

Child Protection Policy

Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to provide written processes about – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) how the College will respond to harm, or allegations of harm, to students under 18 years; and (b) the appropriate conduct of the College’s staff and students to comply with accreditation requirements.	
Scope:	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 St Peters Lutheran College Springfield and covers information about the reporting of harm and abuse	
Status:	Approved	
Authorised by:	College Council	Date of Approval: February 2023
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld) • Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld) • Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (Qld) • Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld) • Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) • Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld) • Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulations 2020 (Qld) • Criminal Code Act 1899 (sections 229BB and 229BC) • Blue Card Services • Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit • Restricted Person Declaration Form • St Peters Lutheran College Springfield Grievance Policy and Procedure • St Peters Lutheran College Child Risk Management Strategy (for the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)) • St Peters Lutheran College Springfield Workplace Health and Safety Policy (for the Work) • Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld) • St Peters Lutheran College Springfield Staff Code of Conduct • St Peters Lutheran College Springfield Behaviour Management Guidelines found in the student handbooks 	
Review Date:	Annually	Next Review Date: February 2024
Policy Owner:	College Council	

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; or
 - 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 child 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 College 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 College receives any information alleging 'harm'¹ 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 College’s Child Risk Management Strategy. Information relating to physical or sexual abuse is handled under obligations to report set out in this policy².

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 students³.

Reporting Inappropriate Behaviour

The incident reporting template (Appendix 1) should be completed and forwarded to the relevant staff member best placed to deal with such reports. If in doubt, the appropriate person to receive the report is

¹ *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)*

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

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

the Principal In instances where the Principal is the person alleged to have caused the harm, the report should be forwarded to the Head of College.

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

- Principal
- Head of Primary
- Head of Secondary⁴.

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 College Council⁵. Reports will be dealt with under the College's Grievance Policy and Procedures.

Reporting Sexual Abuse⁶

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 College, that any of the following has been sexually abused by another person:

- a) a student under 18 years attending the College;
- b) a kindergarten aged child registered in a kindergarten learning program at the College;
- c) 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 College; and
 - ii. is not enrolled in the preparatory year at the College.

Then the staff member must give a written report about the abuse or suspected abuse to the Principal or to the Executive Director⁷ of Lutheran Education Queensland (director@lutheran.edu.au)

The Principal or the Executive Director of Lutheran Education Queensland must immediately give a copy of the report to a police officer.

If the first person who becomes aware or reasonably suspects sexual abuse is the 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 Executive Director of Lutheran Education Queensland immediately.

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;

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

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

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

⁷ *The Lutheran Church of Australia Queensland District has delegated its director's reporting function under s366 and 366A of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 to the Executive Director, Lutheran Education Queensland in line with s 366B.*

- ii. the identity of the person who has abused, or is suspected to have abused, the student;
- iii. the identity of anyone else who may have information about the abuse or suspected abuse⁸.

The reporting form attached as Appendix 1 is consistent with these requirements.

Reporting Likely Sexual Abuse⁹

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 College, that any of the following is likely to be sexually abused by another person: -

- a) a student under 18 years attending the College;
- b) a kindergarten aged child registered in a kindergarten learning program at the College;
- c) 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 College; and
 - ii. is not enrolled in the preparatory year at the College.

then the staff member must give a written report about the suspicion to the Principal or to the Executive Director of Lutheran¹⁰ Education Queensland (director@leq.lutheran.edu.au) immediately.

The Principal or the Executive Director of Lutheran Education Queensland must immediately give a copy of the report to a police officer.

If the first person who reasonably suspects likely sexual abuse is the Principal, the Principal must immediately give a written report about the suspicion to a police officer and give a copy of the report to the Executive Director of Lutheran Education Queensland.

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;
 - iii. the identity of anyone else who may have information about suspected likelihood of abuse¹¹.
- The reporting form attached as Appendix 1 is consistent with these requirements.

Reporting Physical and Sexual Abuse¹²

Under Section 13E (3) of the *Child Protection Act 1999*, if a doctor, a registered nurse, a teacher, or an early childhood 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.

⁸ *Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.68*

⁹ *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(2)(c)*

¹⁰ *The Lutheran Church of Australia Queensland District has delegated its director's reporting function under s366 and 366A of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 to the Executive Director, Lutheran Education Queensland in line with s 366B.*

¹¹ *Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.69*

¹² *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16 (2)(d)*

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 childhood education and care professional must give a written report to the Chief Executive of the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (or another department administering the *Child Protection Act 1999*). The doctor, nurse, teacher or early childhood education and care professional should give a copy of the report to the Principal.

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

- a) the basis on which the person has formed the reportable suspicion¹³.
- b) the child's name and sex;
- c) the child's age;
- d) details of how to contact the child;
- e) details of the harm to which the reportable suspicion relates;
- f) particulars of the identity of the person suspected of causing the child to have suffered, suffer, or be at risk of suffering, the harm to which the reportable suspicion relates;
- g) particulars of the identity of any other person who may be able to give information about the harm to which the reportable suspicion relates¹⁴.

The <Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women Intake Service can be contacted on 1800 177 135 or (07) 3235 9999 during business hours (from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday). Outside of these hours, the Child Safety After Hours Service Centre can be contacted on phone freecall 1800 177 135 (Queensland only).

Responsibilities under Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) – all Adults

In addition to the reporting requirements under the Child Protection Act 1999 and Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, all adults (inclusive of parents/guardians, volunteers and students 18 years or older) also have obligations under the Criminal Code Act 1899 to report to police information relating to child sexual offenses should they have reasonable belief that an adult has committed a child sexual offence.

