STUDENT PROTECTION PROCESSES
Catholic Education
Diocese of Rockhampton

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January 2013
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Diocesan Director’s Message

The person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ’s teaching; that is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school.

(The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium #9)

Catholic Education is committed to a comprehensive educational ministry that embraces and promotes lifelong learning.

We aim to live and share the gospel message and to provide education that supports the holistic development of all students. We recognise that in order to offer opportunities for students to develop their full potential we need to provide a safe and secure learning environment where students are confident, and where they are protected from harm or threat of harm.

This document of processes for schools administered by Catholic Education in the Diocese of Rockhampton has been produced to ensure that prompt, professional, sensitive and appropriate responses are made whenever matters of student protection come to the attention of Catholic Education staff. These processes also conform to relevant legislative and church requirements as explained in the pages that follow.

Appropriate and responsive interventions by schools can provide hope to, and foster resilience in, students who may be at risk by protecting them from harm and supporting their healing. Student protection is integral to learning and teaching. Safety, security and nurture are fundamental human rights and needs. These rights and needs underpin students’ capacity for learning and maximise potential for personal development ultimately enhancing their wellbeing and life opportunities.

I am confident that staff will undertake and accept the requirement to know and understand the serious responsibilities that apply to them in this area. Please be assured of my prayerful support as we continue to implement our shared vision for Catholic schooling and an ongoing commitment to child protection in our school communities.

Leesa M Jeffcoat
(MEd. Admin., BEd., BA, Dip. Teach., ASDA, AMus A, FACE, FACEL)
DIOCESAN DIRECTOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

This document is effective from 29 January 2013
OVERVIEW
1 Overview

1.1 Introduction

In Catholic Education, Diocese of Rockhampton*, protection for students is based upon the belief that each person is made in the image of God and that the inherent dignity of all should be recognised and fostered.

Catholic Education’s Student Protection Policy states:

Jesus insisted on the primacy of love: love of God and love of each other. No one was excluded from his love. In fact, by word and deed He showed a special preference for the poor, the powerless and the vulnerable, those often relegated to the margins of society. He especially loved children ‘for such are the Kingdom of heaven’. (Mt 19:14)

The need for Student Protection Processes arises primarily from the Catholic education community’s concern about this reality in our midst. This concern flows from our Christian belief in the dignity of all persons. We see children as entrusted to us by the love of God, and are committed to the protection of their rights.

This document is also formulated in accordance with a variety of Queensland legal requirements. It provides the rationale and principles and the subsequent processes to be followed when responding to student protection matters. It also provides a framework for the various elements of pastoral provisions for students’ personal safety and welfare, and those of others who may be involved.

It is hoped that our continued efforts in the implementation of the Student Protection Processes will help to enhance the protection of students and bring healing and peace to young people and any others who may have been adversely affected.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a framework for responding to and reporting allegations or suspicions of:

- sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse to a student by another person
- harm or likely harm to a student from any source
- inappropriate behaviour by a staff member towards a student.

The document sets out the processes to be followed to ensure that prompt, professional, sensitive and appropriate action is taken by Catholic Education personnel in schools and at the Diocesan Catholic Education Office (DCEO).

It has been developed in accordance with the Catholic Education Office’s obligations under the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001, the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act (2006) and the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005.

This document is also underpinned by the Diocesan Education Council’s Student Protection Policy and complements the procedures developed by the National Committee for Professional Standards entitled Towards Healing – Principles and Procedures in Responding to Complaints of Abuse against Personnel of the Catholic Church in Australia (2010).

* Here forth referred to as Catholic Education throughout this document.
1.3 Compliance

All Diocesan Catholic Education personnel have legislative and policy responsibilities that are outlined in this document. If further information in relation to any of the processes mentioned in this document and/or other student protection compliance requirements are needed, please refer to the Principal, the school or college’s Student Protection Contacts, Assistant Director: Schools or the Student Protection Coordinator at DCEO.

Each Principal is responsible for ensuring that this document is freely available to employees, students and families and that they are aware of the relevant contents of the document, and that its provisions are being implemented within the school.

1.4 Scope

This document applies to:

- a reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student by another person
- a reasonable suspicion of harm or likely harm to a student from any source
- a complaint or reasonable suspicion of inappropriate behaviour towards a student by a person who is a staff member.

