

## **CHILD SAFETY RESPONDING AND REPORTING OBLIGATIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures our school has in place to respond to any allegation, complaint, disclosure or concern relating to child abuse (including grooming) and to ensure that all staff and members of our school community understand and follow the obligations that apply to the reporting of child abuse to relevant authorities.

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## 1. SCOPE

This policy applies to allegations, complaints, disclosures or concerns relating to child abuse (including grooming) made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the school (physical and/or online).

## 2. DEFINITIONS

### I. Child abuse

Child abuse includes:

- physical violence inflicted on a child
- family violence committed against or in the presence of a child
- serious emotional or psychological harm to a child
- serious neglect of a child
- sexual offences committed against a child
- grooming of a child by an adult

The definition of child abuse is broad and can include student to student incidents and concerns, as well as behaviour committed by an adult.

### II. Physical violence

Physical violence by an adult under the reportable scheme covers actual physical violence or apprehended physical violence against, with or in the presence of a child which is capable of causing or causes harm.

This includes:

- actual physical violence or
- apprehended physical violence against, with or in the presence of a child which is capable of causing or causes harm.

In a school, actual physical violence against a child can include:

- inappropriate physical contact
- unlawful restraint
- hitting
- pushing
- shoving
- pinching
- dragging
- grabbing.

Other examples include:

- snatching, grabbing or throwing objects at a child
- using a door to prevent a child from entering or leaving a classroom.

Apprehended physical violence is when a child believes that someone is about to hurt them. This can happen even if no one touches the child. For example, if a teacher hits an object near to a child, causing the child to fear they might be hit.

Victorian government school staff can use [physical restraint and seclusion](#) when reasonable and immediately required to protect the member of staff, the student, or any other person from acts or behaviour that might be dangerous to them. Physical restraint must only be used where there are no less restrictive measures available in the circumstances.

For more information, see the Commission for Children and Young People information sheet on [physical violence under the Reportable Conduct Scheme \(DOCX, 275KB\)](#).

### III. **Significant emotional or psychological harm**

Behaviour that causes a child serious psychological or emotional harm is child abuse.

Some of the types of behaviours that could cause harm to the extent that a child suffers, or is likely to suffer, serious emotional or psychological harm include:

- ongoing verbal abuse
- coercive or manipulative behaviour
- hostility towards, or rejecting a child
- humiliation
- belittling
- scapegoating
- racism.

This type of behaviour can happen on its own, or with other types of abuse like sexual abuse and grooming.

- Signs that a child may have experienced significant emotional or psychological harm could include:
- suicidal action, suicidal ideation, or self-harm
- self-destructive, antisocial, or anxious behaviour
- ongoing trouble sleeping, nightmares, or bedwetting
- intense visible distress, withdrawal, fear, anxiety, anger or despair, particularly over an extended period
- strong feelings like fear, anger, or sadness that last a long time
- sudden changes in behaviour (e.g. an outgoing child becoming quiet)
- significant delays in emotional or intellectual development
- struggling to cope with everyday things.

For information see the Commission for Children and Young People information sheet on [behaviour that causes significant emotional and psychological harm under the Reportable Conduct Scheme \(DOCX, 142 KB\)](#).

### IV. **Significant neglect**

Significant neglect is a failure to meet the basic needs of a child, such as their wellbeing or safety. This is reportable under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

In some circumstances the neglect of a child:

- can place the child’s immediate safety and development at serious risk
- may not immediately compromise the safety of the child but is likely to result in longer-term cumulative harm.

In a school this can include:

- not providing a child with adequate supervision
- not providing a child with adequate medical care
- exposing a child to inappropriate material or environments like pornography or drug use
- failing to make a mandatory report
- not responding to student wellbeing concerns or following student wellbeing policies
- not taking a child’s medical condition or illness seriously, and not getting them the right treatment
- conduct that shames, isolates or demeans a child
- conduct that rejects, abandons, or belittles a child
- calling a child names.

