

INITIAL RESPONSE OF STAFF TO A STUDENT REPORTING OR ALLEGING SEXUAL ASSAULT

A Brief summary of the School's expectations of staff. This applies to all staff including teaching and non-teaching staff, volunteers and health staff.

- 1. Treat report seriously and without delay**
All reports or allegations of sexual assault, whether by students or staff, **MUST** be taken seriously. This applies whether the alleged assault took place while the student/staff member is under the care of the school (on or off campus) or not.
The person to whom the student/staff member reveals an alleged sexual assault **MUST** respond at once without any delay.
- 2. Inform a Senior Staff member**
The staff member initially involved **MUST** report the allegation to a Senior Staff member (Head of Campus and Director of Student Welfare) as a matter of urgency. The Senior Staff member **MUST** investigate the allegations within the first 24 hours of it being reported. The Senior Staff member will report the allegations to the families concerned if it is deemed appropriate.
- 3. Medical involvement.**
If the sexual assault has been recent and penetration took place, urgent referral for medical advice must occur in case of risk of pregnancy and/or STD or physical injury. An examination may also be required for medico-legal purposes.
- 4. Document all information and action taken**
The person to whom the student has revealed sexual assault, and those subsequently involved in the care of the student **MUST** record the information and action taken contemporaneously. This is to assist in the ongoing care of the student/staff member and also for possible legal action. The original document or signed copy should be lodged in a secure file held by the Head of Campus or Vice Principal.

IMPORTANT FACTORS TO CONSIDER

- 1. Respect confidentiality**
At all times the student/staff member should be assured of confidentiality, but informed that a senior staff member and Head of House need to know. The need to inform parents should be discussed with the student, particularly in the case of a mature student who might expect that their right for confidentiality should extend to their parents. In all serious allegations however, particularly in a minor (under the age of 18), parents should be informed as early as possible **unless there are exceptional circumstances. The student must be given the opportunity to nominate an adult of their choice to be present at the interview. A second adult should be present at all interviews conducted by the School following initial reporting of allegation. A female adult is strongly recommended if interviewing a female student.**
- 2. Question of mandatory reporting**
If the student is under the age of 17 and is considered at ongoing risk for further abuse, mandatory reporting to the Department of Human Services should be considered after discussion with the Head of Campus. This applies particularly if there are allegations that the sexual assault took place outside the school and the parents were unable to protect their child.
- 3. School policies and guidelines.**
Staff must follow School Guidelines for response to claim of sexual assault.

Dr John Court
Chief Medical Officer
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