A situation may arise in which Catholic Education personnel become aware that a current employee has been under police investigation or has been prosecuted for an offence against a child who is not a student attending the school. In such a case, Catholic Education personnel will take all appropriate measures to ensure that students are protected. Such a response will be guided by the processes outlined in this document.

1.5 Guiding principles and commitments

The Student Protection Processes for Catholic Education are based on the following principles and commitments.

The following principles are to be observed when responding to student protection issues.

- Every child and young person has a right to protection from sexual abuse, harm and inappropriate behaviour.
- The welfare and best interest of the child/young person are paramount.
- All adults have a responsibility to care for children and young people, to positively promote their welfare, and to protect them from any kind of harm.
- The interactions of all staff of Catholic Education with students take place in the context of the employee being in a position of trust arising from the nature of their role.
- In every preventative and/or protective action related to a student the total wellbeing of the student is the primary concern, while at the same time the rights and welfare of others involved are to be respected.
- Appropriate confidentiality should be observed in relation to information relating to student protection matters, and relevant information should be kept in a secure place.
- The cultural diversity of students and families in our schools (particularly Indigenous students and their families) is to be recognised, acknowledged and respected. The
management of student protection issues needs to be carried out with sensitivity to cultural issues.

- The special needs and vulnerabilities of students with disabilities and their rights to an educational and family environment free from harm, discrimination, harassment or victimisation must also be recognised, acknowledged and respected.
- The value of the family unit is to be respected but not in such a matter as to be detrimental to the wellbeing of the student.
- All persons who are the subject of an allegation of improper conduct should be treated fairly and reasonably and provided with access to support services as appropriate.
- All persons who honestly report a matter in good faith in accordance with these procedures should not be disadvantaged for doing so.
- All persons involved in situations where sexual abuse, harm or inappropriate behaviour towards a student is suspected and/or disclosed should be treated with sensitivity, dignity and respect.

Catholic Education seeks to fulfill its duty of care to all within its school communities and particularly its duty of care to students. In order to do this, Catholic Education is committed to:

- upholding the right of students to a safe and secure environment based on the belief that this is critical to fulfilling their academic achievements and potential and indeed critical to their overall wellbeing
- responding promptly and appropriately to information concerning student protection matters
- co-operating and working in partnership with the relevant State authorities that are involved in child/student protection
- ensuring that school pastoral care structures address and make appropriate provision for the support of students, families and staff.

1.6 Confidentiality

Staff members who have access to information regarding suspected, alleged or likely sexual abuse to a student, harm or likely harm to a student, or inappropriate behaviour by an employee towards a student must observe appropriate confidentiality in relation to the matter, and also must ensure that any associated documentation is kept in a secure place.

Staff members are directed that the matter must remain highly confidential, should never become a topic of gossip and should never be spoken freely about with others.

1.7 The role of Diocesan Catholic Education office personnel

Principals and other Student Protection Contacts may consult with relevant personnel in DCEO regarding the processes outlined in this document. The Assistant Director: Schools or Student Protection Coordinator may be able to provide advice concerning an assessment of inappropriate behaviour. They may also be able to assist with an assessment of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse, harm or likely harm.
However, if a staff member (the first person) reasonably suspects that in the course of the staff member’s employment at the school that a student younger than 18 years attending the school has been sexually abused or is likely to be sexually abused by another person he/she must immediately make a written mandatory report to the Principal or the Diocesan Director. Likewise, upon receiving the written report from the ‘first person’, the Principal or Diocesan Director must immediately forward to the police the written report. See Section 5 for details.
AWARENESS
2 Awareness

2.1 Definitions

Student protection is a complex issue and requires all staff to be aware of their responsibilities and to know clearly what it is they are required to report. Following is a list of relevant definitions that can assist in clarifying important terms used within this document.

**Assistant Director: Schools** The Assistant Director: Schools is the person appointed by the Diocesan Director to supervise schools in one of the four regions of the Diocese. (AD:S).

**Bullying** Bullying is repeated, unreasonable and less favourable treatment of one person by another. The person experiencing the treatment considers it to be unwelcome, intimidating, degrading or threatening and it would be perceived as such by a reasonable person.

**Catholic Education, Diocese of Rockhampton** referred to as Catholic Education.

**Code of Conduct** Catholic Education’s handbook for all employees setting out their legal and professional responsibilities and which clarifies and affirms the standards of behavior expected of employees of Catholic Education in the performance of their duties.