For more information, see the Commission for Children and Young People information sheet on [significant neglect under the Reportable Conduct Scheme \(DOCX, 123KB\)](#).

#### V. **Sexual Abuse**

Child sexual abuse is when a person uses power or authority over a child to involve them in sexual activity. It can include both physical and sexual contact and non-contact behaviours.

This includes:

- sexual touching
- talking to a child in a sexually explicit way
- sexual activity in the presence of a child
- exposing a sexual body part to a child
- exposing a child to sexual activity (including showing pornography to a child)
- encouraging a child to engage in or be involved in an activity of a sexual nature. This includes giving a child something, such as alcohol, cigarettes or other drugs, gift cards or money, in return for participating in sexual activities
- grooming.

#### VI. **Grooming**

Grooming is a criminal offence under the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic) and is a form of child abuse and sexual misconduct. This offence targets predatory conduct undertaken by an adult to prepare a child, under the age of 16, to engage in sexual activity at a later time. Grooming can include communicating (including electronic communications) and/or attempting to befriend or establish a relationship or other emotional connection with the child or their parent or carer.

Grooming occurs when an adult engages in communication (by words or conduct) with a child to prepare the child for sexual abuse later. Grooming behaviours can be directed at the child, their parents or carer and other adults in the school community.

Grooming can manipulate a child into believing that the abuse is their fault, or that the abuse is a way of showing love.

[Grooming can be difficult to identify](#). It can look like 'normal' caring behaviour, such as providing special attention and emotional support to a child.

Grooming can happen in any school and with students and adults of any age or gender. It can be harder to detect when adults interact with families across school, sport and community spaces. In these settings, some behaviours can seem friendly or routine.

### **3. What to look for in adults**

Behavioural signs that an adult engaged by a school is grooming a child can include (but are not limited to):

- touching a child inappropriately
- unnecessary close physical contact, such as tickling, wrestling or massaging
- spending time 1:1 with the child that is not required by the educational context, or which seems excessive
- contacting a child on unofficial channels (for example calls, texts, or social media messages)
- contacting children directly i.e. not including parents or carers in the communications
- giving a child special treatment or attention so they feel 'special' or indebted
- giving gifts to a child
- having inappropriate social and professional boundaries. For example, telling a child about their personal problems or dating life
- offering to drive a child to or from school, work, after school activities, or social events
- checking on the wellbeing of a child at home
- inviting themselves to a child's home or inviting the child to their home
- undermining a child's reputation, so others won't believe them if they speak up or make a disclosure
- using threats, force, or authority to scare a child so they won't report unwanted behaviour
- using coercive or manipulative behaviour (threats, pressure, manipulation) to get another child to participate in inappropriate or sexual behaviour
- making the child believe they are in a loving 'relationship' with the adult to coerce the child into inappropriate or sexual behaviour
- giving a child cigarettes, alcohol or other drugs
- showing a child nudity, sexual images, or sexual acts, either on purpose or by pretending it was an accident.

### **4. What to look for in children**

Any child can be sexually abused. But children who are vulnerable, feel alone, or have a disability are more likely to be abused.

Behavioural signs of sexual abuse in children can include:

- disclosure of sexual abuse, either directly or by peers or classmates
- sexual activity that isn't appropriate for the age of the child
- drawings or descriptions in stories that are sexual and not age-appropriate
- being afraid of particular places or adults
- having trouble with relationships, including withdrawing from usual activities, friendships and relationships
- complaining of headaches, stomach pains or nausea without a physiological basis

- in younger children, regressive behaviour like bed-wetting or speech loss
- having phone calls, videos, or messages with a staff member or other adult from the school
- being very secretive about their use of communications technologies, including social media
- depression, self-harm, drug or alcohol abuse, or attempted suicide/suicidal ideation
- suddenly doing worse at school, poor memory or concentration
- suddenly developing a very close bond with a staff member or adult at school
- changes in mood like being hyperactive, secretive, hostile, aggressive, impatient, resentful, anxious, withdrawn, or depressed
- having jewellery, clothing or gifts given by the person abusing them.

