



Student Protection Policy and Procedures

Created:	February 2018
Next Review:	2020 or as statutory requirements change
Reviewed by:	Executive
Policy/Procedure/Guideline version number:	1 (replaces the Protective Practices Policy 2009)
Policy/Procedure/Guideline owner:	Deputy Principal
Sign off date:	2 March 2018

1. Statement of Context and Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the methods the College utilises to ensure students are kept safe from harm and that any suspicion of abuse or neglect is reported according to best practice Child Safe Environments. The College recognises that protecting the safety of children and young people is a fundamental responsibility that cannot be compromised by other consideration.

2. Reference Points / Background Papers

- Child-safe Environments: Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect - Guidelines for mandated notifiers and information for organisations. Department for Education and Child Development.
- Child Safe Environment Standards for dealing with information obtained about a person's criminal history as part of a relevant history assessment (as issued by the Chief Executive, Department for Education and Child Development, pursuant to Section 8A, of the Children's Protection Act 1993 (SA))
- Children's Protection Act
- Children's Protection Regulations 2010
- Child Protection Interagency Guidelines
- AISSA Guidelines for developing child protection policy
- Child Sex Offender Registration Act
- Screening and Criminal History Checks Policy Guidelines: A Framework for Guiding Screening Practice in Education and Care Settings and Children's Services, AISSA, Catholic Education SA).

3. Staffing

3.1 Teaching, Education Services and Corporate Services Staff

The recruitment of staff includes the following screening procedures:

- For teaching staff, registration checks with the Teachers' Registration Board of SA;
- Cross referencing of the AISSA "Do Not Employ" list;
- Child-related Employment Screening;
- For non-teaching staff, police checks every three years;
- Careful referee checks;
- A probationary period with a clear induction process.

The College has developed a list of roles across the school and made determination of the level of police clearance and Child Safe Environment Training required for each role.

Staff comply with the RAN (Responding to Abuse and Neglect) obligations under the Act and receive mandatory training in line with regulations.

The screening and background check required will be conducted before an employment offer is finalised.

3.2 Volunteers, Hobbyists and Sports Coaches

Entrusted person volunteers (e.g., engaged in working 1:1 with other people's children, overnight camps, billeting, sports coach/manager, canteen, on school committees/governing board) are required to undergo a criminal history check and to be aware of Mandatory Notification requirements. An induction program is prepared for all hobbyists and sports coaches by the Dean of Co-curriculum.

Other volunteers will be under staff supervision. The main focus for these volunteers will be their own child (e.g., assistance at Sports' Day).

All members of the community will be made aware of the College's position on child protection through annual updates as required.

4. Other Protective Practices used by the College

- Line of sight provisions: all non-College employees (eg external allied health practitioners such as OTs or Psychologists) need to be within line of sight of a teacher at all times;
- Relationships with Guardians, Deans of Wellbeing, Psychologist or Homegroup teacher that facilitate communication and effective pastoral care;
- Coordinators appointed for International and Indigenous students in order to assist with their pastoral care;
- Confidential counselling services for students;
- Provision of protective behaviours education programs in the SOJ (Strength, Optimism, Justice) curriculum;
- Risk assessment procedures for excursions, camps, Study Tours and Outdoor Education;
- Sign in and sign out procedures for all visitors;
- Identifying badges or uniforms for College employees;
- Internet filtering software;
- Outside School Hours Care in the Junior School and library supervision before and after school on the Barr Smith campus;
- Regular updates in staff meetings about their responsibilities in this area.

5. Reports of Abusive Behaviour Towards a Student

Should a report of abusive behaviour towards a student be received the College will follow Mandatory Notification requirements as detailed below. In addition, if the report involves allegations towards a person/s at the College the procedures and guidelines detailed in the Crisis Management document will be followed.

As a mandated reporter it is a legal requirement of staff to contact the appropriate Child Protection Authority through the Child Abuse Report Line; CARL 131478 when any child abuse or neglect is suspected.

The College will act promptly and responsibly in dealing with any such report.

Key Principles guiding the response to a report

- a. The safety and care of the student is the paramount consideration;
- b. Reports will be addressed promptly;
- c. Mandatory Notification requirements will be followed;
- d. Where appropriate other external authorities will be notified e.g., SAPOL, Teachers' Registration Board. The school will cooperate fully with any investigation from these authorities;
- e. Risk of student safety in the future will be considered and addressed;
- f. Any allegations will be addressed fairly having regard for the interests of all those involved;
- g. Responses by the College will be guided by due consideration and not emotion;
- h. The College has an on-going duty of care responsibility to all students, not only the student(s) covered by the allegation;
- i. Details regarding alleged abuse must be kept confidential wherever possible for the sake of both the alleged victim and the alleged offender. Exceptions would be where non-disclosure of information could pose a risk to the safety of other children, or if The DCP or the police have advised that disclosure is appropriate.