**Child** A child is a person under 18 years of age (*Child Protection Act 1999*).

**Cleric** A cleric is an ordained priest or deacon of the Catholic Church.

**Complaint** A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, either oral or written.

**Director of Professional Standards** The Director of Professional Standards is the person appointed by the Bishops and heads of religious institutes in Queensland to manage the implementation of the *Towards Healing* principles and processes.

**Employee** An employee is any person who is engaged to carry out work at a school for financial reward, whether an employee of Catholic Education, on behalf of the Roman Catholic Trust Corporation, or not. This includes any cleric or religious who is an employee.

**Diocesan Director** The Diocesan Director is the person appointed by the Catholic Bishop of Rockhampton to be the Diocesan Director of Catholic Education and who has the delegated authority to administer and manage diocesan and parish schools in the Diocese of Rockhampton; otherwise the person who has the authority to act in the position of Diocesan Director from time to time.

**First Person** The ‘first person’ is a staff member who reasonably suspects, in the course of the staff member’s employment at the school, that a student under 18 years attending the school has been sexually abused by another person or is likely to be sexually abused by another person [*Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 Sec 366 (1) and Sec 366A (1)*].

**Harm** has been defined in Section 3 of the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 as:

1. ‘Harm’ caused to a student younger than 18 is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the student’s physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.
2. It is immaterial how the harm is caused.
3. Harm can be caused by:
   - physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect
   - or
   - sexual abuse or exploitation.

Whilst the definition of ‘harm’ as outlined above only relates to students under 18 years of age, this document extends the general meaning to include students attending Catholic Education schools who are 18 years of age or above.

**Inappropriate behaviour:** Inappropriate behaviour includes, but is not limited to, any behaviour, including words, towards a student that is contrary to what is required of staff members under Catholic Education’s *Code of Conduct*. Further, any report from a person, including a student, about an employee’s behaviour towards a student that the person making the report considers to be inappropriate is to be taken as an allegation of inappropriate behaviour and must be responded to in accordance with the processes contained within this document.

**Principal:** The Principal is the person appointed to be the religious and educational leader of a Catholic Education, school or college; otherwise a person who has the delegated authority to act in the position of Principal.

**Reasonable suspicion:** A *reasonable suspicion* is a suspicion that would be formed by a reasonable person based on a reasonable view of the evidence available to them. In other words, a reasonable suspicion is an objectively justifiable suspicion that is based on specific facts or circumstances. More information about forming a reasonable suspicion is contained in *Section 2.5*.

**Relevant State Authority:** A relevant State Authority could be either the Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) and/or the Queensland Police Service, for example, a Child Protection Investigation Unit (CPIU).

**Religious:** A religious is a member of an institute of consecrated life or a society of apostolic life within the Catholic Church. Religious are generally known as brothers, nuns or sisters.

**Sexual abuse:** Sexual abuse of a student occurs when a person uses power or authority over the student to involve the student in sexual activity or to sexually exploit the student. Sexual abuse can be physical, verbal or emotional. Physical force may sometimes be involved. More detailed information about sexual abuse, including legislative guidance, is contained in *Section 2.2*.

**Staff member:** A staff member is any person who is employed by Catholic Education, on a casual, fixed term or continuing basis.

**Student:** A student is any person enrolled in a school (including those aged 18 and above) who is in attendance at a Catholic Education school or college.

**Student Protection Contact (SPC):** A Student Protection Contact is one of at least two persons who are so designated in each school in compliance with *the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulations* (Provision 10, (4)). The primary role of a Student Protection Contact is to receive reports of suspected harm and likely harm to students from any source and alleged inappropriate behaviour by employees towards students and to take subsequent action as set down in the processes within this document. The names of the Student Protection Contacts are to be made known to the members of the school community and prominently displayed around the school. In Catholic Education, schools and colleges it is recommended that the school Principal is...
one of the Student Protection Contacts. Information relating to the selection and support of Student Protection Contacts is to be found in Section 11.

**Student Protection Coordinator:** The Student Protection Coordinator (SPC) is a DCEO employee appointed to assist school personnel in student protection matters. Their duties include assisting school personnel in the assessing of sexual abuse and/or likely sexual abuse, and harm and/or likely harm to students. They also offer support and guidance to schools during and after intervention, and assist with the facilitation of compliance with student protection policies and the Student Protection Processes, including developing and facilitating student protection in-service for staff.