For more information, see the Commission for Children and Young People information sheet on [sexual misconduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme \(DOCX, 117 KB\)](#).

## 5. School staff member

For the purpose of this policy a school staff member includes a contractor engaged by the school or school council to perform child-related work.

# POLICY

Kurnai College understands the important role our school plays in protecting children from abuse. We have a range of policies and measures in place to prevent child abuse from occurring at our school or during school activities.

## 1. Information for students

- All students should feel safe to speak to any staff member to raise any concerns about their safety or any other concerns that they have.
- If a student does not know who to approach at Kurnai College, they should start with the appropriate Team Leader, Student Well-being Office or Advocate Office. Students can contact these people via email through Compass. Students can also make an anonymous report through Stymie. Alternatively, they can talk to the Campus Principal or Campus Assistant Principal.
- Students can also access the Complaints Policy on the School Website, or refer to induction information provided on enrolment.

## 2. Identifying child abuse

To ensure we can respond in the best interests of students and children when complaints or concerns relating to child abuse are raised, all staff and relevant volunteers must:

- understand how to identify signs of child abuse and behavioural indicators of perpetrators - for detailed information on identifying child abuse and behavioural indicators of perpetrators refer to [Identify child abuse](#).
- understand their various legal obligations in relation to reporting child abuse to relevant authorities - for detailed information on the various legal obligations refer to Appendix A

- follow the below procedures for responding to complaints or concerns relating to child abuse, which ensure our school acts in the best interests of students and children and complies with both our legal and Department policy obligations.

At Kurnai College we recognise the diversity of the children, young people, and families at our school and take account of their individual needs and backgrounds when considering and responding to child safety incidents or concerns.

## **Procedures for responding to an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse**

In responding to a child safety incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion, Kurnai College will follow:

- the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#) for complaints and concerns relating to all forms of child abuse
- the [Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending](#) for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending
- our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and/or Bullying Prevention Policy for complaints and concerns relating to student physical violence or other harmful student behaviours.

### **3. School staff and volunteer responsibilities**

#### **I. Immediate action**

If a school staff member or volunteer witnesses an incident of child abuse, or reasonably believes, suspects or receives a disclosure or allegation that a child has been, or is at risk of being abused, they must:

- If a child is at immediate risk of harm, separate alleged victims and others involved, administer first aid (appropriate to their level of training) and call 000 for urgent medical or police assistance where required to respond to immediate health or safety concerns.
- Notify the Campus Principal or other member of the leadership team, and a member of the campus Wellbeing Team, such as an Advocate or Welfare Officer as soon as possible, who will ensure our school follows the steps in these procedures.

NOTE for staff and volunteers:

- if you are uncertain if an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion gives rise to a concern about child abuse you must always err on the side of caution and report the concern to the Campus Principal or Assistant Principal.
- If the Campus Principal or Assistant Principal is unavailable, a Leading Teacher or Learning Specialist or Disability Specialist will take on this role.
- If the concerns relates to the conduct of the Campus Principal, notify the College Principal or the Gippsland Regional Office who must then take on responsibility for ensuring our school follows these procedures.

Refer to Appendix B for guidance on how to respond to a disclosure of child abuse.

## **II. Reporting to authorities and referring to services**

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant school staff have been informed, the Campus Principal or their delegate **must** report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures of child abuse as soon as possible.

The following steps will ensure our school complies with the four critical actions as well as additional actions required under the Child Safe Standards.

