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## child safe standards

NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ 10072

TITLE: STANDARD 5 – RESPONDING & REPORTING ALLEGATIONS

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_ STAFF

REVIEWER: \_\_\_\_\_ HOSS

REVIEW FREQUENCY: \_\_\_\_\_ Q1 - YEARLY

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### **PURPOSE**

**Ballarat Grammar is committed to zero tolerance of child abuse. All staff and members of our community have a duty of care to protect the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care.**

**As a school with a diverse population, this includes students with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.**

Ballarat Grammar has established simple and accessible procedures for anyone to report a child abuse concern internally to one of the School's Senior Staff.

Ballarat Grammar has developed and implemented procedures for all staff and members of the community for responding to allegations and disclosures of child abuse, or suspected child abuse, including procedures for support following a disclosure by a student.

Child abuse can take many forms. The abuser may be a parent, carer, staff member, volunteer, another adult or even another child. Unfortunately, the nature of child abuse is complex. The abuse may occur over time and potential risk indicators are often difficult to detect. Even our legal obligations for reporting allegations of child abuse can vary depending on the circumstances of the incident.

Ballarat Grammar will take appropriate, prompt action in response to **all** allegations or disclosures of abuse, neglect, inappropriate behaviour or concerns about child safety by reporting all matters to the Victorian Child Protection Service or the Police, depending on the allegation or disclosure made.

All the School's procedures for reporting and responding to allegation of child abuse are designed and implemented taking into account the diverse characteristics of the School community.

A summary of these procedures are made publicly available to the School community on the Portal and are accessible to all children, school staff and the wider community.



# BALLARAT GRAMMAR

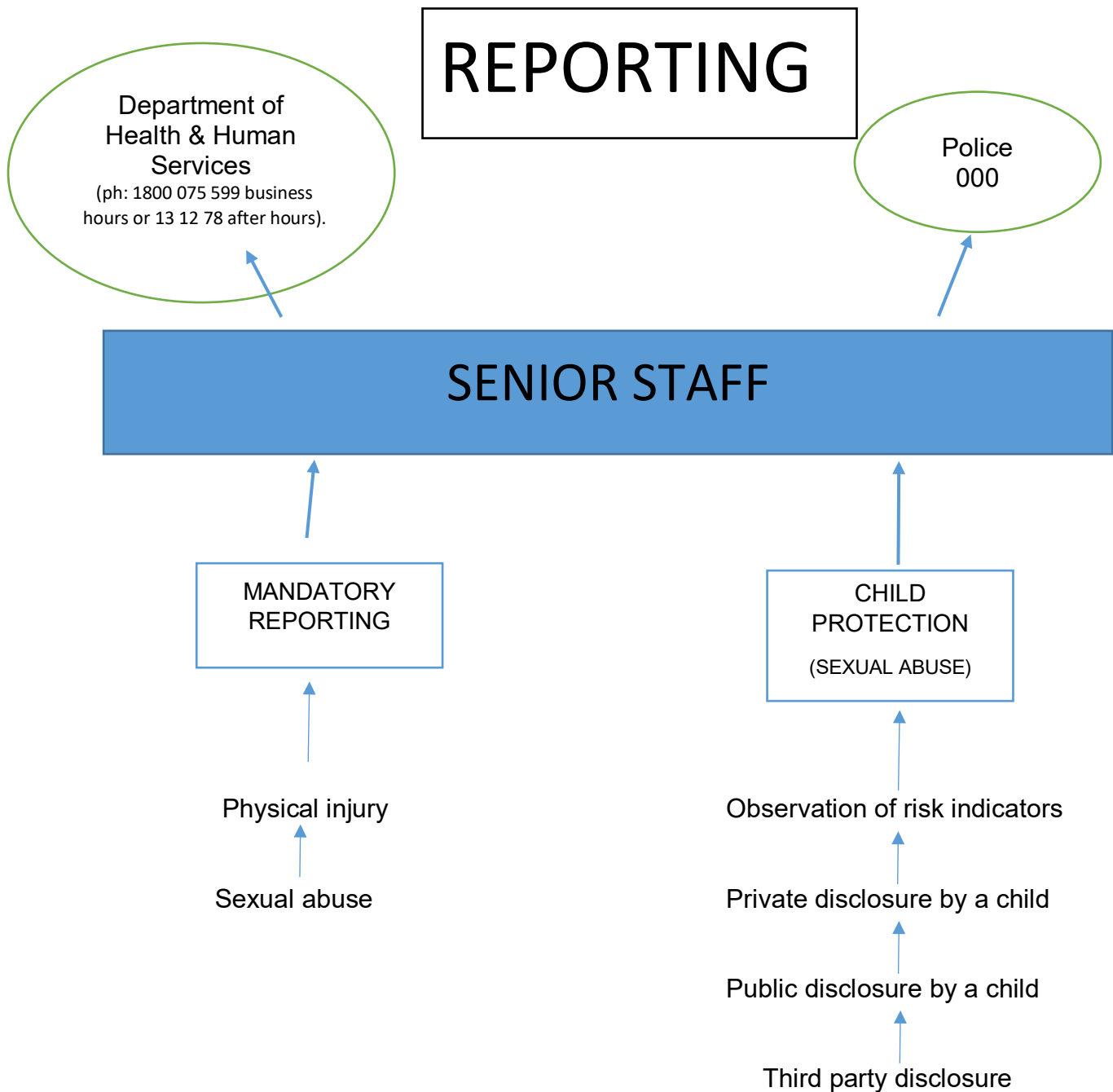
Ballarat Grammar will respond to all allegations of child abuse in an appropriate manner including:

