



# Child Protection Compliance

## Child Protection Compliance Policy

### Blackall Range Independent School

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### PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide written processes to ensure that Blackall Range Independent School complies with legislation applying in Queensland about the care and protection of children. In particular, the policy sets out a risk management strategy for the purpose of reducing the risk of harm to children.

#### **Scope**

This policy applies to all staff, including volunteers, and other operators associated with Blackall Range Independent School and covers information about the school's commitment to child protection, procedures related to recruiting, selecting, training and managing staff; policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines; risk identification and management; and communication and support.

#### **Responsibility**

School Executive Board

#### **Point of Contact**

Facilities Operation Executive (or appointee)

### LEGISLATION

#### **Relevant Legislation**

*Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 (Qld)*  
*Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Regulation 2001 (Qld)*  
*Education (General Provisions Act) 2006 (Qld)*  
*Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2006 (Qld)*  
*Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act, 2005 (Qld)*  
*Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001 (Qld)*  
*Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001(Qld)*  
*Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth)*  
*Education (Overseas Students) Act 1996 (Qld)*

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Blackall Range Independent School Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Homestay Risk Management Strategy.

The *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000*, Section 99G, requires a 'regulated business' to develop and implement a 'risk management strategy'. The *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Regulation 2001* prescribes the following specific criteria of the strategy as follows:

- a) a statement about commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm

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- b) a Code of Conduct for interacting with children and young people
- c) procedures for recruiting, selecting, training and managing people engaged or proposed to be engaged by the school
- d) policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines
- e) a risk management strategy
- f) policies and procedures for implementing and reviewing the risk management strategy
- g) policies and procedures for keeping a written record about each person engaged by the school; for example (a) whether or not the school must apply for a prescribed notice (blue card) about the person; and (b) whether or not an application for a prescribed notice has been made by the school about the person; and (c) if a positive notice has been issued for the person—the date of expiry of the notice
- h) risk management plans for high risk activities and special events
- i) strategies for communication and support, including— (i) written information for parents and persons engaged by the school that includes details of the school’s risk management strategy or where the strategy can be accessed; and (ii) training materials for persons engaged by the school to, (a) help identify risks of harm and how to handle disclosures or suspicions of harm; and (b) outline the school’s risk management strategy.

## POLICY

Blackall Range Independent School is committed to the protection of all children in its care. In order to manage the risks surrounding child protection the following policies and procedures apply at the School/College.

### Child Protection Policy

The Blackall Range Independent School has a current Child Protection Policy which meets criteria as set down in legislation and regulation. The Policy outlines policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines and is available:

- on the School website;
- in the Staff Policy Handbook;
- at reception; and
- a summarised copy of the policy is in staff and student handbooks.

In addition, the school’s policy and attitude towards child protection is conveyed via the school website and the newsletter on a regular basis, including details about how to report harm or suspected harm. Students are also informed at assembly and in regular classroom meetings about how to protect themselves and who to report to if they are concerned about their safety.

### Blue Cards

All staff members, volunteers, including Board members, homestay parents and other people in contact with students of the school must have current blue cards where required by legislation.

The School maintains a register of:

- all teacher registration numbers
- all blue card numbers and the dates for renewal.
- Pre service teachers, relief teachers, step parents, grandparents

### Choosing Staff

Blackall Range Independent School recognises that risk management for child protection begins with the recruiting, screening and selection of the right people to work in schools, and continues by having consistent procedures in place for all staff (including volunteers) (parent contradeal volunteers) and contractors to follow, with adequate management and supervision to ensure they comply with these procedures.

The School, therefore, has a written policy on the selection, supervision and management of staff, volunteers and contractors, such as homestay parents.

