



Responding to Student Safety Concerns - Reporting Obligations

PRESHIL VISION STATEMENT

At our core remains an unshakeable commitment to encouraging all children to set and achieve their own goals and to be respected as individuals in their own right. This is a commitment to our children to be nurtured and challenged in an atmosphere that inspires creativity and independent thinking in all areas of life and does not, overtly or subtly, use competition or punishment to motivate through the fear of failure.

As global citizens we encourage an awareness of world issues and encourage effort to make a positive difference. We believe that education should prepare students to be thoughtful, peace-loving and active citizens of the world. Preshil will remain a school that puts kindness, compassion and social relationships at the center of its operations.

Commitment to Student Safety

Preshil is committed to providing a safe environment for all students and young people, and takes active steps to protect them from neglect and abuse. Our school and governing body maintain a comprehensive suite of child protection strategies, embedded in the Child Safety Standards, and acknowledge our responsibility to report any misconduct by an employee, volunteer or contractor to the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) and respond to and report child abuse allegations for the purpose of **Ministerial Order No. 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises.**

All children attending Preshil School have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our priority. Preshil is committed to the principles of cultural safety and inclusion of children from diverse backgrounds and to the safety and inclusion of children with disability, and we recognise that these principles support the safety of all children. All actions and programs will maintain high ethical standards and comply with child safety standards and child protection reporting guidelines.

We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect. We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Diversity and Inclusion at Preshil

Particular attention is given to the safety needs of First Nations students and their families, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students and families experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Our Policy

This policy sets out in an accessible, child focused, culturally safe and easily understood manner, the ways in which concerns about all forms of child abuse and other reportable conduct may be brought to Preshil's attention, and will otherwise be dealt with, both internally and in accordance with Preshil's external reporting obligations.

Scope

This policy applies to all Board members, employees, volunteers, contractors and other authorised personnel required to perform functions on Preshil's premises, or at School-organised activities and events. Collectively, these individuals are referred to as 'staff'.

This policy extends to any other person who is engaged in student-connected work at Preshil, or that otherwise has direct and regular contact with Preshil's students (whether supervised or not).

Purpose and Relevant Principles

The Board and its staff have a variety of mandatory reporting obligations in relation to child abuse and other reportable conduct. Preshil is guided by this policy to fulfil its (and its staff's) obligations and aims to ensure that:

- Staff, students and members of Preshil community feel encouraged to raise concerns in accordance with this policy.
- Student Safety Officers are carefully selected based on certain attributes and their role in Preshil.
- Contact details of Student Safety Officers are readily available and widely known to Preshil community.
- All concerns are treated seriously, with the utmost importance and are responded to in a prompt, appropriate, sensitive and thorough fashion.
- Preshil and its staff have knowledge and an understanding of their legal obligations with their reporting concerns, and comply with them proactively.
- Preshil's processes for responding to student safety and wellbeing concerns (and the complaints process generally) are legally compliant (with regard to privacy laws, reporting obligations and employment law), culturally safe and understood broadly - including by children and young people, their families and staff.
- Investigations are conducted fairly and without bias, promptly and without undue delay.
- All reasonable steps are taken to protect the identity and wellbeing of a student who is the subject of a concern, and ensure that no adverse action is taken against a person who raises, or is the subject of a concern. All reasonable steps are taken to co-operate with law enforcement agencies regarding concerns raised under this policy, and that they are reported to relevant authorities regardless of the legal obligation to do so.

Members of the Preshil community understand and have confidence in the processes that will be **followed** by Preshil in response to concerns. This policy is student-focused and can be easily understood by Preshil community, in particular students. When complying with this policy, it must be appreciated that fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained herein will not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a student is at risk of child abuse or reportable conduct.

Key Definitions

The Student Safety Definitions document sets out the key definitions used in Preshil’s student safety and wellbeing policies. For the avoidance of doubt, the following definitions are detailed below.

Child: Any person who is under the age of 18 years, except in the case of certain mandatory reporting obligations which may define a child to be under a different age.

Mandatory reporter has the meaning given to it by section 182 of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic) (CYF Act). It includes but is not limited to registered teachers (including early childhood teachers), staff with post-secondary qualifications employed in the care, education or minding of children, school principals, registered nurses, students in training to become teachers (who have been granted permission to teach under relevant legislation), registered psychologists, out of home care workers, early childhood workers and any other person referred to in section 182 of the CYF Act.