**Volunteer:** A volunteer is any person who performs work on a voluntary basis for Catholic Education. The relationship between the volunteer and Diocesan Catholic Education Office, is not bound by a contract of employment and no payment is made by Catholic Education, to the volunteer for the work performed.

### 2.2 Sexual abuse

The *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* indicates that sexual abuse to a relevant person includes sexual behaviour involving the relevant person and another person in the following circumstances.

- The other person bribes, coerces, exploits, threatens or is violent toward the relevant person.
- The relevant person has less power than the other person.
- There is a significant disparity between the relevant person and the other person in intellectual capacity or maturity (s. 364).

The following additional advice is offered to assist staff members.

Sexual abuse can be physical, verbal or emotional. It may involve physical contact with another person, but not necessarily so.

Sexual abuse of a student occurs when there is an imbalance of power between the student and a person who is older, or has power, authority, influence or some kind of control over the student. The imbalance of power allows force, trickery, emotional bribery, blackmail or emotional pressures to be used against the student to involve him/her in sexual activity or to sexually exploit him/her. Secrecy, the misuse of power, and distortion of adult-child relationships may also be involved. It is important to note that activity between peers may also be abusive, especially if the relationship is coercive or the behaviour forceful, degrading or threatening.

The involvement of any staff member, other employee or volunteer within a school in sexual activity with, or sexual exploitation of, a student attending that school is always to be regarded as sexual abuse.

When considering this matter, it is important for staff members to understand that there is a difference between the sexual abuse of a student and unlawful peer sexual activity. Children and young people under the age of 16 years cannot legally consent to sexual acts with others and to engage in such activity is unlawful even if the child/young person has, or appears to have, consented; however, if there is no imbalance of power or coercion involved, the activity may not be sexually abusive. On the other hand, young people over 16 years of age can be subjected to sexual abuse through the use of power and improper use of authority even if the young person appears to have consented in some way.
Sexual abuse involving physical contact with a student could include:

- touching, kissing or holding a student in a sexual manner
- touching or fondling a student’s genital areas
- touching or fondling a student’s body in a sexual manner
- engaging in or attempting to engage in vaginal or anal intercourse with a student
- penetrating or attempting to penetrate a student’s vagina or anus by the finger or any other object
- engaging or attempting to engage in oral sex with a student
- engaging or attempting to engage in masturbation with a student.

Sexual abuse involving having a student engage in sexual acts by duress or through inducements of any kind could include having a student:

- touch or fondle another person’s genital areas
- touch or fondle another person’s body in a sexual manner
- engage in or attempt vaginal or anal intercourse with another person
- penetrate or attempt to penetrate another person’s vagina or anus by the finger or any other object
- engage or attempt to engage in oral sex with another person
- masturbate or to attempt to masturbate.

Sexual abuse/likely sexual abuse to a student not necessarily involving physical contact could involve events that occur in the student’s direct presence or that occur indirectly (including through digital communications):

- exposing a sexual body part to a student
- requesting a student to expose a sexual body part
- making obscene or sexually explicit remarks to a student
- sending obscene or sexually explicit material to a student
- blatant or persistent intrusion into a student’s physical privacy
- voyeurism: covertly observing intimate behaviour that is normally private
- exposing a student to pornographic films, photographs, magazines or other material
- having a student pose or perform in a sexually explicit manner
- exposing a student to a sexual act
- forcing a student to witness a sexual act
- communicating with a student in a sexually intrusive way.

2.2.1 Likely sexual abuse

Likely sexual abuse of students must be reported where a reasonable suspicion is formed that unless someone intervenes to prevent it, sexual abuse is more probable than not to occur in the future.

2.2.1.1 Grooming

Sexual offending by an adult against a child is rarely a random act by a stranger. It is commonly based on a relationship with the child that has been formed over time. The abuse is commonly well thought out and planned in advance.
Offenders will take time to ‘groom’ their victim, often over a lengthy period. They will also often ‘groom’ the child’s carers or others who might otherwise protect them from the abuse. This occurs so that the child and his/her carers will trust the offender and not suspect any intended wrongdoing. The establishment of a relationship of trust is often very confusing and damaging to the child, who may not even immediately recognise what is done to them as abuse.