- informing the appropriate authorities and fully cooperating with any resulting investigation;
- protecting any child connected to the allegation until it is resolved and providing ongoing support to those affected;
- taking particular measures in response to an allegation that concerns a culturally diverse child or a child with a disability; and
- securing and retaining records of the allegation and the School's response to it.
- Staff are encouraged to seek appropriate support from the Director of Care, Head of Learning Enhancement, Indigenous Co-ordinator, and Multicultural Co-ordinator.

## Staff Roles and Responsibilities

<b>Role</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Board of Directors/ Headmaster</b>	Lead the School's child safety culture
<b>Head of School</b>	Develop and enhance the School's child safe strategies. Proactively monitor the effectiveness of strategies Review child safe strategies. Develop policies, procedures and supporting documentation including appropriate communications and resources.
<b>Director of Care</b>	Lead the delivery of programs for children about the school's child safety strategies through the School's pastoral care program and through the curriculum. Develop policies, procedures and supporting documentation including appropriate communications and resources.
<b>Director of Staff/Head of HR</b>	Train staff including contractors and volunteers in the School's child safety strategies. Develop policies, procedures and supporting documentation including appropriate communications and resources.
<b>Heads of Houses (including Boarding, Mentors, Class Teachers and Pastoral Carers.</b>	As the first point of contact; educate and monitor students in their care. Provide support and enact processes and policies.
<b>Chaplain</b>	Monitor and maintain clear messages of child safety for all members of the community through the spiritual dimension of the School.
<b>Psychologists/Health Centre</b>	Provide support to enact processes and policies
<b>Multi-cultural co- ordinator, Indigenous co- ordinator and Head of Learning Enhancement</b>	Provide support to ensure the diversity of our student needs is met.

Where there is a concern about a student being able to communicate, specialist staff must be engaged to support the student.



**PLEASE NOTE THAT REPORTING THE MATTER INTERNALLY DOES NOT RELEASE YOU FROM OTHER LEGAL AND REGULATORY REPORTING OBLIGATION YOU MAY HAVE.**



## Observation of Risk Indicators

### Child Abuse

Child abuse is defined in Section 3 of the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) as including:

- any act committed against a child involving a sexual offence or a grooming offence listed in the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic);
- the infliction of physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm; and
- the serious neglect of a child.

A child is defined by the Act as a person who is under the age of 18 years.

### Family Violence

Whilst the term “family violence” does not form part of the official definition of “child abuse”, the impact of family violence on a child is commonly referred to as a form of child abuse.

In Victoria section 5 of the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic) defines “family violence” as behaviour by a person towards a family member that is:

- physically or sexually abusive;
- emotionally or psychologically abusive;
- economically abusive;
- threatening;
- coercive; or
- in any other way controlling or dominating the family member and causes them to feel fear for their own, or other family member’s safety or wellbeing.

Behaviour that causes a child to hear, witness, or be exposed to the effects of such behaviour also falls within the definition of “family violence”.

## APPENDIX 3 – Examples of forms of abuse and indicators for neglect

### Identifying Child Abuse and Neglect

Child abuse can be divided into four categories:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional and
- Neglect

It is important to be aware that the presence of an indicator of harm doesn’t necessarily mean that a child is being abused. Conversely, the absence of indicators doesn’t necessarily mean that the child is not being abused. What follows is not an exhaustive list.

### Physical Abuse

This consists of any serious non-accidental form of injury or harm inflicted on a child. It includes beating, shaking, burning and assault with weapons. Children who are physically harmed may have frequent injuries explained as accidental.

