

# East Preston Islamic College

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## RESPONDING TO STUDENT SAFETY CONCERNS POLICY

<b>Last Review:</b> April 2023	<b>Constructed / Reviewed by:</b> East Preston Islamic College on advice from Russell Kennedy Lawyers
<b>Next Review:</b> April 2025 (at least every two years (thereafter or more frequently after a significant student safety incident))	<b>Approval Required:</b> Board Motion  <b>Board Sign Off Date:</b> 15 May 2023  <b>Implementation Date:</b> April 2023

### 3 Related Documents

#### Legislation

- 3.1 Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)
- 3.2 Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)
- 3.3 Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- 3.4 Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- 3.5 Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- 3.6 Ministerial Order No. 1359

#### Policies

- 3.7 Student Safety and Protection Policy
- 3.8 Student Safety Staff Code of Conduct
- 3.9 Student Safety Recruitment and Selection Policy
- 3.10 Student Safety Definitions
- 3.11 Student Safety Responsibilities

#### Fact sheets

- 3.12 [Grooming offence | Department of Justice and Community Safety Victoria](#)
- 3.13 [Failure to disclose offence | Department of Justice and Community Safety Victoria](#)
- 3.14 [Failure to protect: a new criminal offence to protect children from sexual abuse | Department of Justice and Community Safety Victoria](#)

### 4 Definitions

- 4.1 The Student Safety Definitions document sets out the key definitions used in the College's student safety and wellbeing policies. For the avoidance of doubt, the following definitions are detailed below.
- 4.2 **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

Examples on circumstances where a reasonable belief may be formed are provided in this policy.

**5 Relevant Principles**

5.1 The Board and its staff have a variety of mandatory reporting obligations in relation to child

**6 Raising concerns**

**How the College community may raise concerns with the College**

6.1 ***If you have a belief that a student is in immediate danger, you should immediately phone the Police on 000.***

6.2 If you are a member of the College 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 member of the Leadership Team or Student Safety Officer.

6.3 As the welfare and the best interests of the College ¶ V V W X G H Q W V D U H S D U D P R X C encouraged to make a report, whether or not you have formed a belief on(m)-3.007 (ed)3.007 r1599

## 7 The College ¶ V 5 H V S R Q V H

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

### Receiving a concern

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

- (a) Listen to the concern in a considerate, patient and supportive manner (and appropriately where the concern is coming from a student).
- (b) Identify the party or parties involved.
- (c) Confirm the basic details, without seeking extensive information, casting judgment or asking suggestive or leading questions.
- (d) Take a detailed file note.
- (e) Remain balanced and not assess the validity of the concern(s) being raised.
- (f) 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 the College ¶ V O H J D O obligations and procedures.
- (g) Confirm that the College takes the concern seriously.
- (h) 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 the College.
- (i) Outline the process that will be followed by the College in dealing with the concern, in accordance with this policy.

7.3 The member of College staff should then:

- (a) Promptly and thoroughly manage the response of the College (including by monitoring the College ¶ V R Y H U D O O F R P S O l i c y a n d a c c o u n t i n g f o r W K L V S R alternatives if the staff member allocated to resolve the concern is unable to perform their role).
- (b) Comply with their personal reporting obligations as set out in this policy.
- (c) Notify the Principal, a Student Safety Officer or member of the Leadership Team, about the concern.
- (d) If the Student Safety Officer or member of the Leadership Team is the subject of the concern, notify the Principal about the concern.
- (e) If the Principal is the subject of the concern, notify the Chairman about the concern.

7.4 The College 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.



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- 8.4 Subject to any Police clearance which may be required, the College will otherwise deal with student-on-student behavioural issues in accordance with its student behavioural management procedures and any other relevant student discipline policies and procedures.

### **Information provided to students**

- 8.5 Students are provided with age-appropriate information during class time and through College 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.
- 8.6 Information provided to students includes, but is not limited to:
- (a) Remain calm.
  - (b) Promptly seek help and speak to a trusted staff member (including a member of the Leadership Team or a Student Safety Officer) about the concerns.
  - (c) Remember this is not your fault, you are not to blame and are not in trouble.
  - (d) Tell the story in your own words, with as much detail as you can.
  - (e) ' R Q R W E H D I U D L G R I V D \ L Q J W K H <sup>3</sup> Z U R Q J ' W K L Q J
  - (f) Listen carefully to any instructions you receive from staff (or if applicable, the Police or other authorities).
  - (g) 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).
  - (h) Be reassured that that you have done the right thing.

### **Records**

- 8.7 The College will make, keep and secure clear and contemporaneous records of any concerns raised in accordance with this policy, and the steps taken by the College to respond to those concerns.
- 8.8 The College 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, the College will ensure all staff understand relevant obligations in relation to information sharing and record-keeping.

- 8.12 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.
- 8.13 The College will also provide appropriate support to staff who make mandatory reports under this policy, or who are assisting the College or families with the process outlined in this policy.

**Cooperation with authorities**

- 8.14 The College 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**

- 8.15 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 D ³ Q H H G V W R N Q R Z ´ E D V L V

**Communication**

- 8.16 Where appropriate, the College will provide parents, carers and guardians with guidance and support where a student is the subject of a concern.
- 8.17 6 W D I I G R Q R W U H T X L U H F R Q V H Q W I U R P D V W X G H Q W ¶ V S D U H C accordance with this policy. Similarly, staff are not required to disclose that a mandatory report has been made.
- 8.18 However, the College will keep families updated a



- (b) 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.
- (c) 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.

9.13 If there is uncertainty about the need for a report to Police (or another body) you should seek advice from the Principal, the Leadership Team or a Student Safety Officer about whether you are still required to make a report.

### **The Reportable Conduct Scheme**

9.14 The Children Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005<sup>(1)</sup> established the Reportable Conduct Scheme (**Scheme**) managed by CCYP. The Scheme requires the College to report and investigate reportable allegations (as defined in the Student Safety Definitions document) against a current member of staff.

9.15 The Principal (or their delegate) will notify CCYP of any alleged G[ ]TJETQqvnktT 0 104 Tf1

(a) a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse; and

(b) WKH FKLOG ¶V SDUHQWV KDYH QRW SURWHFWHG RU DUH  
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.

9.22 Staff must check whether they are mandatory reporters.

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

### **Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT)**

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

(a) Of serious incompetence.

(b) Of serious misconduct.

(c) That the teacher is unfit to be a teacher.

(d) 7KDW WKH WHDFKHU ¶V DELOLW\ WR SUDFWLFH DV D WHD

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

- (a) Significant S D U H Q W L Q J S U R E O H P V W K D W P D \ E H D I I H F W L Q J V
- (b) Family conflict, including family breakdown.
- (c) A family under pressure due to a family member's physical or mental illness, substance abuse, disability or bereavement.
- (d) Young, isolated and/or unsupported families.
- (e) Significant social or economic disadvantage thc S32 842e(hc fyl)6( )-2RFrsempl