Recognition of the grooming process that is used as a preparation for the sexual abuse of a child is an indicator of likely sexual abuse in the future. Observing grooming behaviours could lead to a reasonable suspicion of likely sexual abuse to that student. Behaviour is unlikely to be recognised when observed as a one-off event but a pattern of grooming of the intended victim and/or the intended victim’s carers is likely to be recognised. Grooming also will tend to involve an escalation along a continuum of behaviours that will only be observed over time and it will tend to develop elements of secrecy and concealment.

It is important to be aware of the types of behaviours that can be used in the process of grooming a child or young person, while remembering that some of the behaviours might equally reflect genuine motives of care and concern. This is why for staff members the observance of clear professional boundaries and transparency in the declaration of potential conflicts of interest is a vital part of the protection of children and of the staff members themselves.

Some examples of grooming types of behaviour could include:

- befriending a vulnerable student
- giving the student special attention
- treating the student more favourably than others, for example, with school work or in extra-curricular activities
- giving gifts to or doing favours for the student
- sharing secrets with the student
- arranging opportunities to be alone with the student
- sending email or SMS messages of a personal nature
- making personal comments to the student about sexuality or relationships
- directing suggestive jokes, remarks or actions towards the student
- acting as a substitute parent or confidant of the student
- befriending the student’s family and visiting the family home
- offering to baby-sit or provide transport
- offering individual coaching or special help to the student.

2.2.1.2 Student sexual behaviours

Suspicions of likely sexual abuse may also be formed in some cases where student sexual behaviours are concerning and/or serious. This is where the behaviour displayed by the student may lead to a reasonable suspicion that sexual abuse has occurred and/or a suspicion that the student, because of their behaviour, may be vulnerable to being sexually abused in the future. Some of these situations could emerge not only through overtly sexual behaviour by a student but also through the student’s use of technology, e.g., some incidents of ‘sexting’.

Section 2.4 provides more information about general and specific signs of sexual abuse.
2.3 Harm

Harm is defined in law as:

Any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child’s/student’s physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.

It is immaterial how the harm is caused.

Harm can be caused by:

- physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect
- sexual abuse or exploitation.

2.3.1 Causes of harm

Harm can be caused by physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect by a parent, caregiver or other adult. Children and young people being exposed to domestic violence situations can also be harmed or at risk of harm as a result. Harm can also be caused by other children or young people via the use of electronic/cyber mediums, physical assault and sexual behaviours. Students can also self-harm at times.

- **Physical Abuse** refers to non-accidental injury to a child by another person. These injuries are caused by violence including assaults, excessive discipline, severe beatings or shakings, and any other actions causing injuries such as bruising, lacerations or welts, burns, fractures or dislocations, female genital mutilation, attempted suffocation, strangulation and death.

- **Emotional Abuse** is behaviour by another person that emotionally damages a child resulting in significant deprivation or trauma. It involves a negative impact on a child’s social, emotional, cognitive, intellectual development and/or disturbance of a child’s behaviour. Examples of emotional abuse include constant criticism, public humiliation, belittling, excessive teasing, and scapegoating.

- **Neglect** is the failure by the parent or caregiver responsible for a child to provide the child with adequate nutritious food, clothing, shelter, supervision and protection needed for the child’s optimal growth and development. Failure to provide access to medical and dental care and educational opportunities may also be deemed as neglect. Child neglect occurs where a child is harmed by the failure to provide basic physical and emotional necessities of life. Neglect is characterised as ongoing omissions in parental care giving.

- **Domestic violence** is violence which includes physical and verbal abuse, and intimidation perpetrated by one person against another in a family or in another personal, intimate relationship, causing fear, physical, sexual and/or psychological harm.

- **Sexual Abuse** is dealt with in the Section 2.2.

2.3.2 Sources of harm

For the purposes of this document, the various sources of harm are classified as follows:

1. Harm to a student by a staff member, other employee or volunteer (Source 1)
2. Harm to a student by a person who is not an employee or agent of the school or another student (Source 2)
3. Harm to a student by another student (Source 3)
4. Student self-harm (Source 4)

2.3.3 Assessing harm

When attempting to assess whether harm (as defined) has taken place or is likely in the future, the following questions may be useful.

- What harm has been identified? (i.e., a detrimental effect of a significant nature).
- What are the signs of harm? (see 2.4).
- What are the reasonable grounds to suspect that harm has occurred or is likely? (see 2.5).
- What information is needed to provide background and context?
- What information is not evident that we might need to know in order to make an adequate assessment?

