- A child's actions or behaviour may place them at risk of significant harm and the child's parents are unwilling or unable to protect the child.

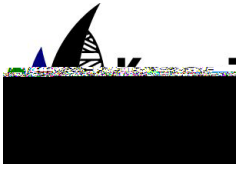
*Refer to Staff Registers Policy for staff currently trained.

Failure to report

A failure by mandated professionals and staff members to report a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection from significant harm as a result of physical or sexual abuse may result in the person being prosecuted and a court imposing a fine under the CYFA.

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

- f* The child has been abandoned and there is no other suitable person who is willing and able to care for the child.
- f* 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.
- f* 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.
- f* 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.
- f* The child has suffered or is likely to suffer emotional or psychological harm and the parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.
- f* 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



APPENDIX B MAKING A REPORT

Making a report to Child Protection

The CYFA allows for two types of reports to be made in relation to significant concerns for the safety or wellbeing of a child: a report to Child Protection or a referral to Orange Door

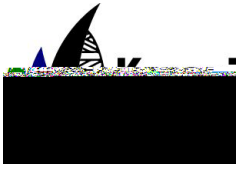
A report to Child Protection should be considered if, after taking into account all of the available information, the staff member forms a view that the child or young person is in need of protection because:

- the harm or risk of harm has a serious impact on the child's immediate safety, stability or development
- the harm or risk of harm is persistent and entrenched and is likely to have a serious impact on the child's safety, stability or development
- the child's parents cannot or will not protect the child or young person from harm.

Where during the course of carrying out their normal duties, a school staff member forms the belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection, the staff member must make a report to Child Protection regarding this belief and the reasonable grounds for it as soon as practicable.

Staff members may form a professional judgement or belief, in the course of undertaking their professional duties based on:

- warning signs or indicators of harm that have been observed or inferred from information



Teachers are encouraged to discuss any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of students with the principal or a member of the school leadership team. If a principal or member of the leadership team does not wish to make a mandatory report, this does not discharge the teacher's obligation to do so if they have formed a reasonable belief that abuse may have occurred. If the teacher's concerns continue, even after consultation with the principal or member of the leadership team, that teacher is still legally obliged to make a mandatory report of their concerns.

Information about the identity of a person making a report to Child Protection must be kept confidential unless the reporter consents to the disclosure of their identity. If the staff member wishes to remain anonymous, this information should be conveyed at the time that the reporter makes the mandatory report.

The role of school staff

School staff have a duty of care to protect and preserve the safety, health and wellbeing of children and young people in their care and staff must always act in the best interests of those children and young people. If a staff member has any concerns regarding the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person it is important to take immediate action.

Note: The role of investigating an allegation of child abuse rests solely with Child Protection and/or Victoria Police.

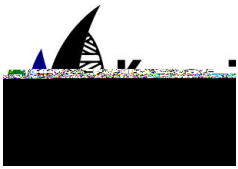
The roles and responsibilities of staff in supporting children and young people who are involved with Child Protection may include acting as a support person for students, attending Child Protection case plan meetings, observing and monitoring students' behaviour, and liaising with professionals.

Confidentiality

Staff must respect confidentiality when dealing with a case of suspected child abuse and neglect, and may discuss case details and the identity of the child or the young person and their family only with those involved in managing the situation.

When a child or young person has moved to another school, professional judgement should be exercised as to what information needs to be passed on. This will be guided by usual procedures for passing on information about a child's general wellbeing or special needs, and the role of the school in any ongoing care plans.

Interviews at Victorian schools



A staff member may be identified as a support person for the child or young person during the interview. Prior to the commencement of the interview, the Child Protection practitioner should always authorise the staff member to receive information regarding Child Protection's investigation.

This may occur verbally or in writing using the relevant Child Protection proforma.

Independent persons must refrain from providing their opinions or accounts of events during interviews. A principal or their delegate may act as an independent person when the child or young person is to be interviewed, unless they believe that doing so create a conflict of interest

Advising parents, carers or guardians

Staff do not require the permission of parents, carers or guardians to make a report to Child Protection, nor are they required to tell parents, carers or guardians that they have done so.

It is the responsibility of Child Protection to advise the parents, carers or guardians of the interview at the earliest possible opportunity. This should occur either before, or by the time the child arrives home

Ensuring that a Child Protection interview takes place

The school does not have the power to prevent parents, carers or guardians from removing their children from the school and should not attempt to prevent the parents, carers or guardians from collecting the child. If a parent/carer or guardian removes a child before a planned interview has taken place, the principal and/or their nominee should contact Child Protection or Victoria Police immediately.

Staff Training

Staff will be informed of Mandatory Reporting requirements as part of their initial induction to the school and will be provided with supporting documentation in their staff handbook.

Updates will take place annually as part of the Performance and Development/Staff meeting rotation.

References:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/default.aspx>

<https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/childprotection>

<https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/reportingchild-abuse>

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/childprotecPn.ecvn3px>

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