The Campus Principal or their delegate must ensure:

- all relevant information is reported to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection, Victoria Police or relevant services where required
- the incident is reported to the Department's [eduSafe Plus portal](#) or the Incident Support and Operations Centre (1800 126 126) in accordance with the severity rating outlined in the [Managing and Reporting School Incidents Policy](#)
- all [reportable conduct](#) allegations or incidents are reported by the Principal to the Department's Employee Conduct Branch (03 7022 0005) – where a reportable conduct allegation is made against the Principal, the Regional Director must be informed who will then make a report to Employee Conduct Branch

NOTE: In circumstances where staff members are legally required to report child abuse to DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police and they are unable to confirm that the information has been reported by another person at the school or the designated member of school staff does not agree that a report needs to be made, the staff member who has formed the reasonable belief must still contact DFFH Child Protection and Victoria Police to make the report.

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 The Orange Door, DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police.

## **III. Contacting parents or carers**

The Campus Principal or their delegate must ensure parents and carers are notified unless advised otherwise by DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police, or there are other safety and wellbeing concerns in relation to informing parents/carers.

Principals may contact the Department of Education and Training Legal Division for advice on notifying parents and carers, and where relevant, the wider school community.

For further guidance, refer to [PROTECT Contacting parents and carers](#)

## **IV. Ongoing protection and support**

The Campus Principal and Assistant Campus Principal must ensure appropriate steps are taken by the school to protect the child and other children from any continued risk of abuse. These steps must be taken in consultation with any relevant external agency or Department staff such as DFFH Child Protection, Victoria Police, Legal Division or Employee Conduct Branch. Ongoing protection will also include further reports to authorities if new information comes to light or further incidents occur.

Appropriate, culturally sensitive and ongoing support must be offered and provided to all affected students. Ongoing support will be based on any available advice from the Department, parents and carers, health practitioners, and other authorities (such as DFFH or Victoria Police) and may include referral to SOCIT, GCASA, wellbeing professionals, development of a safety plan, student support group meetings, and, for student to student incidents, behaviour management and support measures.

## **V. Recordkeeping**

The Campus Principal will ensure that:

- detailed notes of the incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion are using the [Responding to Suspected Child Abuse: Template](#) or the [Responding to Student Sexual Offending: template](#)] including, where possible, by the staff member or volunteer who reported the incident, disclosure, or suspicion to them
- detailed notes are taken of any immediate or ongoing action taken by the school to respond to the incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion
- all notes and other records relating to the incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion, including the schools immediate and ongoing actions, are stored securely on Compass, with Staff Visibility set to “Admin”.

### **4. For school visitors and school community members**

All community members aged 18 years or over have legal obligations relating to reporting child abuse – refer to Appendix A for detailed information.

Any person can make a report to DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection. For contact details, refer to the [Four Critical Actions](#).

Members of the community do not have to inform the school if they are making a disclosure to DFFH Child Protection or the Victoria Police. However, where a community member is concerned about the safety of a child or children at the school, the community member should report this concern to the Principal or Assitan Principal so that appropriate steps to support the student can be taken

### **5. Additional requirements for all staff**

All staff play an important role in supporting student safety and wellbeing and have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to prevent reasonably foreseeable harm to students.

Fulfilling the roles and responsibilities in the above procedure does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse. This means that if, after following the actions outlined in the procedure, a staff member reasonably believes that a child remains at risk of abuse, they must take the following steps:

- if they are concerned that the school has not taken reasonable steps to prevent or reduce the risk, raise these concerns with the principal in the first instance, and escalate to the regional office if they remain unsatisfied.

- report the matter to the relevant authorities where they are unable to confirm that the information has been reported by another staff member

Staff must refer to Appendix A for further information on their obligations relating to reporting to authorities.

## 6. COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school’s website (or insert other online parent, carer, student communication method)
- Included in staff induction processes and annual staff training
- Included in volunteer induction processes and training for relevant volunteers
- Discussed an annual staff briefings or meetings
- Included in staff handbook or manual
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

## 7. FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education and Training policies and guidance are relevant to this policy:

- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Protecting Children — Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](#)
- [Managing and Reporting School Incidents](#)
- [Reportable Conduct](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)
- [Identify child abuse](#)
- [Report child abuse in schools \(including four critical actions\)](#)
- [Identify and respond to student sexual offending](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this policy:

- Child Safety Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	
Consultation	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	

## APPENDIX A

### LEGAL OBLIGATIONS RELATING TO REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

The following information outlines the various legal obligations relating to the reporting of child abuse to relevant authorities.