Mandatory reporting is a term used to describe the legislative requirement imposed on selected classes of people to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to government authorities. Where a mandated reporter ‘forms a belief on reasonable grounds’ that a student or young person is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse, they are to report their concerns to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection.

Reasonable belief means a belief that would lead a reasonable person in the same position as you, and with the same information as you to form a belief that child abuse (including sexual abuse) or reportable conduct is occurring or may occur. There must be some objective basis for the belief. However, it is not necessary to have proof to form a reasonable belief, nor do you need to make a judgement about the truth of an allegation. However, a reasonable belief is more than suspicion, mere rumour or speculation. Examples on circumstances where a reasonable belief may be formed are provided in this policy.

Reportable allegation means any information that leads a person to form a reasonable belief that an employee has committed either:

- reportable conduct OR
- misconduct that may involve reportable conduct

whether or not the conduct or misconduct is alleged to have occurred within the course of the person’s employment.

Reportable conduct means:

- a sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of a child, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the offence has been commenced or concluded
- sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child ¹
- physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of a child
- any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child
- significant neglect of a child.

¹ See [Information Sheet 9 - Sexual Conduct](#) for further guidance. Sexual misconduct may include conduct that was overly personal or intimate.

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The scope of 'reportable conduct' is wide and is not limited to criminal conduct. This means that reportable conduct includes:

- sexual abuse
- grooming
- sexting
- inappropriate physical contact
- sexualised behaviour with a child.

Reportable conduct includes information about something that is alleged to have occurred outside the course of the person's employment or engagement with the Department.

School environment: Any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by Preshil for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a campus of Preshil
- online school environments, including email and intranet systems
- other locations provided by Preshil for a child's use including school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, or school community and other events.

Raising concerns

How the Preshil community may raise concerns

- If you have a belief that a student is in immediate danger, you should immediately phone the Police on 000.
- If you are a member of the Preshil community (other than a member of staff), with a concern about child abuse or reportable conduct involving a student, then you are encouraged to raise that concern with the Principal, or a Student Safety Officer (the Human Resources Compliance Manager, the Heads of Campus, the Director of Kindergarten, the Inclusive Education Leader, the Student Wellbeing Coordinator or the School Counsellor).
- As the welfare and the best interests of Preshil's students are paramount, you are encouraged to make a report, whether or not you have formed a belief on reasonable grounds that the abuse or conduct has occurred.
- **Relevant contact details for Preshil's Student Safety Officers are set out in the table below.**

Senior Student Safety Officer

Preshil has appointed the Human Resources Compliance Manager as its Senior Student Safety Officer. The Principal and the Human Resources Compliance Manager have important roles in the promotion and maintenance of a student and culturally safe culture at Preshil.

Where a concern relates to a Student Safety Officer, it should be reported to the Senior Student Safety Officer and or the Principal.

Student Safety Officers

Name	Position	Contact details
Josh Brody	Principal	josh.brody@preshil.vic.edu.au
Mae Louise McGuinness	Human Resources Compliance Manager	maelouise.mcguinness@preshil.vic.edu.au
Karoline Kuti	Head of Campus (BK)	karoline.kuti@preshil.vic.edu.au
Cressida Batterham Wilson	Head of Campus (ARL)	cressida.batterham-wilson@preshil.vic.edu.au
Stewart Thorn	Director of Kindergarten	stewart.thorn@preshil.vic.edu.au
Julia Strentz	Inclusive Education Leader	julia.strentz@preshil.vic.edu.au
Steve Kapsalis	Student Wellbeing Coordinator	steve.kapsalis@preshil.vic.edu.au
Veronica Backhouse	School Counsellor	veronica.backhouse@preshil.vic.edu.au

How staff will deal with their own concerns

Staff with, or who are aware of concerns about child abuse or reportable conduct must also address any concerns they may have in accordance with this policy.

Concerns about the Principal or the Preshil Council

Where a concern relates to the Principal or a Board member, concerns should be raised with the Preshil Board President by email (council.president@preshil.vic.edu.au).

Preshil's Response

This section sets out how Preshil will acknowledge a concern about child abuse or reportable conduct involving a student.

