

### Queensland Independent College

#### Child Risk Management Policy

##### PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

<b>Purpose:</b>	The purpose of this strategy is to eliminate and minimise risk to child safety to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students	
<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	
<b>Status:</b>	Approved	<b>Supersedes:</b> 2015
<b>Authorised by:</b>	School Board Chairperson	<b>Date of Authorisation:</b> 12.2.2016
<b>References:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2006 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Education (Overseas Students) Regulation 1998 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) Act 2011 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit</a></li> </ul>	
<b>Review Date:</b>	Annually	<b>Next Review Date:</b> 2017
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	School Board	

## **Policy Statement and a Statement about Commitment**

Queensland Independent College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of students enrolled at the school. In accordance with sections 171 and 172 of the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* (Qld), Queensland Independent College is dedicated to eliminating and minimising risks to child safety through this Strategy which includes and refers to various other policies and procedures to effectively ensure the safety and wellbeing of children in the school's care.

This Child Risk Management Strategy is evidence of Queensland Independent College's commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm in fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(a) of the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011* (Qld).

## **Implementation**

In practice, Queensland Independent College's commitment to acting in accordance to the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act* ("the Act") to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students means that it will implement the measures outlined below in points 1 - 8.

### **1. Code of Conduct**

At Queensland Independent College we expect our employees to conduct themselves as follows:

School employees are expected to always behave in ways that promote the safety, welfare and well-being of children and young people. They must actively seek to prevent harm to children and young people, and to support those who have been harmed.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Employees should avoid situations where they are alone in an enclosed space with a student.
- When physical contact with a student is a necessary part of the teaching/learning experience, employees must exercise caution to ensure that the contact is appropriate and acceptable. Employees must always advise the student of what they intend doing and seek their consent.
- Employees must not develop a relationship with any student that is, or that can be interpreted as having a personal rather than a professional interest in a student.
- Employees must not have a romantic or sexual relationship with a student.

This commitment is evidence of Queensland Independent College's fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(b) of the Regulation.

### **2. Recruitment, Selection, Training and Management Procedures**

Queensland Independent College is committed to recruiting, selecting, training and managing employees in such a way that limits risks to children. In particular, Queensland Independent College will:

- Ensure that its recruitment and selection procedures act to reduce the risk of harm to children from employees via:

- Accurate position descriptions, including whether the successful applicant must be a teacher registered with the Queensland College of Teachers (who has been subject to relevant police and other safety checks), whether a Blue Card is necessary for the successful applicant, the responsibilities and supervision associated with the position, the nature and environment of the service provided to children, and the experience and qualifications required by the successful applicant.
  - Advertising the position with a clear statement about the school's commitment to safe and supportive work practices and identifying that candidates will be subject to a teacher registration check or Blue Card screening, a police check, referee checks, identification verification and the requirement to disclose any information relevant to the candidates' eligibility to engage in activities including young people.
  - A selection process that includes assessing the application via an interview process and referee and other checks (as identified above) based on the accurate position description.
  - A probationary period of employment, which allows the school to further assess the suitability of the new employee and to act as a check on the selection process.
- Ensure that its training and management procedures act to reduce the risk of harm to children from employees via:
    - Management processes that are consistent, fair and supportive;
    - Performance management processes to help employees to improve their performance in a positive manner;
    - Supportive processes for staff when they are experiencing challenges, such as mentoring, mediation, conflict resolution, coaching, additional training, and external support and counselling services;
    - An induction program which thoroughly addresses the school's policies and procedures, particularly its expectations regarding child risk management and to assist employees to understand their role in providing a safe and supportive environment for children;
    - Training new and existing staff on an ongoing basis to enhance skills and knowledge and to reduce exposure to risks, as follows:
      - The school's policies and procedures;
      - Identifying, assessing and minimising risks to children;
      - Handling a disclosure or suspicion of harm to a child;
    - Keeping a record of the training provided to employees;
    - Exit interviews to assist the school to identify broader issues of concern that may impact on the safety and welling of children at the school.

This commitment is evidence of Queensland Independent College's fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(c) of the Regulation.

### **3. Handling Disclosures or Suspicions of Harm**

Any of the types of concerns or reports below should be reported and managed under the Queensland Independent College Child Protection Policy, as follows:

- All staff with concerns about sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse;

- Teachers with concerns of sexual or physical abuse; and
- All staff who have received a report of inappropriate behaviour by another staff member.

In accordance with the *Child Protection Act 1999*, if a staff member, teaching or non-teaching, is aware or reasonably suspects harm has been caused to a student under 18 years and the harm has not been reported under the Child Protection Policy, the staff member must report the harm to the school's principal. The types of harm reported may include emotional or psychological abuse or neglect or sexual exploitation.

If the principal is aware or reasonably suspects the harm has been caused and that the student is in need of protection, the principal must report the harm or suspected harm to the Chief Executive of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (or other department administering the *Child Protection Act 1999*). In assessing whether a student is in need of protection, the Principal will consider the "Significant Harm Test" and the "Parent Willing and Able Test", as well as utilise the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services' Child Protection Guide resource.

To report any type of harm, all staff members should use the Report of Suspected Harm or Sexual Abuse Form in Appendix 2 of this Strategy.

Furthermore, and in accordance with section 76 of the *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005*, the principal of Queensland Independent College will report to the Queensland College of Teachers any investigations into allegations of harm caused, or likely to be caused, to a child because of the conduct of a relevant teacher at the school.

