Rationale
Weeroona College Bendigo (WCB) is a child safe school and has zero tolerance to child abuse. All children have a right to feel safe and to be safe. As teachers, we have a legal and moral responsibility to respond to serious incidences involving abuse and neglect of the children with whom we have contact, and to report instances that we believe involve physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect.

Aim
To ensure that children’s’ rights to be safe are maintained and each child is protected against physical and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Implementation
- All members of the Teaching Service are mandated by law to report signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, and neglect.
- New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures as part of their induction procedure.
- Staff will be reminded of mandatory responsibilities annually.
- All concerns must be reported immediately to a member of the Student Wellbeing team or a member of the Principal Team.
- The Student Wellbeing or Principal Team Member will keep a record of all discussions about a student with whom there is a concern.
- If a belief has been formed by a staff member that sexual or physical abuse has taken place the teacher/Student Wellbeing or Principal Team Member will contact the Department of Human Services by telephone the Department of Human Services – Child Protection office in Bendigo as soon as possible to make an official notification. If sexual abuse is suspected staff will follow the DET Responding to Allegations of Student Sexual Assault Flowchart.
- Members of the Department of Human Services, or associated support or intervention services that visit the school following a notification, will interview staff and children only in the presence of a Principal class member or his/her nominee.
- All reports, information sheets and subsequent discussions and information are to be recorded and remain strictly confidential.
- All incidents are to be monitored, and any subsequent signs or indications of abuse are also to be reported.
- While only mandated by law to report incidents of physical and sexual abuse, and neglect; teachers are asked to report incidents of emotional abuse or neglect.
- Students, who disclose to staff a desire to harm themselves or others, must be reported by staff to a member of the Student Wellbeing Team.
- All staff are reminded that fulfilling their role and responsibilities does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.

Evaluation
This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle.