



Mount Erin College

Mandatory Reporting Policy

Child Safe Standards

Mount Erin College is a Child Safe School. Our College is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. We value all students as individuals and their diversity. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision making.

Mount Erin College is committed to providing a Child Safe environment where children and young people are valued and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.

Our College takes a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to Child Safety to ensure that the safety of children is promoted, child abuse is prevented and allegations of child abuse are properly responded to. Mount Erin College has zero tolerance for child abuse.

RATIONALE:

As a school staff member you play a critical role in protecting children in your care. The information below applies to all employees, contractors, and service providers and includes specific advice on how to create a Child Safe environment, identify and report signs of abuse and what your Mandatory Reporting requirements are.

PURPOSE

To ensure school staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and are able to:

- understand their various legal obligations to report and take other reasonable steps to discharge the duty of care that may be owed to the child or young person
- identify indicators that a child or young person has been, is being, or is at risk of being abused
- make a report about a child or young person who has been, is being, or is at risk of being abused.

For information on how to make a report, see: [Child Protection - Making a Report](#)

To support the guidelines of the Mandatory Reporting Policy.

Mount Erin College and its staff have as a core responsibility, the health, safety and wellbeing of all students attending the school. There are times when it is disclosed that a student attending the College has been (or could have been) sexually or physically abused.

The purpose of this Policy is to outline when Mandatory Reporting needs to occur and what processes the College will follow when this need arises.

THE CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Protecting children and young people from abuse is our responsibility.

The paramount responsibility of all staff at Mount Erin College is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students.

The Victorian Government is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. As part of the Victorian Government's commitment to implementing the recommendations of the Betrayal of Trust Report, which found that more must be done to prevent and respond to child abuse in our community, there is a new regulatory landscape surrounding child safety, underpinned by the new Child Safe Standards.

The Child Safe Standards are compulsory minimum standards for all Victorian early childhood services and schools, to ensure they are well prepared to protect children from abuse and neglect.

These web pages have been developed from the Protect Guidance which has been developed to assist schools to fulfil their obligations under Clause 11 of Ministerial Order 870. For more information, see:

- [Child Safe Standards - Creating a Safe Environment](#)

POLICY STATEMENT

Teachers and Education Support staff are **Mandated** to report ALL cases where they believe that sexual and physical child abuse may have occurred.

It is Department and College Policy that all staff have completed Mandatory Reporting Training according to Department Guidelines.

Staff members are mandated to report two types of abuse to Department of Human Services.

1. Physical abuse, which involves any non-accidental injury to a child by a parent or caregiver. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures.
2. Sexual abuse, which occurs when an adult or someone bigger and/or older than the child uses power or authority over the child to involve the child in sexual activity.

Staff members may wish to consult with a member of the Principal Class or one of the Student Services Team, when forming your reasonable belief in relation to the possible abuse.

Teachers and Education Support staff have the responsibility to act on a reasonable belief and report it to Department of Human Services if they have grounds to suspect abuse in the following circumstances:

- A child tells them she/he has been sexually or physically abused;
- Someone else informs them that he/she believes a child has been physically or sexually abused;
- They observe signs of physical abuse;
- Their observation of a child's behaviour leads you to suspect that a child may have been physically or sexually abused.

If a member of staff is of the opinion that a child is being abused then he/she should report this to a member of the Principal Class team or the Student Services Team or a Sub School Leader who will then contact Human Services and make a Report.

For more specific details regarding Mandatory Reporting requirements please refer to the Mount Erin College Child Safe Reporting Policy which is available on the College website www.mounterin.vic.edu.au

Once this report has been made the Principal or the Principal's Nominee will then determine whether others within the school such as, Sub School Leaders, Year Level Coordinators, Home Group teachers or member of the Student Services Team, should be informed, keeping in mind that at this stage the Report has been made on the grounds of reasonable belief but has not been investigated by the relevant government agency.

A referral to Child FIRST should be considered, if, after consideration of the available information a teacher is of the opinion that the immediate safety of the child is not compromised and the concerns currently have a low to moderate impact on the child.

This may include the following scenarios:

- Significant parent problems that may be affecting the child's development
- Family conflict, including family breakdown
- Families under pressure due to a family member's physical or mental illness, substance abuse, disability or bereavement
- Young isolated and/or unsupported families
- Significant social or economic disadvantage that may adversely impact on a child's care or development
- Clear signs of parental neglect through student appearance and demeanour

The content in the Protect Guidance below is for all school staff in all Victorian schools including non-government schools.

Mount Erin College staff are encouraged to refer to the following additional information for guidance related to enacting Mandatory Reporting requirements and Child Safe Standards.

These web pages have been developed by the Department of Education and Training and are based on the Protect Guidance which has been developed to assist schools to fulfil their obligations under Clause 11 of Ministerial Order 870. For more information, see:

-  [Ministerial Order 870 - Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools](#)
- [Child Safe Standards - Creating a Safe Environment](#)

For information on how to make a report, see: [Child Protection - Making a Report](#)

For guidance on identifying and responding to all forms of suspected abuse see:

-  [Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian Schools](#)
-  [Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian Schools](#)
-  [Four Critical Actions for schools](#)
-  [Four Critical Actions for schools](#)
-  [Recording your actions: responding to suspected child abuse \(pdf - 250.74kb\)](#)
-  [Recording your actions: responding to suspected child abuse](#)

For guidance on suspected sexual offending by students, see:

-  [Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
-  [Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
-  [Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending \(Word version\)](#)

REVIEW CYCLE

This Policy was last updated in December 2018 and is scheduled for review in December 2020.

This Policy will be reviewed in order that it is consistent with Child Safe Standards.