## **Selection**

### **1. Job Analysis**

All positions at Blackall Range Independent School are subject to a job analysis before they are advertised. This analysis includes:

- summarising the duties to be performed in the job;
- deciding how much supervision it involves;
- deciding who the supervisor will be;
- the equipment/work aids used to perform the duties of the job;
- outlining the physical environment of the work;
- listing the physical skills or abilities needed to perform the work;
- determining the schools' requirements in relation to the job, e.g. criminal history check requirements, minimum educational level, first aid qualifications, bus or car licence;
- listing special skills or qualifications required for the job; and
- indicating any special training that may be necessary after the employee enters the job.

### **2. Duty Statement**

The job analysis is used by the School as the basis for developing a job description/duty statement which targets the skills and experience necessary for working with children and young people. Duty statements are developed for all positions in the school, including voluntary and contract positions.

The duty statement makes explicit the mandatory conditions for ongoing employment, including the Code of Conduct under which staff members, volunteers and contractors are expected to work, and is the basis for the selection criteria for the position. Questions at interview will be based on the criteria developed from the duty statement.

The selection process for a position identifies whether people applying have the particular skills, knowledge, abilities and, where relevant, qualifications required to do the job, as well as the personal qualities an employer is looking for.

Before the selection interview, the selection panel develops reasonable but probing questions that relate to:

- an applicants work history, background and attitudes; and
- the selection criteria.

Following the selection interview, and before appointment, the selection panel:

- undertakes a thorough verification from referees that the applicant has the right qualities for the position, including the ability to work effectively with children; and
- checks that the applicant is a registered teacher or has a blue card.

### **3. Screening**

It is the policy of the School that all members of staff, volunteers, (parent contradeal volunteers) and contractors are cleared to work with children:

- all members of academic staff are registered or provisionally registered with the Queensland College of Teachers, or have received special dispensation from the College;
- all non-teaching members of staff and all volunteers, (Parent contradeal volunteers) and contractors (including Board members), who are required to hold a blue card, have a current card;
- in some cases, deemed appropriate by the School, paid or unpaid employees who work with children but are not required to hold a blue card (e.g. a parent volunteer) may be asked to consent to a criminal history check through the Queensland Police Service;

- where volunteer parents are working with children, it will be in the presence of academic or non-teaching staff who are cleared to work with children.

## Induction

Blackall Range Independent School has a written induction process which applies to all staff, volunteers, (parent contradeal volunteers) and contractors (hereafter called 'staff') during the first twelve months of appointment, and includes procedures for making staff members aware of the legislation on Child Protection and the Code of Conduct expected of staff.

The Induction process includes, but is not limited to:

- professional development about identifying and reporting harm or suspected harm;
- making staff aware of the protocols for the protection of children (see below);
- working through policies related to child protection such as;
  - behaviour management;
  - anti-bullying; and
  - disabilities' policy.

## Protocols

It should be noted that it is a policy of the School that:

- staff members to the best of their ability limit situations where they are alone with individual students in areas where they cannot be seen by other staff members or students;
- all interviews with a child in relation to behaviour management issues are carried out in the presence of at least two members of staff; where staffing and timetabling allows otherwise, see above
- staff members do not use their private vehicles to transport students without the permission of the principal;
- staff members do not invite students to their homes without the permission of the principal.

## Professional Development

All staff members are required, on an annual basis, to sign a register that they have read and understood the School's Child Protection Policy.

In addition, the School provides Professional Development in relation to child protection on a regular basis and a register is kept of such activities.

## Dealing with Incidents

The School keeps a register in the Principal's office of all incidents related to sexual abuse, harm or inappropriate behaviour.

Where legislation requires, incidents of harm or suspected harm are reported to the relevant state authorities immediately, and the incident is noted in the register.

Where an incident of inappropriate behaviour is reported, full details, including the steps taken to resolve the incident, are entered in the register.

Staff, parents and students can access the School's comprehensive complaints handling procedure in cases where an issue is not resolved to their satisfaction.