The *Criminal Code Act 1899* includes two offences that pertain to the failure to report a child sexual offence and the failure to protect a child against a child sexual offence. A child sexual offence is an offence of a sexual nature by an adult against a child under 16 years or a person with an impairment of the mind.

Failure to Report¹⁵

Under section 229BC of the Criminal Code Act 1899, all adults, inclusive of parents/guardians, volunteers and students 18 years or older must report sexual offences against a child by another adult to police as soon as reasonably practicable after the belief is, or ought reasonably to have been, formed. Failure to make a report, without a reasonable excuse, is a criminal offence. A reasonable excuse not to make a report under the *Criminal Code Act 1899* includes that a report has already been made under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (reporting sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse) and the *Child Protection Act 1999* (reporting significant harm or risk of significant harm) as per this policy.

Failure to Protect¹⁶

Under section 229BB of the Criminal Code Act 1899, all adults (inclusive of parents/guardians, volunteers and students 18 years or older) in positions of power or responsibility within institutions to reduce or remove the

risk of child sexual offences being committed must take reasonable steps to protect children in their care from a child sexual offence. A failure to protect is an offence. All adults (inclusive of, but not limited to parents/guardians, volunteers and students 18 years or older) will commit an offence if:

- a) the adult knows there is a significant risk that another adult (the alleged offender) will commit a child sexual offence in relation to a child; and
- b) the alleged offender is associated with the school (or another institution) or is a regulated volunteer; and
- c) the child is under the care, supervision or control of the school; and
- d) the child is under 16 years or is a person with an impairment of the mind; and
- e) the adult has the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk; and
- f) the adult wilfully or negligently fails to reduce or remove the risk.

If in doubt, always assume that a matter is reportable.

Awareness

The College will inform staff, students and parents of its processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students in written communications to them and it will publish these processes on its website and in hard copy format at the school office¹⁵.

Accessibility of Processes

Processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students are accessible on the College website and will be available on request from the school administration¹⁶.

Training

The College will train its staff in processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students on their induction and will refresh training annually¹⁷. A record of attendance by staff in induction training and annual refresher sessions will be maintained by the College.

Implementing the Processes

The College will ensure it is implementing processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students by auditing compliance with the processes annually¹⁸.

Complaints Procedure

¹³ Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.69

¹⁴ See Child Protection Regulation 2011 (Qld) s.10 "Information to be included in report to chief executive"

¹⁵ Criminal Code Act 1899(Qld) s.229BC

¹⁶ Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) s.229BB

¹⁷ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(4)(a)

¹⁸ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(4)(b)

¹⁹ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(4)(c)

²⁰ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(4)(

Suggestions of non-compliance with the College's processes may be submitted as complaints under St Peters Lutheran College Grievance Policy and Procedure ¹⁹.

Note: Reporting under this policy fulfills the obligations for reporting a child sexual offence that is being or has been committed against a child by an adult under the *Criminal Code Act 1899* s.229BC ²⁰.

Important Contact Details

Queensland Police Service	000 (in emergency) or Indooroopilly Police Station (07) 3377 9444
Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women	1800 177 135 or (07) 3235 9999
Family and Child Connect	13 32 64 or at https://familychildconnect.org.au/
Queensland College of Teachers	(07) 3377 4777

¹⁶ *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(5) and s.16(6)*

¹⁷ *Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) s.229BC(4)(b)*

Appendix 1

Private and Confidential

Report of Suspected Harm or Sexual Abuse

Date:
School:
School Phone:
School Fax:

DETAILS OF STUDENT/CHILD HARMED OR AT RISK OF HARM/ABUSE:	
Legal Name:	Preferred Name:
DOB:	Gender:
Year Level:	Cultural Background:
Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/>	Torres Strait Islander <input type="checkbox"/>
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander <input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the student have a disability verified under EAP: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Disability Category:
Student's Residential Address:	Phone:
	Student's Personal Mobile:

FAMILY DETAILS	
Parent/caregiver 1:	Relationship to Student:
Address (if different from student):	
Phone: (H):	(W): (M):
Parent/caregiver 2:	Relationship to Student:
Address (if different from student):	
Phone: (H):	(W): (M):
Is the student in out of home care: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

PERSON ALLEGED TO HAVE CAUSED THE HARM OR ABUSE		
<input type="checkbox"/> Adult family member	<input type="checkbox"/> Child family member	<input type="checkbox"/> Other adult
<input type="checkbox"/> Student/other child	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	

PROVIDE ALL INFORMATION YOU HAVE WHICH LED TO THE SUSPICION OF HARM OR ABUSE (Attach extra pages if necessary).
Details of any harm and/or sexual abuse to the student – please include: Time and date of the incident; source of information; details of person alleged to have caused the harm or sexual abuse; physical appearance of any injury; immediate and ongoing safety concerns; any disclosures made by student; any previous incidents of harm; parenting and protective capacity; behavioural indicators of harm; presence of any medical needs or developmental delays; and if the information relates to an unborn child, the alleged risk to the unborn child.
Please indicate the identity of anyone else who may have information about the harm or abuse
Additional information provided as an attachment YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Name of staff member making report to the Statutory Agency: Position:	Signature:	Date:
Email address of reporting staff member:		

ACTION TAKEN		
Form was faxed or emailed to (please tick which agencies the form was sent to):	<input type="checkbox"/>	Queensland Police Services (QPS)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family and Child Connect

(Adapted from EQ SP-4 Report of Suspected Harm or Risk of Harm)

Confirm receipt of faxed or emailed form and ensure original is stored in a secure location along with any other documentation collected for the purpose of this report.