### Physical Indicators:

- Bruises or welts, often of different ages
- Burns, scalds, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts
- Bald patches where hair has been pulled out
- Lacerations or abrasions
- Poisoning



## **Behavioural Indicators:**

- Child wears inappropriate clothing in attempt to cover injuries
- Extreme wariness of adult contact
- Apprehensive when other children cry or shout
- Behavioural extremes, such as aggressiveness/withdrawal
- Fear of parents/caregiver, reluctance to go home
- Poor sleeping patterns, fear of dark, nightmares
- Reports injury by parents or gives inappropriate explanation of injury
- Attaches too readily to strangers
- Frequent absenteeism/prolonged school refusal
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Drug or alcohol abuse

## **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse occurs when someone (adult, adolescent or another child) uses their power, force or authority to involve a child/children in sexual activity. It can take the form of contact or non-contact acts such as exposure to pornography, on-line grooming etc.

Sexual abuse is not usually identified through obvious physical indicators. The presence of sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, vaginal or anal bleeding or discharge, frequent urinary tract infections can indicate sexual abuse.

In older children and young people, sexual harm is more likely to be identified through self-disclosure by the child to a trusted person, rather than by observing physical indicators. In babies and young children, the physical indicators are observed through a medical examination.

## **Behavioural Indicators:**

- Reports of sexual harm by caregiver
- A fear of home, specific place, particular adult
- Constant complaint of headaches, abdominal pains
- Reluctance to participate in physical or recreational activities
- Sophisticated sexual knowledge beyond what is expected for age and environment
- Unusual level of interest in own or other's genitals, taking into consideration their age and circumstances
- Personality change
- Serious difficulties with peers, adults
- Regression in toilet training, for example: soiling, wetting
- Excessive concerns about privacy
- Refusal to go home or truancy
- Self-destructive behaviour
- Wearing of provocative clothing or layers of clothing to hide injuries

## **Emotional Harm**

Emotional harm occurs when a child is repeatedly rejected or subjected to threats, hostility or persistent coldness. If a young person grows up in this climate, they can develop a negative self-image that impedes development and prevents them from reaching full potential. They may develop personality or behavioural disorders, or become an adult filled with self-doubt and internalised rage, unable to form sustained and intimate relationships.



## **Physical indicators**

There are few physical indicators of emotional harm.

- Speech disorders
- Delays in physical, emotional or mental development

## **Behavioural Indicators:**

- Behavioural extremes which cannot be explained by other circumstances
- Extremely low self-esteem
- Compliant, passive, withdrawn, tearful, apathetic
- Aggressive, demanding
- Depression
- Constant high anxiety
- Poor social and interpersonal skills
- Delayed development, for example in speech
- Persistent habit disorders, such as sucking, biting, washing, rocking
- Unexplained academic delays

## **Neglect**

Neglect includes all instances where a caregiver has failed to take adequate precautions to ensure the child's safety and provide food, clothing and shelter for the child. Many cases of neglect require a welfare and family support response, rather than a protective response. However, in cases where neglect has resulted in physical injury, emotional harm or health impairment, it may be considered as abuse.

## **Physical Indicators:**

- Consistent hunger
- Failure to thrive or malnutrition
- Poor hygiene that can result in health problems and/or ostracism by peers
- Inappropriate dress for the climatic conditions
- Consistently without adequate supervision and at risk of injury or harm
- Unattended health problems or medical needs
- Abandonment
- Health or dietary practice which endangers a child's health or development

## **Behavioural Indicators:**

- Stealing food
- Extended stays at school
- Constant fatigue, listlessness, or falling asleep in class
- Delinquent acts: vandalism, alcohol or drug abuse
- Little positive interaction with parent/caregiver
- Prolonged absenteeism or school refusal
- Aggressive or inappropriate behaviour
- Isolation from their peer group



# INCIDENT REPORT

## Child Safe Standards

**Ballarat Grammar is committed to zero tolerance of child abuse. All staff and members of our community have a duty of care to protect the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care.**

All incident reports must be stored securely.

## Incident Details

<b>Date of incident:</b>	
<b>Time of incident:</b>	
<b>Location of incident:</b>	
<b>Name/s of child/children involved:</b>	
<b>Name/s of staff/volunteer involved:</b>	
<b>What did you see?</b>	
<b>Other information</b>	

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

Does the child identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

**Aboriginal**  Yes  No

**Torres Strait Islander**  Yes  No

Please categorise the incident

Physical violence

Sexual offence

Serious emotional or psychological abuse

Serious neglect



## Parent/Carer/Child use

<b>Date of incident:</b>	
<b>Time of incident:</b>	
<b>Location of incident:</b>	
<b>Name/s of child/children involved:</b>	
<b>Name/s of staff/volunteer involved:</b>	

## Office Use

<b>Date incident report received:</b>	
<b>Staff member managing incident:</b>	
<b>Follow-up date:</b>	
<b>Incident Ref. Number:</b>	

## Has the incident been reported?

<b>Child Protection</b>	
<b>Police</b>	
<b>Another third party</b> (please specify)	

Incident reporter wishes to remain anonymous?

Yes

No

Reported by: \_\_\_\_\_