



Guidance for child safety champions



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact Eaglehawk Primary School

Phone: 03 54463722.

Child safety champions must have the status and authority to work with and influence others.
The role:

- requires knowledge and professional judgement on child safety and wellbeing
- needs support through ongoing training and mentoring
- maybe a suitable development opportunity for aspiring school leaders.

Key responsibilities

Child safety champions work with the school leadership team, teachers, students, volunteers and the school community to create a child safe environment in the school.

Promote child safety culture

- Promote child safety and wellbeing. For example, at staff and parent meetings, through newsletters and staff bulletins.
- Ensure the school's child safety policies and procedures:
 - are current and fit for purpose
 - are publicly accessible
 - are known and implemented.
- Promote a culture of listening to students and families and acting on their child safety concerns.
- Support staff and volunteers to focus on the child safety needs of vulnerable students.

Provide support and guidance

- Be a point of contact for child safety concerns for staff, volunteers and students.
- Provide guidance to students, staff and volunteers on child safety policies and procedures.
- Work with school leadership to respond to child safety incidents.
- Maintain current skills and knowledge to support child safety and wellbeing, including:
 - child-focused complaint processes, reporting obligations and the [Four Critical Actions](#)
 - student rights, participation and empowerment
 - Aboriginal cultural safety and inclusive practices to meet students diverse needs
 - child safety risk management including online safety
 - child safety information sharing and record-keeping obligations
 - working with relevant agencies to refer students and families to appropriate support
 - keeping across emerging research and best practice guidance in child safety and wellbeing.

Train and educate

- Provide child safety induction programs for new school staff, volunteers and school council members.
- Provide child safety training for school staff, volunteers and school council members.



Eaglehawk Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people



- Ensure mandatory reporters complete the annual mandatory reporting training.
- Provide child safety updates and information to staff and volunteers, as needed.

Monitor, review and report

- Record child safety complaints and concerns, and analyse trends as needed.
- Coordinate reviews following significant safety incidents and recommend improvements.
- Maintain the school's child safety risk register with the school leadership team.
- Coordinate child safety policy and practice reviews in consultation with the school community.
- Maintain detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.

[Guidance for child safety champions | Victorian Government \(www.vic.gov.au\)](http://www.vic.gov.au)

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 Incident Support and Operations Centre.
- **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 Incident Support and Operations Centre.
- **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.

OTHER CONCERNS

If you believe that a child is not subject to abuse, but you still hold **significant concerns** for their wellbeing you **must** still act. This may include making a referral or seeking advice from:

- Child FIRST/The Orange Door (in circumstances where the family are open to receiving support)
- DHHS Child Protection
- Victoria Police.

CONTACT

<p>DHHS CHILD PROTECTION AREA North Division 1300 664 977 South Division 1300 655 795 East Division 1300 360 391 West Division (Rural) 1800 075 599 West Division (Metro) 1300 664 977</p> <p>AFTER HOURS After hours, weekends, public holidays 13 12 78.</p> <p>CHILD FIRST https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/referral-and-support-teams</p> <p>ORANGE DOOR http://www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence/the-orange-door.html</p>	<p>VICTORIA POLICE 000 or your local police station</p> <p>DET INCIDENT SUPPORT AND OPERATIONS CENTRE 1800 126 126</p> <p>INCIDENT MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT UNIT 1800 126 126</p> <p>EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH (03) 9637 2595</p> <p>DIOCESAN OFFICE Melbourne (03) 9267 0228 Ballarat (03) 5337 7135 Sale (03) 5622 6600 Sandhurst (03) 5443 2377</p>	<p>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS VICTORIA (03) 9825 7200</p> <p>THE LOOKOUT The LOOKOUT has a service directory, information, and evidence based guidance to help you respond to family violence: http://www.lookout.org.au Family violence victims/survivors can be referred to 1800 Respect for counselling, information and a referral service: 1800 737 732.</p>
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Approval and review

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