This commitment is evidence of Queensland Independent College's fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(d) of the Regulation.

#### **4. Managing Breaches of this Child Risk Management Strategy**

Queensland Independent College is committed to appropriately managing breaches of this Child Risk Management Strategy in accordance with its other relevant policies as appropriate in the circumstances, such as its Child Protection Policy, Child Risk Management Policy, Employee Code of Conduct, and Dispute Resolution Policy and this is evidence of fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(e) of the Regulation.

#### **5. Implementing and Reviewing the Child Risk Management Strategy**

This Strategy in its entirety and its related policies and procedures are evidence of fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(f)(i) of the Regulations relating to implementation.

The introduction to this Child Risk Management Strategy and the "Compliance and Monitoring" section below state Queensland Independent College's commitment to reviewing the Strategy annually and are evidence of fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(f)(i) of the Regulation relating to review.

#### **6. Blue Card Policies and Procedures**

Queensland Independent College is committed to acting in accordance with chapter 8 of the Act relating to the screening of employees in such a way that limits risks to children. In particular, Queensland Independent College will:

- Require relevant perspective or current employees, volunteers, trainee students and school board members to apply for a Blue Card or Exemption Notice, and check the validity and appropriateness of any currently held notices as appropriate, in accordance with Queensland Independent College's position descriptions and the Act.
- Complete an *authorisation to confirm a valid card* application when necessary.
- Submit a *Change in police notification* form when notified by employee that such a change has occurred.
- Not allow a person to continue to work with children if their Blue Card or Exemption Notice is cancelled or suspended or a negative notice is received after a change of police information.
- Submit a *no longer with organisation* form when appropriate.
- Appoint a school contact person who will be responsible for managing the screening process and all related documentation and records.
- Keep written records of all the above actions, decisions and outcomes, including the dates of expiry of Blue Cards and Exemption Notices.
- Ensure that all information in relation to Blue Cards and Exemption Notices is kept confidential.
- Act to remind employees to keep their Blue Card or Exemption Notice up to date.

This commitment is evidence of Queensland Independent College's fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(f)(ii) of the Regulation.

## **7. High Risk Management Plans**

Queensland Independent College is committed to identifying risks, assessing risks, eliminating and minimising risks and the monitoring of risk to the safety of children on an ongoing basis. Queensland Independent College will utilize various risk management tools to assist it in this process and will keep appropriate records of decisions made and actions taken in relation to risks to children.

This commitment is evidence of Queensland Independent College's fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(g) of the Regulation.

## **8. Strategies of Communication and Support**

Queensland Independent College's commitment to making this Child Risk Management Strategy available to students, parents and employees are by publishing these processes via its website, in newsletters, through the parent enrolment package, in staff and employee handbooks, Policies and Procedures Handbook and specifically designed brochures thus providing evidence of fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(h)(i) of the Regulation.

Queensland Independent College is committed to training employees in relation to risks to children and will conduct this training on safety and conduct of all staff and students as part of their induction, refresh training annually via formal training events and professional development, including informal updates at regular staff meetings and regular discussions between management and their staff. This is evidence of fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(h)(ii) of the Regulation.

## **Responsibilities**

Queensland Independent College is responsible for developing and implementing this Child Risk Management Strategy and related policies and procedures to ensure it fulfils its obligations. All employees at Queensland Independent College are responsible for acting in compliance with this Child Risk Management Strategy and related policies and procedures.

## **Compliance and Monitoring**

Queensland Independent College is committed to the annual review of this Strategy. Queensland Independent College will also record, monitor and report to the school board and others as appropriate at your school regarding any breaches of the Strategy.

In addition, Queensland Independent College is committed to other various compliance and monitoring arrangements made under relevant policies and procedures.

## **Related Documents**

- Queensland Independent College Child Protection Policy
- Child Protection Compliance Policy
- Queensland Independent College Dispute Resolution Policy
- Queensland Independent College Volunteers Policy
- Queensland Independent College Risk Management Framework
- Queensland Independent College Employee Code of Conduct

## **Helpful Links**

- Independent Schools Queensland's [Child Protection Decision Support Trees](#)
- Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services' [Child Protection Guide](#) resource

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Summary of Reporting Harm
- Appendix 2 – Report of Suspected Harm or Sexual Abuse Form

## Appendix 1

### Summary of Reporting Harm

Who	What abuse	Test	Report to	Legislation	Status
All staff	Sexual	Awareness or a reasonable suspicion Sexually abused or likely to be sexually abused	Principal, through to Police	EGPA, sections 366 and 366A	Unchanged
Teacher	Sexual and physical	Significant harm Parent may not be willing and able	Confer with Principal, report to Child Safety	CPA, sections 13E and 13G	New
All staff	Physical, psychological, emotional, neglect, exploitation	Significant harm Parent may not be willing and able	Principal, through to Child Safety	Accreditation Regulations, section 10	Amended
All staff	Any	Not of a level that is otherwise reportable to Child Safety, refer with consent	Principal, through to Family and Child Connect	CPA, sections 13B and 159M	New
Principal	Any	Not of a level that is otherwise reportable to Child Safety, refer without consent	Family and Child Connect	CPA, sections 13B and 159M	New
Any member of the public	Any	Significant harm Parent may not be willing and able	Child Safety	CPA, section 13A	Unchanged



**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; 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  NO

<b>Name of staff member making report to the Statutory Agency if not the Principal:</b> <b>Position:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Principal:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Principal's email address:</b>		
<b>Response requested by school:</b>		

**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 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.**