

Fact sheet

Keeping your learners safe using the Conduct Reporting Guide

Have you ever been in a situation where you should report a concern about the conduct of a registered teacher within your school or early childhood service? What about a situation that involved another member of your school or early childhood community – a parent, student or non-teaching staff member?

Did you know how to report it and was the process clear? Did you feel supported and confident to make the report?

The VIT has launched a [conduct reporting guide](#) to help teachers to understand and act on child safety matters. The guide also assists parents, learners, the general public, schools and early childhood services in reporting concerns about the conduct of any person employed in a Victorian education setting.

The guide includes a wide range of practical scenarios and various conduct concerns individuals may be obligated to report on, such as criminal behaviour (sexual and non-sexual), inappropriate conduct, teacher registration concerns, and school / service-based concerns. If you have concerns about someone's conduct, the guide outlines who to report your concerns to, maps out which organisations are involved following a report, and explains the relationship between the VIT and other co-regulators.

Use the following scenarios to help build your understanding.



Scenario #1 – school principal

You're the Assistant Principal of a local primary school.

You arrive to the school early one morning and notice a learner engaging with a teacher in the playground. As you walk past, you hear the teacher using offensive language and can see the learner is visibly distressed. The teacher is a popular and well-respected staff member at the school.

You understand that you have an obligation to tell someone about this, but you feel uncomfortable about the allegation and you're unsure how to go about it.

- what do you do?
- what would you do if you reported the incident to the Principal and school board, but you didn't believe they handled the incident correctly?
- what if it wasn't a teacher using offensive language, but a parent in your school community? What if it was a non-teaching staff member at the school?
- would you react differently if the incident involved physical conduct, rather than verbal conduct?



Scenario #2 – early childhood manager

You're the Assistant Manager of a local kindergarten chain.

You arrive to the centre early one morning and notice a child engaging with a teacher in the playground. As you walk past, you hear the teacher using offensive language and can see the child is visibly distressed. The teacher is a popular and well-respected staff member at the kindergarten.

You understand that you have an obligation to tell someone about this, but you feel uncomfortable about the allegation and you're unsure how to go about it.

- what do you do?
- what would you do if you reported the incident to your manager and the centre's board, but you didn't believe they handled the incident correctly?
- what if it wasn't a teacher using offensive language, but a parent? What if it was a non-teaching staff member at the centre?
- would you react differently if the incident involved physical conduct, rather than verbal conduct?

Understanding your child safety reporting obligations

The impact of the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry and Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has dramatically changed the public expectations of teacher conduct and behaviour.

A crucial role for teachers and early childhood teachers is to [respond effectively to children and young people](#) whose safety and wellbeing may be at risk, or who are in need of protection.

All registered teachers in Victoria are [mandated to report physical and sexual abuse of children](#) to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Child Protection. In some cases, you might be legally required to report matters – but how do you know what you should (or could) report, and who to report it to?

Conduct reporting guide

The [conduct reporting guide](#) was developed in collaboration with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA), the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) and the Quality Assessment and Regulation Division of the Victorian Department of Education and Training (QARD). These organisations frequently work together to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.



The [Victorian Teaching Profession's Codes of Conduct and Ethics](#) support all teachers to understand the expectations of the teaching profession and the community in relation to their professional conduct, personal conduct and professional competence.

Supporting your professional learning

The [Child Protection and Child Safe Standards \(PROTECT\)](#) *Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations eLearning modules* are available for all school and early childhood staff. These modules explore teachers' responsibilities for protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