It is important to note that the procedures outlined in the above policy ensure compliance with the below reporting obligations, and also include additional steps to ensure compliance with Department policy and our school's duty of care obligations.

#### **Mandatory reporting to Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection**

The following individuals are mandatory reporters under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic):

- registered teachers and early childhood teachers (including principals and school staff who have been granted permission to teach by the VIT)
- school counsellors including staff who provide direct support to students for mental, emotional or psychological wellbeing, including (but not limited to) school health and wellbeing staff, primary welfare coordinators, student wellbeing coordinators, mental health practitioners, chaplains, and Student Support Services staff
- nurses
- registered psychologists
- police officers
- registered medical practitioners
- out of home care workers (excluding voluntary foster and kinship carers)
- early childhood workers
- youth justice workers
- people in religious ministry
- midwives

All mandatory reporters must make a report to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection as soon as practicable if, during the course of carrying out their professional roles and responsibilities, they form a belief on reasonable grounds that:

- a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical abuse and/ or sexual abuse; and
- the child's parents or carers have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type.

A mandatory reporter who fails to comply with this legal obligation may be committing a criminal offence. It is important for all staff at Kurnai College to be aware that they are legally obliged to make a mandatory report on each occasion that they form a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection and they must make a mandatory report even if the principal or any other mandatory reporter does not share their belief that a report is necessary.

If charged with not making a mandatory report, it may be a defence for the person charged to prove that they honestly and reasonably believed that all of the reasonable grounds for their belief had been the subject of a report to child protection made by another person.

The identity of a person who reports any protective concerns to DFFH Child Protection is protected by law. It is an offence for a person, other than the person who made the report, to disclose the name of the person who made a report or any information that is likely to lead to their identification.

At our school, all mandated school staff must undertake the *Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations eLearning Module* annually.

The policy of the Department of Education and Training (DET) requires **all staff** who form a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection to discuss their concerns with the school leadership team and to report their concerns to DFFH and in some circumstances to Victoria Police, or to ensure that all the information relevant to the report has been made by another school staff member.

Any person can make a report to DFFH Child Protection (131 278 – 24 hour service) if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection even if they are not a mandatory reporter listed above.

### **Reporting student wellbeing concerns to Orange Door**

At Kurnai College we also encourage staff to make a referral to the Orange Door when they have significant concern for a child's wellbeing. For more information about making a referral, see the Policy and Advisory Library: [Protecting Children – Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](#).

### **Reportable Conduct**

The Reportable Conduct Scheme is focussed on worker and volunteer conduct and how organisations investigate and respond to suspected child abuse. The scheme aims to improve organisational responses to suspected child abuse and to facilitate the identification of individuals who pose a risk of harm to children.

There are five types of 'reportable conduct' listed in the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*:

- sexual offences against, with or in the presence of, a child
- sexual misconduct (which includes grooming) against, with or in the presence of, a child
- physical violence against, with or in the presence of, a child
- behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child
- significant neglect of a child.

A reportable conduct allegation is made where a person makes an allegation, based on a reasonable belief, that a worker or volunteer has committed reportable conduct or misconduct that **may** involve reportable conduct.

If school staff or volunteers become aware of reportable conduct by any current or former employee, contractor or volunteer, they must notify the school principal immediately. If the allegation relates to the principal, they must notify the Regional Director.

The principal or regional director must notify the Department's Employee Conduct Branch of any reportable conduct allegations involving current or former employees of the school (including Department, allied health, casual and school council employees), contractors and volunteers (including parent volunteers).

