



CHILD SAFETY RESPONDING AND REPORTING OBLIGATIONS (INCLUDING MANDATORY REPORTING) POLICY AND PROCEDURES

HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS



If you need help to understand this policy, please contact the General Office on 9581 5200 or via email on mentone.girls.sc@education.vic.gov.au

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all staff, volunteers and members of the Mentone Girls' Secondary College community understand the procedures for responding to and reporting any complaints or concerns relating to child abuse, in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359 and the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

SCOPE

- applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors and school council members
- applies in all physical and online environments used by students
- applies to all school activities including camps, excursions and off-site activities
- applies to all forms of child abuse, whether occurring in or outside of the school environment

POLICY

All children have the right to protection from abuse. Mentone Girls' Secondary College is committed to protecting students from all forms of abuse and ensuring staff understand and comply with their legal and professional obligations.

Child abuse includes:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse, including grooming
- family violence
- emotional or psychological abuse
- serious neglect

School staff must act as soon as they form a reasonable belief that a child is at risk of harm.

FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS



All staff must follow the Four Critical Actions for Schools when responding to any incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse:

- Respond to an emergency
- Report to authorities
- Contact parents/carers where appropriate
- Provide ongoing support

REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

Mandatory reporting

Mandatory reporters must report to Child Protection if they form a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection from significant harm.

Failure to disclose offence

All adults must report to Victoria Police if they have a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed against a child.

Failure to protect offence

School leaders must act if they become aware of a substantial risk of child abuse by an adult associated with the school.

Reportable conduct

Allegations involving staff, volunteers or contractors must be reported in accordance with the Department of Education Reportable Conduct Scheme.

Internal reporting at Mentone Girls' Secondary College

All concerns must be reported immediately to the Principal or a member of the Principal Team via the College on 9581 5200. The leadership team will coordinate the response and ensure the Four Critical Actions are followed.

External reporting

- Victoria Police – 000 in an emergency
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing – Child Protection
- Department of Education – Conduct and Integrity Division

Responding to disclosures

- listen carefully and remain calm
- do not promise confidentiality
- reassure the student they have done the right thing
- record the disclosure accurately
- report immediately

Staff must not investigate the matter themselves.



Record keeping

- document all concerns, observations and actions
- maintain clear and accurate records
- store records securely

Ongoing support

- ensure the student is safe
- provide wellbeing support through the Student Wellbeing Team
- support affected students and staff

Staff training

All staff must complete annual training in mandatory reporting, the Four Critical Actions and child safety obligations.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to the school community via the school website, staff induction processes and ongoing professional learning.

RELATED POLICIES

Information on related policies can be found on the College website: <https://mgsc.vic.edu.au/our-college/policies>

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Complaints Policy



POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2026
Consultation	Student Wellbeing Team
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2028