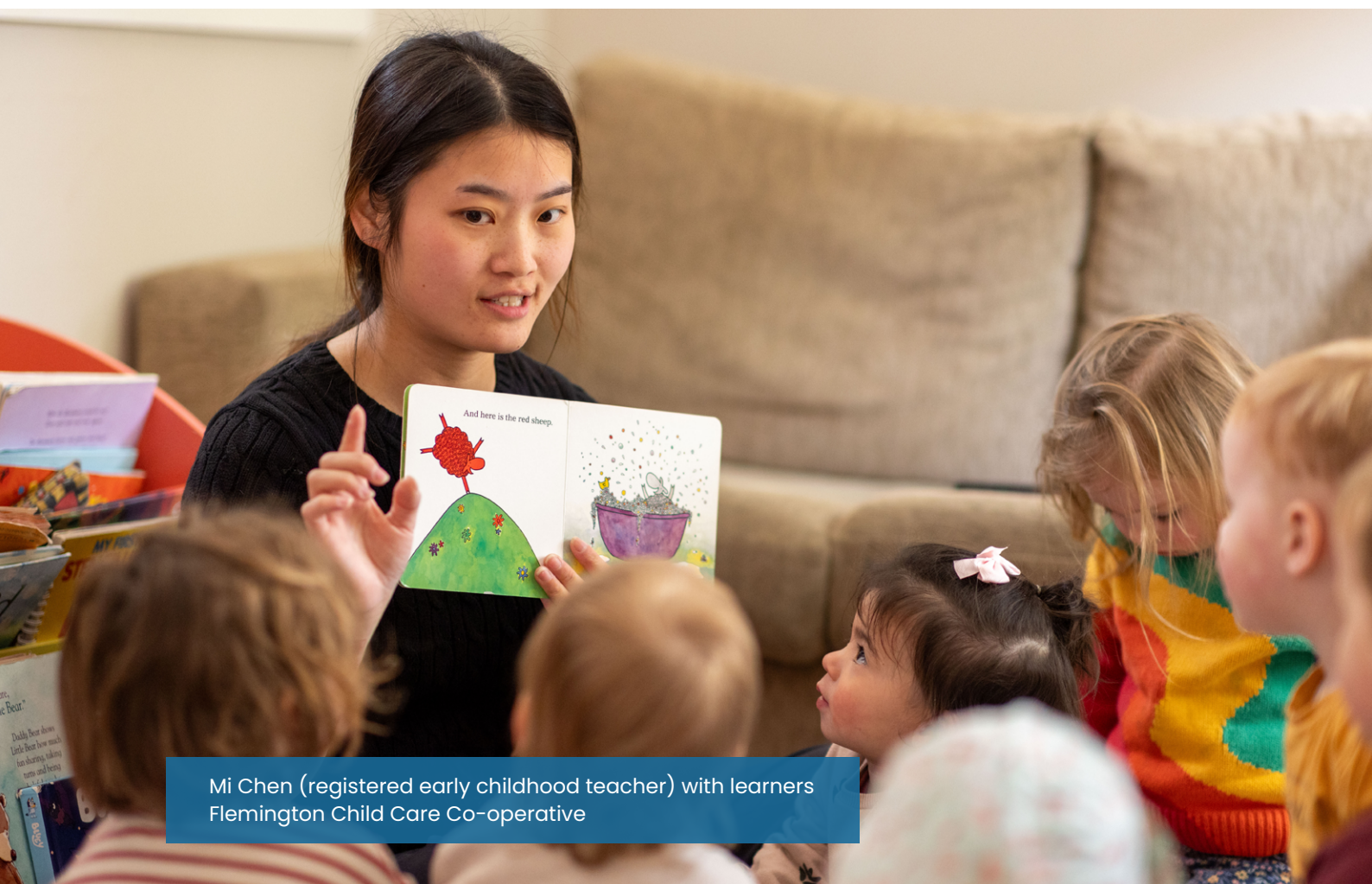
All staff working in [schools](#) and [early childhood settings](#) within Victoria – particularly those with mandatory reporting obligations – are strongly encouraged to regularly undertake and complete the relevant online module.

Teachers are also strongly encouraged to attend a [VIT Code of Conduct webinar](#) and make use of the Code [resources](#) available on the VIT website.



Resources

- [download the guide](#) to report conduct concerns about other registered teachers within a school or early childhood setting
- watch a hypothetical conduct [case study video](#)
- download the [parent fact sheet](#) for information on where to report school / early childhood setting based concerns



Mi Chen (registered early childhood teacher) with learners
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