- Employee Conduct Branch: 03 7022 0005 or [employee.conduct@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:employee.conduct@education.vic.gov.au)

The Department's Secretary, through the Manager, Employee Conduct Branch, has a legal obligation to inform the Commission for Children and Young People when an allegation of reportable conduct is made.

For more information about reportable conduct see the Department's *Policy and Advisory Library*: [Reportable Conduct](#) and the Commission for Children and Young People's [website](#).

### **Failure to disclose offence**

Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults (ie persons aged 18 years and over), not just professionals who work with children, have a legal obligation to report to Victoria Police, as soon as practicable, where they form a 'reasonable belief' that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16 in Victoria.

Failure to disclose information to Victoria Police (by calling 000, local police station or the Police Assistance Line 131 444) as soon as practicable may amount to a criminal offence unless a person has a 'reasonable excuse' or exemption from doing so.

"Reasonable belief" is not the same as having proof. 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 when:

- a child states that they have been sexually abused
- a child states that they know someone who has been sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves)
- someone who knows a child states that the child has been sexually abused
- professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a mandated professional to form a belief that the child has been sexually abused
- signs of sexual abuse leads to a belief that the child has been sexually abused.

"Reasonable excuse" is defined by law and includes:

- fear for the safety of any person including yourself or the potential victim (but not including the alleged perpetrator or an organisation)
- where the information has already been disclosed to Victoria Police and you have no further information to add (for example, through a mandatory report to DFFH Child Protection or a report to Victoria Police from another member of school staff).

### **Failure to protect offence**

This reporting obligation applies to school staff in a position of authority. This can include principals, assistant principals and campus principals. Any staff member in a position of authority who becomes aware that an adult associated with their school (such as an employee,

contractor, volunteer or visitor) poses a risk of sexual abuse to a child under the age of 16 under their care, authority or supervision, must take all reasonable steps to remove or reduce that risk.

This may include removing the adult (ie persons aged 18 years and over) from working with children pending an investigation and reporting your concerns to Victoria Police.

If a school staff member in a position of authority fails to take reasonable steps in these circumstances, this may amount to a criminal offence.

### **Further information**

For more information about the offences and reporting obligations outlined in this fact sheet refer to: [Protecting Children — Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](#).

## **APPENDIX B: MANAGING DISCLOSURES OF CHILD ABUSE**

### **Important information for staff**

#### ***When managing a disclosure relating to child abuse you should:***

- listen to the student and allow them to speak
- stay calm and use a neutral tone with no urgency and where possible use the child's language and vocabulary (you do not want to frighten the child or interrupt the child)
- be gentle, patient and non-judgmental throughout
- highlight to the student it was important for them to tell you about what has happened
- assure them that they are not to blame for what has occurred
- use open questions such as "What happened next?" but stop once you have formed a *reasonable belief*. Asking the child to retell the details multiple times should be avoided.
- be patient and allow the child to talk at their own pace and in their own words
- do not pressure the child into telling you more than they want to, they will be asked a lot of questions by other professionals, and it is important not to force them to retell what has occurred multiple times
- reassure the child that you believe them and that disclosing the matter was important for them to do
- use verbal facilitators such as, "I see"
- tell the child in age appropriate language you are required to report to the relevant authority to help stop the abuse, and explain the role of these authorities if appropriate (for a young child this may be as simple as saying "I will need to talk to people to work out what to do next to help you")
- Take prompt action in relation to following the procedures outlined below.

#### ***When managing a disclosure you should AVOID:***

- displaying expressions of panic or shock
- asking questions that are investigative and potentially invasive (this may make the child feel uncomfortable and may cause the child to withdraw)
- asking leading questions – instead use open questions
- going over the information repeatedly (you are only gathering information to help you form a belief on reasonable grounds that you need to make a report to the relevant authority)
- making any comments that would lead the student to believe that what has happened is their fault
- making any promises you will keep the information the student provided confidential
- making promises to the child about what will occur next or that things will be different given the process can be unpredictable and different for each child depending on their circumstances (instead reassure them that you and others will do your best to help).