Receiving a concern

A member of staff, upon becoming aware of a concern, is required to:

1. Listen to the concern in a considerate, patient and supportive manner (and appropriately where the concern is coming from a student).
2. Identify the party or parties involved.

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3. Confirm the basic details, without seeking extensive information, casting judgment or asking suggestive or leading questions.
4. Take a detailed file note.
5. Remain balanced and not assess the validity of the concern(s) being raised.
6. Explain that other people may need to be informed about the concern, in order to stop any inappropriate or unlawful behaviour and to comply with Preshil’s legal obligations and procedures.
7. Confirm that Preshil takes the concern seriously.
8. Offer support to the student(s) involved in the concern, and their families. This may include encouragement to access confidential wellbeing and support services, either internal or external to Preshil.
9. Outline the process that will be followed by Preshil in dealing with the concern, in accordance with this policy.

The member of School staff should then:

1. Promptly and thoroughly manage the response of Preshil (including by monitoring Preshil’s overall compliance with this policy and accounting for alternatives if the staff member allocated to resolve the concern is unable to perform their role).
2. Comply with their personal reporting obligations as set out in this policy.
3. Notify the Principal, or a Student Safety Officer, about the concern.
4. If the Student Safety Officer is the subject of the concern, notify the Principal about the concern.
5. If the Principal is the subject of the concern, notify the Board President about the concern.

Preshil will then take such steps as it considers appropriate to protect any student connected with a concern until it is resolved, including by ensuring that any mandatory reporting obligations are met, and also, that allegations, suspicions or disclosures are made to relevant authorities (including but not limited to Child Protection and CCYP) have been met, regardless of whether there is a legal obligation to report.

Resolving the concern

Preshil will investigate the concern where appropriate, which will ordinarily require a determination, on the balance of probabilities, whether the concern is substantiated or not.

When doing so, Preshil will take into account the diversity and characteristics of the Preshil community to ensure equity is upheld and act to reduce barriers to inclusion.

The decision-maker will usually be the Principal (or their nominee), although where the concern relates to the alleged conduct or misconduct of the Principal then the decision-maker will be the Council. Preshil may rely on legal or third-party assistance to investigate or determine the concern.

Where a concern involves allegations against a staff member, Preshil will need to notify the staff member about those allegations (to the extent that it is appropriate to do so, which may initially involve only notification that there has been a concern), outline the process to be followed, and advise the staff member about the process pending the resolution of the concern (which may, in appropriate cases include the staff member being stood down, without judgment, while the concern is being dealt with).

Investigation Process

To the extent that Preshil decides it is appropriate or practicable to do so, any investigation will usually involve:

- (a) Interviewing the subject of the concern and key witnesses or individuals (noting that more than one interview may be required).
- (b) Reviewing relevant documents, correspondence and materials of substance.
- (c) Taking notes of any interviews (or where appropriate, transcripts of audio recordings of any interviews) during the investigation.
- (d) The relevant decision-maker determining whether, on the balance of probabilities, the concern is substantiated.

Witnesses being interviewed will not be unreasonably refused a support person.

If the concern is substantiated, Preshil will take appropriate action (which may, in the case of a current staff member, potentially include summary dismissal for serious misconduct). Even if a concern is not substantiated, the findings made by Preshil during the course of investigating the concern may, in certain cases, still result in disciplinary action (including dismissal).

Following the conclusion of its investigation, Preshil will indicate the outcomes of the investigation to:

- (a) The person, or student who raised the concern.
- (b) The person subject of that concern (where appropriate).
- (c) Any external authorities (including CCYP, Victoria Police, VIT and any other child protection bodies) to whom a report is required to be made.

Policy Review

Preshil may need to adjust this policy to reflect the circumstances

This policy applies regardless of whether the alleged behaviour which is the subject of a concern, occurred on or outside Preshil grounds, or concerns current or former students.

It may not be appropriate or possible for Preshil to investigate that concern in strict accordance with this policy where a concern is raised with Preshil and:

- (a) An investigation by Victoria Police, CCYP or VIT relevant to the concern is ongoing.
- (b) Civil or criminal proceedings relevant to the concern are ongoing.
- (c) The concern relates to the conduct of current or former students.
- (d) The concern relates to the conduct of former staff.

In such circumstances, Preshil will seek and act on legal advice to comply with this policy to the extent it is appropriate to do so (and in particular to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of all current students of Preshil).