## Risk Management Strategy

### 1. Identify risks

A risk is anything that can cause harm, either physically, psychologically or emotionally. It could be caused by a faulty piece of equipment, a poorly planned excursion, abuse, neglect, communication misunderstandings, leaving students alone in a car park while they wait for a lift from a friend, and so on.

Blackall Range Independent School has a Risk Management Representative with the role of identifying risks to students of the school, whether on campus or involved in school related activities off campus. All staff members are expected to report risk situations to the Committee, as well as to identify risks related to activities under their supervision and to comply with all policies of the school that have been established for the safety of children.

Risks can be identified through:

- audits or physical inspections
- brainstorming
- decision trees
- examining local or overseas experience
- expert judgment
- flow charting, system design review, systems analysis
- history, failure analysis
- incidents or complaints
- interviews/focus groups
- operational modelling
- organisational experience
- personal experience
- scenario analysis
- SWOT Analysis
- survey or questionnaire
- systems engineering techniques, e.g. Hazard and Operability (HAZOP) studies
- work breakdown structure analysis.

These **key questions** help to identify risks:

- When, where, why, how are the risks likely to occur?
- What is the source of each risk?
- Who might be involved?
- How often might these risks occur?
- How reliable is the information?
- What are the consequences of each risk?
- What is the potential cost in time, money and resources?
- What controls presently exist to mitigate the risk?
- What are the accountability mechanisms - internal and external?
- Is there a need to research specific risks or seek further information?

Staff members who are involved in identifying risks must be knowledgeable about the policy, program, process or activity being reviewed and, where it is complex, consult with experts who may assist them.

Some risks will not lend themselves to objective analysis or observation, and the cost of collecting all data might be too great for the benefits provided.

## **2. Analyse risks**

After identifying a wide range of risks, the next step is to separate the minor risks from the major and to begin to prioritise the risks. The level of risk is defined by the relationship between consequence and likelihood, applicable to the area of risk or program under review.

Answer these **key questions** to define risk levels:

- What are the potential consequences of each risk if it occurs?
- What is the potential likelihood of the risk happening?
- What controls exist to prevent or detect the risk?
- What controls exist which will lower the consequences or likelihood of the risk?
- How well are these controls enforced by management?

### 3. Evaluate and prioritise

After analysing the risk, decisions can be made by you or by the organisation regarding whether the risk is acceptable or unacceptable. This involves comparing the level of risk with the identified level of unacceptable risk.

A risk is called 'acceptable' if it is not going to be treated. Unacceptable risks will be treated in some way. Evaluation should take account of the degree of control over each risk and the cost impact, benefits and opportunities presented by the risks. Combining likelihood and consequences will produce risk levels.

#### Level of risk

		Consequences				
		Insignificant	Minor	Major	Critical	Extreme
Likelihood	Almost Certain	Medium	Serious	High	High	High
	Likely	Medium	Medium	Serious	High	High
	Possible	Low	Medium	Serious	Serious	High
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Serious
	Rare	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Serious

#### Risk descriptors

<b>High risk</b>	Immediate action required, school executive will be involved
<b>Serious risk</b>	School executive management attention needed and management responsibility specified
<b>Medium risk</b>	Manage by specific monitoring or response procedures
<b>Low risk</b>	Manage by routine procedures, unlikely to need specific application of resources

Answer these **key questions** to assess whether a risk is acceptable:

- How does the level of each risk stand up against the level of acceptable risk?
- Is the level of the risk so low that treatment is not appropriate?
- Do the opportunities outweigh the threats to such a degree that the risk is justified?
- Is the cost excessive compared to the benefit?
- Is there no treatment available?

### 4. Treat risks

Risk cannot be eliminated, but choosing and implementing a treatment plan will help to master the risk.

