

## Child Protection Policy

<b>Purpose:</b>	The purpose of this policy is to provide a policy as part of Blackall Range Independent School's written processes about how the school will respond to harm, or allegations or harm, to enrolled students, and the appropriate conduct of the school's staff and students, to comply with accreditation requirements.	
<b>Scope:</b>	Students and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements at Blackall Range Independent School and covers information about the reporting of harm and abuse.	
<b>Status:</b>	Current	<b>Supersedes:</b> BRIS Child Protection Policy 20 <sup>th</sup> July, 2020
<b>Authorised by:</b>	Blackall Range Independent School Executive	<b>Date of Authorisation:</b> 20 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
<b>References:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection Act 1999 <a href="https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1999-010">https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1999-010</a></li> <li>• Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (QLD) <a href="https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/inforce/current/act-2011-018">https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/inforce/current/act-2011-018</a></li> <li>• Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 <a href="https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2006-039">https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2006-039</a></li> <li>• Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 <a href="https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/inforce/2017-09-01/sl-2017-0161">https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/inforce/2017-09-01/sl-2017-0161</a></li> <li>• Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 <a href="https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/asmade/act-2017-024">https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/asmade/act-2017-024</a></li> <li>• Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 <a href="https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/asmade/sl-2017-0197">https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/asmade/sl-2017-0197</a></li> <li>• Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 <a href="https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/inforce/current/act-2000-060">https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/inforce/current/act-2000-060</a></li> <li>• Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2020 <a href="https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/asmade/sl-2020-0131">https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/asmade/sl-2020-0131</a></li> <li>• Blackall Range Independent School Dispute Resolution/Complaints Handling Policy</li> <li>• Blackall Range Independent School Dispute Resolution/Complaints Handling Procedure</li> <li>• Blackall Range Independent School Child Risk Management Strategy (for the <i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000</i> (Qld))</li> <li>• Blackall Range Independent School Work Health and Safety Policy (for the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> (Qld))</li> </ul>	
<b>Review Date:</b>	Annually	<b>Next Review Date:</b>
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Blackall Range Independent School Executive	

## Definitions

- **Section 9 of the *Child Protection Act 1999* - “Harm”**, to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child’s physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.
  1. It is immaterial how the harm is caused.
  2. Harm can be caused by—
    - a) physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or
    - b) sexual abuse or exploitation.
  3. Harm can be caused by—
    - a) a single act, omission or circumstance
    - b) a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.
  
- **Section 10 of the *Child Protection Act 1999* - A “child in need of protection”** is a student who—
  - a) has suffered significant harm, is suffering significant harm, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm  
**and**
  - b) does not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.
  
- **Section 364 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* - “Sexual abuse”**, in relation to a relevant person, includes sexual behaviour involving the relevant person and another person in the following circumstances –
  - (a) the other person bribes, coerces, exploits, threatens or is violent toward the relevant person
  - (b) the relevant person has less power than the other person
  - (c) there is a significant disparity between the relevant person and the other person in intellectual capacity or maturity.

## **Health and Safety**

The school has written processes in place to enable it to comply with the requirements of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (QLD)* and the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000. (QLD)*.

## **Responding to Reports of Harm**

When the school receives any information alleging 'harm'<sup>1</sup> to a student (other than harm arising from physical or sexual abuse) it will deal with the situation compassionately and fairly, so as to minimise any likely harm to the extent it reasonably can. This is set out in the school’s Child Risk Management Strategy. Information relating to physical or sexual abuse is handled under obligations to report set out in this policy<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(7)*: the definition of 'harm' for this regulation is the same as in section 9 of the *Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)*

<sup>2</sup> *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(1)*

## Conduct of Staff and Students

All staff, contractors and volunteers must ensure that their behaviour towards and relationships with students reflect proper standards of care for students. Staff, contractors and volunteers must not cause harm to students<sup>3</sup>.

## Reporting Inappropriate Behaviour

If a student considers the behaviour of a staff member, to be inappropriate, the student should report the behaviour to: -

The School Principal/Acting Principal

or

The School Social Welfare Officer

or

A trusted teacher<sup>4</sup>

## Dealing with Report of Inappropriate Behaviour

A staff member who receives a report of inappropriate behaviour must report it to the Principal. Where the Principal is the subject of the report of inappropriate behaviour, the staff member must inform a member of the school's governing body<sup>5</sup>. Reports will be dealt with under the school's Dispute Resolution/Complaints Handling Policy.

## Reporting Sexual Abuse<sup>6</sup>

Section 366 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* states that if a staff member becomes aware, or reasonably suspects, in the course of their employment at the school, that any of the following has been or is likely to be sexually abused by another person:

- a) a student under 18 years attending the school;
- b) a person with a disability who: -
  - i. under section 420(2) of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* is being provided with special education at the school; and
  - ii. is not enrolled in the preparatory year at the school.

then the staff member must give a written report about the abuse or suspected abuse to the Principal or to a director of the school's governing body immediately.

The school's Principal or the director of the school's governing body must immediately give a copy of the report to a police officer.

(Under section 366B of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* the directors of a school's governing body may delegate the directors' function under section 366 to an appropriately qualified individual (this cannot be the Principal or any other staff member of the school). Directors should ensure they are well briefed about the requirements of section 366B before delegating this function, including identifying the delegation in this policy and informing the school community of the delegate/s name/s their contacts, and their role in the school's processes.)

<sup>3</sup> *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(1)*

<sup>4</sup> *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(2) and s.16(3)*

<sup>5</sup> *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(2)*

<sup>6</sup> *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(2)(c)*

If the first person who becomes aware or reasonably suspects sexual abuse is the school's Principal, the Principal must give a written report about the abuse, or suspected abuse to a police officer immediately and must also give a copy of the report to a director of the school's governing body.