6. Mandatory Notification Procedures for Staff

Information about reporting child abuse and neglect can be found in the booklet entitled "Child-Safe Environments: Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect. Guidelines for Mandated Notifiers." This booklet can be accessed on the Staff SOCS page.

When making a report of child abuse or neglect:

Staff/volunteers are obliged by law to notify The DCP if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected and the suspicion is formed in the course of the person's work (whether paid or voluntary) or in carrying out official duties.

If you are unsure whether you have a suspicion on reasonable grounds to notify, it is appropriate to consult with:

- a. Head of sub-School;
- b. Dean of Wellbeing;
- c. Psychologist;
- d. Director of Boarding;
- e. Deputy Principal;
- f. Principal;
- g. A social worker by calling the Child Abuse Report Line, 13 14 78 (24 hrs).

Remember it is a legal requirement from staff as mandated reporters to contact the appropriate Child Protection Authority through the Child Abuse Report Line when any child abuse or neglect is suspected. (CARL 131 478)

When making a notification it is helpful if you have the following details available:

- a. The child/young person's name, age, address;
- b. The parents' names and contact details;
- c. Your reason for suspecting abuse or neglect;
- d. Your assessment of immediate danger to the child/young person;
- e. Current whereabouts of the child/young person.

You are not obliged to inform any other person of your notification and you are able to make the notification to the Department of Child Protection (DCP) anonymously. However, Department of Child Protection prefers you to identify yourself and they are required to keep this information confidential. A very small number of cases go to court and if this occurs there is a small chance you may be subpoenaed as a witness.

If your notification is likely to result in some action involving the College you should inform the Principal (or Deputy Principal if the Principal is absent).

You are not required to keep any written record of a notification made to the Child Abuse Report Line. However, there may be circumstances under which a detailed written record is prudent. For example, if you have been advised by DCP that there is insufficient information to warrant a notification but you are still concerned about a young person, the following steps are recommended:

- Make a record of your consultation with the DCP and any other steps taken to support the young person. To ensure confidentiality, this record should be stored in the psychology files kept by the College Psychologist.
- Consult with the College Psychologist to determine whether other supports can be engaged for the young person.
- When phoning the Child Abuse Report Line you can insist that your concerns are recorded even if you are advised that there is insufficient information to warrant a formal notification.
- You are encouraged to seek feedback about your report and any subsequent intervention from The DCP. If the child/young person needs further support within the College consult with their Guardian, Dean of Wellbeing, Director of Boarding and/or the College Psychologist.
- If you are unsatisfied with the response from the DCP then ask to speak with a supervisor.
- The contact number for the Child Abuse Report Line and Yaitya Tirramangkotti (for an Aboriginal child) is: 13 14 78.

If you need a private and quiet place in which to make a notification approach the Head of School or the College Psychologist. The following contact people can help you by discussing your concerns, assisting you to make the call, and debriefing with you following the notification or providing support in your ongoing relationship with the family:

- a. Staff at Department of Child Protection;
- b. Head of sub-School;
- c. College Psychologist.

7. Consequences of a Breach of these Guidelines

Seymour College emphasises the need to comply with the requirements of these guidelines. Any employees other than authorised personnel found to be in breach of the requirements of these guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action.

8. Implications for practice

8.1 At Principal Level

To properly implement this guideline, the Principal must ensure that:

- This policy is endorsed every year or whenever updates are required under statutory obligations;
- Copies of this policy are made available to employees, for example on SOCS;
- This policy is incorporated into the Principal's record of current policies and guidelines;

- This policy is incorporated into Seymour College's induction program, to ensure that all employees are aware of the guideline/policy, have read and understood the guideline, and acknowledge their commitment to comply with the guideline;
- Periodic training and refresher sessions are administered to all employees in relation to this guideline.

8.2 At Other Levels

To properly implement this guideline, all Seymour College's employees must ensure that:

- They will abide by this guideline and assist Seymour College in the implementation of this guideline;
- They notify Seymour College if an employee becomes aware of a breach of this guideline.