A number of options are available:

- accept

- avoid
- reduce
- transfer

**Assess treatment or control options** to minimise risk by asking:

- What is the feasibility of each treatment option?
- What is the cost of implementing versus the benefits?
- What is the extent of risk reduction versus the benefits?
- What are the resources needed (people, money, technical)?
- Do the risk treatments comply with legal, insurance requirements, government and organisational policies, including those concerning access, equity, ethics and accountability?
- What are the criteria of acceptability?
- What opportunities are created by the risk?
- Are there rare but severe risks?

Prepare treatment plans by deciding:

- Which option is the best choice?
- What will be monitored and reviewed to determine the success of the treatment?
- Who is best placed to treat each risk, either through better knowledge, technical expertise or financial capability?
- What job design and work organisation options are appropriate for staff treating the risks?
- Who is accountable and responsible for the treatment of the risk?

**Implement your treatment plan** by following these steps:

- develop the policy
- establish the infrastructure, including management commitment, responsibility and authority and resources
- develop and establish the program at organisational level
- address management of cross-organisational risks
- manage program, project and team level risks
- manage individual level risks
- develop performance indicators to monitor the levels of risk, the performance of the treatment measures and the risk treatments.

## **5. Monitor and review**

You need to monitor risks, the effectiveness of your treatment plan or strategies and the management system that you set up to control the implementation. Review and monitor risks on an 'as needed' basis. Some risks should be reviewed daily, while others can be addressed at the start of semester, biannually or annually.

**Key questions** when monitoring and reviewing risks are:

- Are the risk treatments effective in minimising the risks?
- Are the risk treatments comparatively efficient/cost effective in minimising risks?
- Do the performance indicators address the key elements for risk treatment?
- Are the assumptions you made about the environment, technology and resources still valid?
- Are the management and accounting controls adequate?
- Do the risk treatments comply with legal requirements, government and organisational policies, including access, equity, ethics and accountability?
- How can improvements be made?

## **6. Risk Management Checklist**

Refer to the Appendix for a Risk Management Checklist for Child Protection Compliance

## POLICY RELEASE DETAILS

### ***Date of Policy***

Reviewed- September 2010

### ***Approved by***

School Executive Board

Signature:

Date:

### ***Review Date***

Biennially

## RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Child Protection Policy  
Staff Code of Conduct  
Anti-bullying policy  
Sexual Harassment policy  
Privacy Policy  
Grievance/Complaints Policy  
Recruitment and Selection Procedures  
Anti-Discrimination Policy  
Excursion Procedures  
Duty of Care Handbook

## APPENDIX – RISK MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

Element	N	D	I	NA	Evidence	Review date
<p><b>COMMITMENT TO A CHILD-SAFE CULTURE</b></p> <p>Child protection policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>statement of commitment to children’s wellbeing and protecting them from harm</li> <li>Code of Conduct: standards of language and behaviour for working with children</li> <li>Responsibilities, procedures and consequences for non-compliance with child protection policy.</li> </ul>						
<p><b>BUILDING PEOPLE’S CAPABILITIES</b></p> <p>Information, training and development for staff, volunteers, parents, children re:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child abuse and child protection</li> <li>Role-specific child protection duties, e.g. people working with children, supervisor/manager, contact person for Child Protection/Risk Mgt.</li> <li>Risk management processes and requirements</li> <li>Handling complaints and disclosures of harm</li> <li>Involving and empowering children and young people</li> <li>Rights and expectations of parents and children.</li> </ul>						
<p><b>CONSISTENT PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTS</b></p> <p>Risk management for child protection explicit in guidelines for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selecting, supervising and managing staff and volunteers (incl. blue card status)</li> <li>Planning for activities and special events</li> </ul> <p>Forms and registers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk management register (risks identified, assessed, treated and reviewed)</li> <li>Register of staff/volunteer Blue Card status</li> <li>Permissions/approvals</li> <li>Incident register</li> <li>Register of complaints and disclosures of harm.</li> </ul> <p>Financial commitment to child protection strategies.</p>						

**CODE: N – Not done D – Developing I – Implementing N/A – Not applicable SIGNED/DATE:**