



Catholic College Sale

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN – FAILURE TO DISCLOSE PROCEDURE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Protection of Children – Failure to Disclose Procedure applies to Catholic College Sale Ltd and is consistent with all primary and secondary Catholic schools managed and operated by Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL).

Protecting children and young people against sexual abuse is a community wide responsibility. CCS Ltd has a moral and legal responsibility to ensure children and young people are safe in their care and to ensure that all forms of abusive behaviours towards children are prevented.

It is a clear legal duty of all adults to report child sexual abuse to police. Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child has an obligation to report that information to Victoria Police on 000 or the local police station.

This obligation applies to all non-mandated employees and adult community members over the age of 18 years, and should be read in conjunction with the CCS Ltd Protection of Children – Failure to Disclose Policy.

It is imperative to prevent, reduce and minimise child abuse and exploitation in all their forms.

CCS Ltd workplaces may also request information or voluntarily provide information (including personal or sensitive information) to another prescribed Information Sharing Entity (ISEs) under the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS), where this may improve child wellbeing or safety, or help to assess or manage the risk of family violence. These schemes complement existing mandatory reporting obligations. For more information, see: CCS Ltd Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes Policy and Procedure, [Information Sharing and Family Violence Reforms Contextualised Guidance](#), [Child Information Sharing Scheme Ministerial Guidelines](#), [Family Violence Information Sharing Guidelines](#), and [Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework](#).

2.0 PURPOSE

This Procedure informs CCS Ltd employees of their responsibilities in relation to the disclosure/reporting responsibilities and removing the risk to children and young people of suspected abuse where practicable.

This Procedure acknowledges the particular duty CCS Ltd employees have towards children and young people in their care.

It respects the dignity of children and young people and outlines the rights and responsibilities of CCS Ltd employees.

3.0 PROCEDURE

CCS Ltd has a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing school environments where children and young people are respected, and their voices heard, and where they are safe and feel safe.

The successful implementation of this policy will include the following:

- Regularly communicating this policy to employees and the wider community;
- Educating children in personal safety and sexual abuse;
- Educating school employees to identify possible sexual abuse;
- Taking action that is timely, respectful and coordinated when an employee forms a belief that a child or young person is at risk of being harmed through sexual abuse, or has been harmed, such action to include:
 - Reporting the matter to the Police and the Principal;
 - Knowing that Victoria Police has primary responsibility for conducting investigations into the alleged matter.
- Reporting to the Department of Health and Human Services (**DHHS**) unless otherwise advised by the police;
- Ensuring the child or young person and the child or young person's family have access to appropriate services in order to reduce any long-term effects of the abuse;
- Documenting all allegations and retaining records in a secure area, ensuring their confidentiality;
- Where appropriate, sharing information with other ISEs under the CISS and FVISS.

4.0 REFERENCES

- *Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.)*
- *Crimes Amendment (Protection of Children) Act 2014 (Vic.)*
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.)*
- *Family and Domestic Violence: A guide to supporting staff*
- *Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse*
- *Protect: Responding to Suspected Child Abuse: A Template for all Victorian Schools*
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic.)*
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety (Information Sharing) Regulations 2018*
- *Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic.)*
- *Family Violence Protection (Information Sharing) Regulations 2018*
- *Child Information Sharing Scheme Ministerial Guidelines*
- *Family Violence Information Sharing Guidelines*
- *Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework*
- *Information Sharing and Family Violence Reforms Contextualised Guidance*

5.0 RELATED COLLEGE POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

- Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes Policy and Procedure
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Protection – Anti-Grooming Policy
- Child Protection – Failure to Disclose Policy
- Child Protection – Failure to Protect Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns Policy

6.0 APPROVAL

Approved by	CC Sale Ltd Board
Person(s) Responsible	Principal
Date(s) Reviewed or Updated	August 2023
Next Review Date	August 2025