

## Rationale

Every Child has the right to a full and productive life. Clyde Grammar is committed to the welfare, safety and protection of all students and has a zero tolerance for child abuse. The school will provide a positive environment for all students that builds confidence, friendship, security and happiness, irrespective of the student's family circumstances or background.

All employees at Clyde Grammar have important obligations in the prevention and reporting of child abuse and neglect. All teachers at Clyde Grammar have a legal responsibility in the prevention and reporting of child abuse and neglect.

## Aims

- To reinforce Clyde Grammar's zero tolerance for child abuse.
- To provide staff and other members of the school community with clear expectations for appropriate behaviour. Everyone within the school community should be aware of what constitutes child abuse, alert to signs and evidence of abuse and neglect, and aware of their reporting responsibilities.
- To ensure that action is taken to protect students from risks, and immediate action is taken to ensure the safety of students.
- To ensure that all mandatory reporters are appropriately and regularly trained with respect to their responsibilities.
- To ensure that reports are filed with the Department of Health & Human Services ("DHHS") by mandatory reporters for all reasonable allegations of child abuse.
- Clyde Grammar's reporting procedures for mandatory reporters will be kept up to date.
- To ensure that ongoing support and assistance is provided to students who have been abused, and that confidentiality is maintained with respect to all students and their case details, with information restricted to only those managing the situation.

## Definition of Child Abuse

Child abuse constitutes any act committed against a child involving:

- Physical violence;
- Sexual offenses;
- Serious emotional or psychological abuse; and/or
- Serious neglect.

## Implementation

Clyde Grammar will adopt a three-phase approach to child protection and mandatory reporting:

### A. Education

- On commencement of their employment, all staff will receive mandatory training relating to identifying child abuse, forming a belief that a child is at risk, and reporting obligations and procedures. To ensure all staff are up to date and familiar with their reporting obligations, this training will be run annually, with attendance required for all staff members. Training will include face-to-face professional learning and an online e-learning program.

- Any staff who miss the initial or annual training, or are unsure of their obligation, must contact the Principal.
- Community awareness programs will be conducted relating to child abuse, its characteristics, and the school's programs and response.
- Students will be educated through the school's Pastoral Care program, on unacceptable behaviour towards them and the importance of, and methods for, disclosing unsafe behaviour to appropriate staff.

## B. Intervention – Reporting Obligations and Procedures

### 1. Mandatory Reporting Legislation

- Mandatory reporters are defined as:
  - Teachers registered to teach or who have permission to teach pursuant to the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic);
  - Principals of Government and Non-Government Schools
  - Registered Medical Practitioners;
  - Nurses;
  - All members of the Police Force.
- All mandatory reporters and non-mandated staff members whom, in the course of carrying out their duties, form a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection from physical harm or sexual abuse, and that the child's parents are unwilling or unable to protect the child, must report that belief to the Department of Health & Human Services Child Protection Division as soon as possible after forming the belief.
- Reasonable excuses for failing to comply with the requirement include:
  - A reasonable belief that the information has already been reported to the Police or Department of Health and Human Services 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.

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**Evaluation:**

This policy is to be reviewed every three years, or as incidents arise.

Last review: April 2020

Next review required before April 2023.