INTRODUCTION

This procedure forms part of the commitment of Scotch College to child safety, and applies to all forms of child abuse. It sets out how Scotch College will respond to allegations or disclosures of child abuse made by, or in relation to, a student of Scotch College, school staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors or other persons while connected to the Scotch College school environment.

The Scotch College school environment is a place made available by the School for use by a child during or outside school hours. It includes our campus in Hawthorn, our online environment (including email and intranet systems), and other locations provided for a child's use, such as locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions and other events.

These procedures should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Child Protection Commitment Statement
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Protection and Obligation of Reporting Policy

Child abuse includes:

- any act committed against a child involving a sexual offence or grooming;
- inflicting on a child any physical violence or serious emotional or psychological harm; and,
- serious neglect of a child.

ROLE OF SCHOOL STAFF

The Principal has ultimate responsibility for managing the response of Scotch College to any allegations or disclosures of child abuse, and for monitoring the School's compliance with this procedure.

Scotch College has appointed the following people to act as coordinators for reporting child abuse: the Principal, the Vice Principal, the Head of the Junior School, the Deputy Head of the Junior School, the Head of Education Support and the School’s Child Protection Officer.

The School will ensure the identity of these coordinators is well publicised throughout the School.

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OR DISCLOSURES OF CHILD ABUSE

The reporting procedures the School has adopted have been formulated to ensure that:

- the welfare of the alleged victim(s) involved remains paramount;
- the trust of the person making the allegation is maintained;
- confidentiality is provided for all boys, teachers and families involved; and,
- access to support is provided, both internally and through any appropriate external agency, to all boys, teachers and families involved, as needed.

By following these procedures, those charged with the responsibility of reporting allegations of abuse can form a comprehensive understanding of all related matters and incidents. These procedures acknowledge that issues of abuse and reporting are often highly emotional, and by discussing concerns with a designated coordinator, the person making the allegation can:

- view their concerns objectively;
- be supported against feelings of isolation and vulnerability;
- be supported in dealing with their emotional responses or related personal experiences; and,
- further support the alleged victim.

Upon being informed, or learning of, any allegation or disclosure of child abuse, all school staff, visitors, volunteers and contractors must immediately inform one of the designated coordinators or any member of the Scotch College teaching staff. Such persons are not required to make a judgement about the truth of an allegation of child abuse before reporting their concerns. Students are also encouraged to inform a designated coordinator if they have any concerns about child abuse. Information and advice can be obtained from the following:

Senior School
- Principal
- Vice Principal
- Child Protection Officer
- Head of Upper School
- Head of Middle School
- Head of House
- Head of Year
- Head of Education Support

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Child Protection – Procedure for Responding to and Reporting Allegations of Suspected Child Abuse

Once a report has been made, the School will act under the direction of the relevant agency.

Fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained in this procedure is not intended to displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.

SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN CONNECTED TO ALLEGED CHILD ABUSE

Any communication of the allegation will appropriately take into account the confidentiality and welfare of all children involved, their families and those making the allegations. In the case of an allegation of sexual abuse, the Principal will inform the Chairman of Council.

Once aware of the allegation, the School will act immediately to provide appropriate support and protection for the alleged victim of abuse and all other children involved. Advice regarding the form and source of this support and protection will be sought from the School Psychologist or relevant external agencies, ensuring that the School is sensitive to the diversity of all children, including the needs of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities and children who are vulnerable. The support might include:

- developing a case management plan for vulnerable students;
- working with the student's family to ensure the School's response is in the best interests of the safety and welfare of the student; and,
- appointing a support staff member to oversee the student's safety and welfare while at school, and to monitor the student's ongoing needs.

Support and protection for the children involved, their families and anyone else affected will be arranged by the designated coordinator who made the report in consultation with the Principal and either the Vice Principal (Senior School) or Head of Junior School (Junior School).

RECORD KEEPING

Staff members will make a clear and contemporaneous record of any disclosure or allegation of child abuse made to them. Accurate records of all supportive and protective measures, meetings, interviews, telephone conversations and the procedures followed by the School and its response will be maintained and stored securely in accordance with the School's privacy obligations and under the supervision of the Principal.

Nothing in this procedure should be read as prohibiting staff from making reports in relation to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse.

MR I TOM BATTY, PRINCIPAL
(August 2016)

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**Junior School**
- Head of Junior School
- Deputy Head of Junior School
- Child Protection Officer
- Education Support Director
- Year Level Coordinator
- Teacher-in-Charge of Pastoral Care

**Boarding House**
- Dean of Boarding
- Head of Boarding House
- Child Protection Officer
- Principal
- Vice Principal
- Head of Day House
- Head of Year

**Visitors, Volunteers and Contractors**
- Principal
- Vice Principal
- Child Protection Officer
- Head of the Junior School
- Bursar

The person making the allegation should, and the staff member contacted will, keep notes of the concerns that led to the allegation of abuse being made. This will assist mandated staff members and designated coordinators to prepare a comprehensive account of the behaviours and concerns involved.

The person making the allegation, or the staff member contacted, should, in the first instance, and as soon as practicable, discuss the matter with one of the designated coordinators. In the case of an allegation of sexual abuse, the Principal must also be informed as soon as is practicable.

In appropriate cases, including where an allegation or disclosure of sexual abuse has been made, the Principal, with the assistance of the designated coordinator, will make a report to the police or Child Protection Services (Department of Human Services). The nature of the alleged abuse determines which of the two agencies will be contacted. This contact will be documented by the designated coordinator, and the person who brought the matter forward will be informed that the relevant agency has been contacted.

If a view is formed by the designated coordinator in consultation with the Principal that the matter brought forward does not require a report, detailed notes will be maintained for future reference, and the person bringing the matter forward will be informed. Mandated staff are required by law to report to relevant authorities all matters in which they have formed a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection because he/she (the child) has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse, and his/her (the child’s) parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, him/her (the child).