Keeping Preshil informed

It is Preshil's preference that members of Preshil community (including students, staff, volunteers, parents, etc) promptly inform the Principal, or a Student Safety Officer of any matters on the subject of a potential reporting obligation under this policy which relate to Preshil community, so that Preshil can coordinate the information and support the Police and affected students and their families as required.

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However, Preshil appreciates that in some cases it will be necessary for an external report to be made before Preshil is notified (and nothing in this policy is intended to limit a person’s right, or obligation, to make external reports). At the very least, the Principal, or a Student Safety Officer should be notified after an external report is made.

Reflection and continuous improvement

It is important that Preshil’s student safe practices are subject to continuous improvement.

Preshil will analyse complaints, concerns and safety incidents to identify causes and (if applicable) systemic changes to inform continuous improvement.

Preshil will report on the findings of relevant reviews of student safety and wellbeing practices to staff, students and the community, particularly where Preshil’s usual practices are improved as a result.

Other Considerations

Concerns relating to other students

This policy also applies to concerns involving the behaviour of other students.

For example, mandatory reporting obligations are not limited to the actions of staff, and the failure to disclose offence can also apply to alleged sexual activity by adult students.

Where a concern involves child abuse or other inappropriate behaviour allegedly perpetrated by a student, Preshil will comply with its mandatory reporting obligations, and may otherwise exercise its discretion to inform SOCIT.

Subject to any Police clearance which may be required, Preshil will otherwise deal with student-on-student behavioural issues in accordance with the Preshil Student Code of Conduct and any other relevant student discipline policies and procedures.

Information provided to students

Students are provided with age-appropriate information during class time and through school assemblies about what to do in response to an allegation of suspected child abuse and the need to promptly alert a member of staff if they believe that they, or a peer, is suffering from child abuse or reportable conduct.

Information provided to students includes, but is not limited to:

- Remain calm.
- Promptly seek help and speak to a trusted staff member (or a Student Safety Officer) about the concerns.
- Remember this is not your fault, you are not to blame and are not in trouble.
- Tell the story in your own words, with as much detail as you can.
- Do not be afraid of saying the “wrong” thing.
- Listen carefully to any instructions you receive from staff (or if applicable, the Police or other authorities).
- Listen carefully to information you receive from staff about what will happen next (for example, and subject to the circumstances, authorities notified, parents informed, internal and/or external investigation).
- Be reassured that that you have done the right thing.

Review

This policy was reviewed by the Leadership Team in February 2023. It will be reviewed again each year or following a critical incident.

Records

Preshil will make, keep and secure clear and contemporaneous records of any concerns raised in accordance with this policy, and the steps taken by Preshil to respond to those concerns.

Preshil will also create, maintain and dispose of any records about student safety and wellbeing in line with the Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards, including minimum retention periods regarding these obligations. In addition, Preshil will ensure all staff understand relevant obligations in relation to information sharing and record-keeping.

Support

Preshil will afford appropriate support to students the subject of, or otherwise connected to, concerns raised under this policy, particularly until the concern is resolved.

If a concern involves a student who identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, or is from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background, steps will be taken to ensure that the student, and their family, is supported to understand the situation and are supported, including via the use of an interpreter where required.

If a concern involves a student with a disability, steps will be taken to ensure the student, and their family, understand the situation and are supported.

If a concern involves a student with needs, special circumstances or otherwise (for example, students who identify as LGBTQIA+, or are unable to live at home) steps will be taken to ensure the student, and their family, understand the situation and are supported.

Preshil will also provide appropriate support to staff who make mandatory reports under this policy, or who are assisting Preshil or families with the process outlined in this policy.

Cooperation with authorities

Preshil will cooperate with any investigation by Victoria Police, CCYP or any other relevant authority in relation to a concern or report (whether made under this policy or otherwise).

Confidentiality

Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained at all times when dealing with concerns under this policy, with information only being provided to those who have a right or otherwise, on a “needs to know” basis.

Communication

Where appropriate, Preshil will provide parents, carers and guardians with guidance and support where a student is the subject of a concern.

Staff do not require consent from a student’s parents before making a mandatory report in accordance with this policy. Similarly, staff are not required to disclose that a mandatory report has been made.

However, Preshil will keep families updated as it considers appropriate about the way in which it is dealing with concerns affecting that family's child.

