



# Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Procedure (Standard 5) October 2018

## Sacred Heart, Emmaus and Cana Catholic Primary Schools

*As a federation of three schools, Sacred Heart, Emmaus and Cana Primary Schools in the one Parish of Sacred Heart / Emmaus in St Albans, Sydenham and Hillside, each and all has as its fundamental and essential commitment, the fostering of the spiritual, emotional, psychological and social wellbeing of all students. Each school is dedicated to providing a physically safe and supportive environment.*

## Procedure for Responding to Allegations and Disclosures of Suspected Child Abuse:

The school Leadership teams of Sacred Heart, Emmaus and Cana Primary schools are sensitive to the diverse characteristics of each school community as each has a significant multicultural enrolment.

- Each school will ensure that all forms of child abuse as defined in the Education Training and Reform Act 2006 will be reported.

Child Abuse includes;

1. any act committed against a child involving -
  - 1.1. a sexual offence; or
  - 1.2. an offence under section 49B(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming); and
2. the infliction, on a child, of -
  - 2.1. physical violence; or
  - 2.2. serious emotional or psychological harm; and
3. serious neglect of a child.
4. family violence

- The school's procedures will apply to allegations or disclosures of child abuse made by or in relation to a child, school staff, visitors or other persons while connected to a school environment.
- Any reported allegations or disclosures are to be directed to the School Leadership Team - Principal, Deputy Principal and Student Wellbeing leader who will promptly manage the school response to such an allegation or disclosure of child abuse and ensure that the allegation or disclosure is taken seriously.
- Such persons will respond appropriately to a child who makes or is affected by an allegation of child abuse.
- Such person will also monitor the overall school compliance with this procedure.
- The Leadership will also be responsible for managing an alternative procedure for responding to an allegation or disclosure if the person allocated responsibility cannot perform his or her role.
- Since the Federation provides for team leadership in the event of an allegation or a disclosure any one of the above mentioned, that is the Principal, Deputy Principal, Student Wellbeing leader takes responsibility for the diligent carrying out of the appropriate procedures.
- In the event of an allegation or disclosure of child abuse the school will;
  - inform appropriate authorities about the allegations or disclosure (including but not limited to mandatory reporting);
  - protect any child connected to the alleged child abuse until the allegation is resolved; and
  - make, secure and retain records of the allegation of child abuse and the school's response to it.
- It is to be noted that fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained in the procedures does not displace or discharge any other obligations that may arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.
- The four critical actions for schools to respond to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse will be followed.
  1. Respond to an emergency
  2. Reporting to authorities
  3. Contacting parents/carers
  4. Providing ongoing support
- The four critical actions for schools responding to student sexual offending will be followed.
  1. Immediate response to an incident
  2. Report to authorities
  3. Contact parents/carers
  4. Provide ongoing support
- These procedures do not:
  - prohibit or discourage school staff from reporting an allegation of child abuse to a person external to the school.
  - state or imply that it is the victim's responsibility to inform the police or other authorities of the allegations;
  - require staff to make judgement about the truth of the allegation of child abuse; or
  - prohibit staff from making records in relation to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse.

This policy is accessible to all children school staff and the wider community via the school websites.

All staff have access to and will be referred to CEM documents;

Policy 2.19 Child Reporting - Reporting Obligations and

School Guidelines 2.19a Police and DHHS Interview Protocols.