A report under this section must include the following particulars: -

- a) the name of the person giving the report (the **first person**);
- b) the student's name and sex;
- c) details of the basis for the first person becoming aware, or reasonably suspecting, that the student has been sexually abused by another person;
- d) details of the abuse or suspected abuse;
- e) any of the following information of which the first person is aware: -
  - i. the student's age;
  - ii. the identity of the person who has abused, or is suspected to have abused, or be likely to abuse, the student;
  - iii. the identity of anyone else who may have information about the abuse or suspected abuse<sup>7</sup>.

### Reporting Likely Sexual Abuse<sup>8</sup>

Section 366A of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* states that if a staff member reasonably suspects in the course of their employment at the school, that any of the following is likely to be sexually abused by another person: -

- a) a student under 18 years attending the school;
- b) a person with a disability who: -
  - i. under section 420(2) of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* is being provided with special education at the school; and
  - ii. is not enrolled in the preparatory year at the school.

then the staff member must give a written report about the suspicion to the Principal or to a director of the school's governing body immediately.

The school's Principal or the director of the school's governing body must immediately give a copy of the report to a police officer.

(Under section 366B of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* the directors of a school's governing body may delegate the directors' function under section 366 to an appropriately qualified individual (this cannot be the Principal or any other staff member of the school). Directors should ensure they are well briefed about the requirements of section 366B before delegating this function, including identifying the delegation in this policy and informing the school community of the delegate/s name/s, their contacts and their role in the school's processes.)

If the first person who reasonably suspects likely sexual abuse is the school's Principal, the Principal must give a written report about the suspicion to a police officer immediately and must also give a copy of the report to a director of the school's governing body.

A report under this section must include the following particulars: -

- a) the name of the person giving the report (the **first person**);
- b) the student's name and sex;
- c) details of the basis for the first person reasonably suspecting that the student is likely to be sexually abused by another person;
- d) any of the following information of which the first person is aware: -
  - i. the student's age;
  - ii. the identity of the person who is suspected to be likely to sexually abuse the student;

<sup>7</sup> *Education (General provisions) Regulation 2017 (QLD) s. 68*

<sup>8</sup> *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(2)(c)*

- iii. the identity of anyone else who may have information about suspected likelihood of abuse.

## Reporting Physical and Sexual Abuse<sup>9</sup>

Under Section 13E (3) of the *Child Protection Act 1999*, if a doctor, a registered nurse, a teacher or an early education and care professional forms a 'reportable suspicion' about a child in the course of their engagement in their profession, they must make a written report.

A **reportable suspicion** about a child is a reasonable suspicion that the child: -

- a) has suffered, is suffering, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse; and
- b) may not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.

The doctor, nurse, teacher or early education and care professional must give a written report to the Chief Executive of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (or other department administering the *Child Protection Act 1999*). The doctor, nurse, teacher or early education and care professional should give a copy of the report to the Principal.

A report under this section must include the following particulars: -

- the child's name and sex;
- the child's age;
- details of how to contact the child
- 
- details of the harm to which the reportable suspicion relates;
- particulars of the identity of the person suspected of causing the student to have suffered, suffer, or be at risk of suffering, the harm to which the reportable suspicion relates;
- particulars of the identity of anyone other person who may be able to give information about the harm to which the reportable suspicion relates<sup>10</sup>.

North Coast Regional Intake Service                      1300 703 921

## Awareness

The school will inform staff, students and parents of its processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students in communications to them and it will publish these processes on its website<sup>11</sup>.

The school will:

- (a) Publish this and other related policies on the school website, so that it is available for staff, students and families;
- (b) Inform parents about this policy as part of their induction and enrolment material for the school;
- (c) Ensure that staff members acknowledge that they have read and understood this policy;
- (d) Remind staff, current and new, of their obligations in relation to this policy at the commencement of each school year;
- (e) Ensure that a hard copy is available from the school's administration office upon request;

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<sup>9</sup> Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (QLD) s. 16 (2)(d)

<sup>10</sup> Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (QLD) s. 68A

<sup>11</sup> Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(4)(a)

## Training

The school will train its staff in processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students on their induction and will refresh training annually.<sup>12</sup>

The governing body will liaise with the Principals to minute in the monthly executive meeting that the child protection training has occurred.

## Implementing the Processes

The school will ensure it is implementing processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students by auditing compliance with the processes annually<sup>13</sup>.

## Complaints Procedure

Suggestions of non-compliance with the school's processes may be submitted as complaints under Blackall Range Independent School Complaints Policy (Students and Parents)<sup>14</sup>.

## Useful Contacts

- Department of Education: Student Protection Procedure  
<https://ppr.ged.qld.gov.au/attachment/student-protection-procedure.pdf>
- Blue Card Services (Public Safety Business Agency), telephone 07 3211 6999 or 1800 113 611
- Queensland College of Teachers, telephone 07 3377 4777
- Police (Brisbane City North), telephone 07 3364 6464
- Child Safety Services (Department of Communities) Brisbane Regional Intake Services, telephone 1300 682 254
- Child Safety After Hours Service Centre, telephone 1800 177 135
- Family and Child Connect 13 32 64
- Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800

## Related Documents

BRIS Child Risk Management Policy

BRIS Policy Complaints Handling Policy

BRIS Privacy Policy

BRIS Work Health and Safety Policy

BRIS Anti-Discrimination Policy

Child Protection Reporting Diagram - [5a064974-3c3e-4430-a049-16d2645b9203\\_SBS\\_DecisionTree\\_PrincipalChildProtection.pdf](#)

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<sup>12</sup> *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(4)(c)*

<sup>13</sup> *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(4)(d)*

<sup>14</sup> *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(5) and s. 16(6)*