Victimisation is not tolerated

Preshil will not tolerate victimisation towards someone because they have raised or participated in a process contemplated by this policy, including by raising a concern or making a mandatory report.

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This will occur if Preshil forms the view that it is prudent to independently confirm a prospective recruit's medical fitness to perform the duties that relate to the role that the prospective staff member is applying for. Such an assessment will be conducted by a registered medical practitioner of Preshil's choice.

If the registered medical practitioner is unable to recommend employment of the applicant, Preshil may withdraw the offer of employment (if the offer has already been made).

Preshil's reporting obligations

This section sets out the out the main mandatory reporting obligations that apply to Preshil and its staff.

Preshil treats seriously its reporting obligations and recognises that student protection is everyone's responsibility. Whilst the Principal, the Human Resources Compliance Manager and the Student Safety Officers are primarily entrusted with day-to-day responsibility for ensuring that these reporting obligations are met, all staff and appropriate personnel are required to uphold the ethos of this policy by ensuring that student safety matters are reported internally, and externally where required.

Staff will receive training on their personal reporting obligations to achieve this, which are summarised below:

Reporting a Sexual Offence: Failure to Disclose Offence

- (1) The *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic) makes it a crime to fail to disclose a sexual offence against a child.
- (2) As a result, anyone (and not just a not just professionals who work with Preshil's students, or with children and young people generally) aged 18 or over must make a report to Victoria Police if they form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed against a child under the age of 16 years, by a person aged 18 years or over.
- (3) A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour or speculation. A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. For example, a 'reasonable belief' might be formed if:
 - a. A student states that they have been sexually abused.
 - b. A student states that they know someone who has been sexually abused (sometimes the student may be talking about themselves).
 - c. Someone who knows a student states that the student has been sexually abused.
 - d. Professional observations of the student's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the student has been sexually abused or is likely to be abused.
 - e. Signs of abuse lead to a belief that the student has been sexually abused.
- (4) If you are not sure whether you have a reasonable belief, you must consult with the Principal, or a Student Safety Officer or the appropriate body to which a report must be made.
- (5) If you have formed a reasonable belief in relation to a sexual offence, you must immediately report the belief to Victoria Police by calling 000 in an emergency or otherwise, to the Boroondara (Kew) Police Station on (03) 88511111.
- (6) You must then make a further report on each occasion on which you become aware of any further reasonable grounds for the reasonable belief.
- (7) Failure to make a report without reasonable excuse is an offence under section 327 of the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic) and carries a potential term of imprisonment.

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- (8) However, it may not be an offence not to disclose a sexual offence against a child to Victoria Police if you:
- Have a reasonable fear that reporting your reasonable belief to Victoria Police may pose a risk to your own or another person’s health and safety (including the relevant child or young person, but not including the alleged perpetrator of sexual offence).
 - Were told about the sexual offence by the alleged victim, who was 16 or older at the time they disclosed the abuse, and they have asked you not to report the abuse.
 - Believe on reasonable grounds that the information has already been disclosed to Victoria Police by another person (such as a Child Protection authority) and you have no further information.
- (9) If there is uncertainty about the need for a report to Police (or another body) you should seek advice from the Principal, or a Student Safety Officer about whether you are still required to make a report.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme

The *Children Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) established the Reportable Conduct Scheme (**Scheme**) managed by CCYP. The Scheme requires Preshil to report and investigate reportable allegations (as defined in the Student Safety Definitions document) against a current member of staff.

The Principal (or their delegate) will notify CCYP of any alleged reportable conduct or alleged misconduct that may involve reportable conduct in respect of a staff member.

A disclosure can be made using an online form available on CCYP’s website. CCYP may also be contacted by phone on 1300 782 978 or by email at contact@ccyp.vic.gov.au in relation to any queries.

Further, the Scheme requires the head of an entity (the Principal) to do certain things upon becoming aware of a reportable allegation about a member of staff. These obligations include, but are not limited to, managing any immediate risks to students, making reports as required by law and investigating the allegations when appropriate clearance has been received (refer below).

Where a reportable allegation is about the Principal, the Board President will assume responsibility for complying with the head of entity’s obligations under the Scheme.

