

# Child Safety Standards

## **Ministerial Order (870): Child Safe Standards - Managing the risk of child abuse**

Preventing child abuse needs to be embedded into our thinking, attitudes and practices. Noble Park Secondary College is committed to child safety and strives for an organisational culture that protects children from abuse and allows them to flourish.

Child protection is a **shared responsibility** between all employees, workers, contractors, associates, and members of the Noble Park Secondary College parent / carer community. The safety and wellbeing of our students forms a central and fundamental responsibility of our College and compliments our vision and values of: Respect, Excellence, Teamwork, Responsibility and Integrity.

Noble Park Secondary College is **committed to zero tolerance of child abuse**; including physical violence, sexual offences, emotional or psychological abuse and neglect. It is our moral and legal responsibility to create a nurturing school environment where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and they are safe and feel safe. All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse. Noble Park Secondary College affirms our commitment towards-

- The support, respect and commitment to providing all children with positive and nurturing experiences, as well as our staff and volunteers.
- Actively working towards listening to and empowering children.
- Creating systems to protect children from abuse. We will take all allegations and concerns seriously; having mechanisms in place to ensure consistency in line with school, DET and DHHS protocols.
- Teaching children and young people the skills and knowledge to understand and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing.
- Promoting cultural safety and safe learning environments for Aboriginal children, children with disabilities and children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Noble Park Secondary College commits to engaging with and listening to the views of parents and carers about our child-safety practice, policies and procedures. Our College and governing body will be transparent in our decision-making with the wider school community (where it will not compromise the safety of children or young persons). Additionally, we acknowledge the cultural diversity of students and families and being sensitive to how this may impact on student safety issues.

# Critical Response poster (DET) – four critical actions to child abuse

## FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

### Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse

**YOU MUST TAKE ACTION** As a school staff member, you play a **critical role** in protecting children in your care.

- You **must** act, by following the Four Critical Actions, as soon as you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief\* that a child has, or is at risk of being abused.
- You **must** act if you form a suspicion/ reasonable belief, even if you are unsure and have not directly observed child abuse (e.g. if the victim or another person tells you about the abuse).
- It is strongly recommended that you use the **Responding to Suspected Child Abuse template** to keep clear and comprehensive notes, even if you make a decision not to report.

\*A reasonable belief is a deliberately low threshold. This enables authorities to investigate and take action.

#### 1 RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY

If there is no risk of immediate harm go to **Action 2**.

If a child is at immediate risk of harm you **must** ensure their safety by:

- separating alleged victims and others involved
- administering first aid
- calling **000 for urgent medical and/or police assistance** to respond to immediate health or safety concerns
- identifying a contact person at the school for future liaison with Police.

Where necessary you may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve evidence.

#### 2 REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES / REFERRING TO SERVICES

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed you **must** report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures of child abuse as soon as possible. Failure to report physical and sexual child abuse may amount to a criminal offence.

Q: Where does the source of suspected abuse come from?

##### WITHIN THE SCHOOL

**VICTORIA POLICE**  
You **must** report all instances of suspected child abuse involving a school staff member, contractor, volunteer or visitor to Victoria Police.

You **must also** report **internally** to:

**GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**

- School principal and/or leadership team
- Employee Conduct Branch
- DET Security Services Unit.

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

- School principal and/or leadership team
- Diocesan education office.

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**

- School principal and/or school chairperson
- Commission for Children and Young People on **1300 782 978**.

All allegations of 'reportable conduct' **must** be reported as soon as possible to:

**GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**

- Employee Conduct Branch

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

- Diocesan education office

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**

- Commission for Children and Young People on **1300 782 978**.

##### WITHIN THE FAMILY OR COMMUNITY

**DHHS CHILD PROTECTION**  
You **must** report to DHHS Child Protection if a child is considered to be:

- in need of protection from child abuse
- at risk of being harmed or has been harmed) and the harm has had, or is likely to have, a serious impact on the child's safety, stability or development.

**VICTORIA POLICE**  
You **must also** report all instances of suspected sexual abuse (including grooming) to Victoria Police.

You **must also** report **internally** to:

**GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**

- School principal and/or leadership team
- DET Security Services Unit.

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

- School principal and/or leadership team
- Diocesan education office.

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**

- School principal and/or chairperson.

#### 3 CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS

Your principal **must** consult with DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers. They may advise:

- not to contact** the parents/carer (e.g. in circumstances where the parents are alleged to have engaged in the abuse, or the child is a mature minor and does not wish for their parent/carer to be contacted)
- to contact** the parents/carers and provide agreed information (this must be done as soon as possible, preferably on the same day of the incident, disclosure or suspicion)
- how to communicate** with all relevant parties with consideration for their safety.

#### 4 PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT

Your school **must** provide support for children impacted by abuse. This should include the development of a **Student Support Plan** in consultation with wellbeing professionals. This is an essential part of your duty of care requirements. Strategies may include development of a safety plan, direct support and referral to wellbeing professionals and support.

You **must** follow the **Four Critical Actions** every time you become aware of a further instance or risk of abuse. This includes reporting new information to authorities.

#### CONTACT

<p><b>DHHS CHILD PROTECTION AREA</b></p> <p>North Division <b>1300 664 9777</b> South Division <b>1300 655 795</b> East Division <b>1300 360 291</b> West Division (rural) <b>1800 075 599</b> West Division (Metro) <b>1300 664 9777</b></p> <p><b>AFTER HOURS</b> After hours, weekends, public holidays <b>13 12 78</b>.</p> <p><b>CHILD FIRST</b> <a href="https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/referral-and-support-teams">https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/referral-and-support-teams</a></p> <p><b>ORANGE DOOR</b> <a href="https://www.vic.gov.au/familialviolence/the-orange-door.html">https://www.vic.gov.au/familialviolence/the-orange-door.html</a></p>	<p><b>VICTORIA POLICE</b></p> <p><b>000</b> or your local police station <b>DET SECURITY SERVICES UNIT (03) 9589 6266</b></p> <p><b>STUDENT INCIDENT AND RECOVERY UNIT (03) 9651 3622</b></p> <p><b>EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH (03) 9637 2595</b></p> <p><b>DIOCESAN OFFICE</b> Melbourne (03) <b>9267 0228</b> Ballarat (03) <b>5327 7135</b> Sale (03) <b>5622 6600</b> Sandhurst (03) <b>5443 2377</b></p>	<p><b>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS VICTORIA (03) 9825 7200</b></p> <p><b>THE LOOKOUT</b> The LOOKOUT has a service directory, information, and evidence based guidance to help you respond to family violence: <a href="http://www.lookout.org.au">http://www.lookout.org.au</a></p> <p>Family violence victims/survivors can be referred to <b>1800 Respect</b> for counselling, information and a referral service: <b>1800 737 732</b>.</p>
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The critical response poster above shows how Noble Park Secondary College must respond to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse as per DET guidelines and Ministerial orders.