As soon as practicable after becoming aware of a reportable allegation, the head of the entity must respond to the reportable allegation by making the notifications to CCYP and investigating the allegation:

- Initial notification – within three (3) *business days* after becoming aware of the reportable allegation.
- Update – as soon as practicable and within thirty (30) *calendar days* after becoming aware of the reportable allegation.
- Advice about investigation – as soon as practicable.
- Outcome(s) of investigation – as soon as practicable.

Mandatory reporting

Mandatory reporters (as defined in the Student Safety Definitions document) have mandatory reporting obligations under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic). Failure to make a mandatory report can constitute an offence under that Act.

If you are a mandatory reporter, and you have formed a reasonable belief that:

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- (a) a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse; and
- (b) the child’s parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child or young person from harm of that type,

you must **immediately** report the belief to Child Protection by calling 1300 655 795 during business hours, or 13 12 78 after hours. Additional reports must be made on each occasion where a mandatory reporter becomes aware of any further reasonable grounds for the belief.

Staff must check whether they are mandatory reporters.

A mandatory reporter must make a report even if a SSO does not share their belief that the report must be made. Preshil will afford support where appropriate to mandatory reporters who make a report under this policy.

Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT)

In accordance with the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic), Preshil must notify VIT if it has taken any action against a registered teacher in response to allegations:

- (1) Of serious incompetence.
- (2) Of serious misconduct.
- (3) That the teacher is unfit to be a teacher.
- (4) That the teacher’s ability to practice as a teacher is seriously detrimentally affected, or likely to be seriously affected, because of an impairment.
- (5) Any other actions against a registered teacher that may be relevant to their fitness to teach.

Preshil must also notify VIT if it becomes aware that a registered teacher has been:

- (6) Charged with, convicted or found guilty of certain criminal offences that affect the right to hold a Working with Children Check (**WWCC**).
- (7) Given a negative notice in relation to a WWCC.

Referral to Child FIRST/Orange Door

A referral to Child FIRST/Orange Door should be considered if, after taking into account the available information, a staff members forms a view that the concerns have a low-to-moderate impact on the wellbeing of a student under the age of 17 years, but the student is not at risk of significant harm (meaning a mandatory report is not required).

Anyone with a concern for a student’s wellbeing can make a referral to Child FIRST/The Orange Door. If the Principal does not wish to make a mandatory report, this does not discharge the mandatory reporter’s legal obligation to do so *if the mandatory reporter continues to hold a reasonable belief that abuse or a sexual offence may have occurred* (including in circumstances where the student’s parents have not or are unlikely to protect their child from that harm). In that circumstance, the mandatory reporter must still make a report to Child Protection or a referral to Child FIRST/Orange Door and in the case of a sexual offence, Victoria Police.

Examples of situations where a referral to Child FIRST/The Orange Door may be appropriate include:

- (1) Significant parenting problems that may be affecting the student’s development.
- (2) Family conflict, including family breakdown.

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- (3) A family under pressure due to a family member's physical or mental illness, substance abuse, disability or bereavement.
- (4) Young, isolated and/or unsupported families.
- (5) Significant social or economic disadvantage that may adversely impact on a student's care or development.

Many cases will not fit neatly into these categories. For guidance about whether a referral to Child FIRST/The Orange Door should be considered, staff can refer to Preshil's Student Safety Officers and information available on the DFFH's website.

Please note that whilst Child FIRST acts as the access point for family services, it is progressively transitioning to the Orange Door. Child First/Orange Door can be contacted at 1800 319 353.

Communication and Implementation

This policy is made publicly available on Preshil's website. This policy is available to staff as part of Preshil's and the Board's internal policies and procedures. Aspects of (and updates to) Preshil's student safety and wellbeing framework, including this policy will be addressed in Preshil's professional development updates, training programs, bulletins and newsletters.

To properly implement this policy:

- (1) The Board will review this policy and Preshil's student safe practices at least every two years (or more frequently after a significant student safety incident) and implement improvements where applicable.
- (2) Families and the Preshil community will be afforded the opportunity to contribute to the review and development of Preshil's student safe policies and practices (including this policy).
- (3) Periodic training and refresher sessions on this policy are provided to all staff.
- (4) All staff must ensure that they abide by this policy and assist Preshil in implementing this policy.

Review of this policy

This policy was reviewed by the School Leadership Team and by Russell Kennedy lawyers in December 2022. It will be reviewed no later than two years after that date or shortly after a serious child safety incident.