Key facts on harm

Staff should be aware of signs and patterns of harm. There may be physical, emotional and/or behavioural indicators. Section 2.4 provides more information about general and specific signs of harm.

Source 1: Harm by a staff member, other employee or volunteer.

- Harm can be caused to a student by a staff member, other employee or volunteer within a school. While such harm may very rarely be physical in nature, the role of the teacher in particular can provide opportunities for emotional harm to be done to a student through the misuse of the teacher’s power and authority, possibly inadvertently.
- Adults in schools may emotionally harm students without being fully aware of the impact that their behaviour can have. Harm could be caused by yelling at students, making degrading comments about students, continually teasing or belittling students, labelling students as stupid or dumb and threatening students as a means of exerting control.
- Harm done by a student by a staff member, other employee or volunteer within a school may be especially damaging because of the special position of trust that is held by the adult within the school and because those working in a Catholic school do so on behalf of the Catholic Church.

Source 2: Harm to a student by a person who is not an employee or agent of the school.

- Most children/young people who are harmed are harmed by someone they know and trust - a parent, caregiver, sibling, and other relative, family friend or care giver.
- The younger the child, the more vulnerable they are and the more serious the consequences are likely to be.
- Harm done to a child by a close family member can often have permanent negative effects on the child’s development and life chances as well as upon the family itself.

Source 3: Harm to students by another student.

Harm can be caused to a student by another student. The use of the word ‘bullying’ in this section includes all types of harassment and intimidation and can result in physical, psychological and/or
emotional harm. Besides physical harm, all the following types of interactions between students may involve psychological and/or emotional harm and require an appropriate response.

1. Cyber bullying.
   Cyber bullying is bullying using electronic communication media. It can cause long-term harm to students.
   - Mobile phones and computers can be used to bully.
   - Some cyber bullying or other misuse of electronic media can be a criminal offence.
   - These offences should be reported to police and managed appropriately at the school level.

2. Students with a disability.
   It is important to recognise, acknowledge and respect the special needs and vulnerabilities of students with disabilities and their rights to an educational and family environment free from harm, discrimination, harassment or victimisation in relation to those disabilities. The behaviour of other students towards students with disabilities needs to be monitored carefully.

3. Student sexual behaviours.
   Sexual behaviours of various kinds may be evident in children, particularly in the early years. Some forms of this behaviour may not be of concern, while other behaviours may indicate that the child may have been exposed to inappropriate material or experiences. For example, reports of very young children knowing about and even experimenting with oral sex and other concerning sexual behaviours have been noted in some schools.
   - Schools need to respond appropriately to any sexual behaviours among students that come to their attention.
   - It is important that all cases of sexual behaviour that is of concern be taken seriously, and responded to in a timely manner. Principals should do all they can reasonably do in the particular circumstances to respond to the reported situation while acting with caution in their response.
   - If assistance is required in assessing the seriousness of the sexual behaviour the Student Protection Coordinator or Assistant Director: Schools at DCEO should be contacted.
   - If sexual behaviour that is of concern is identified, steps should be taken to ensure the safety of the child or children who are involved or who could be exposed and to report according to student protection reporting processes in relation to sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse or harm or likely harm.
Source 4: Student self-harm.

During the course of their schooling, some students may be at risk of harming themselves.

- This may be by direct means such as cutting, burning etc. but could also be by engaging in serious risk-taking behaviours such as alcohol/substance abuse, recklessly dangerous physical activities and/or unsafe promiscuity.
- Each of these situations presents the possibility of a complex range of precipitating circumstances and possible interventions.
- If student self-harm is identified steps should be taken to ensure the initial safety of the student.
- Staff are to report it according to the relevant student protection reporting process in relation to harm and likely harm. (N.B. It is important to keep in mind that some cases of self-harm may at times be an indication of sexual abuse.)

2.4 Recognising signs of sexual abuse and harm

There are many signs that might lead staff to have concerns about a student. It is important to keep an open mind when encountering these signs, as their presence does not necessarily mean that sexual abuse or harm has occurred or is likely. However, they may indicate that a student is at risk and that further assessment and monitoring is the appropriate response.

It is important to remember:

- the signs are generally more significant if they are severe and/or form a pattern
- the younger the child involved, the greater the risk
- all factors need to be considered including the child’s circumstances and family context.

In general terms, something may be wrong if you observe student behaviour such as:

- nervousness/withdrawal
- passivity/excessive compliance
- evidence of a deterioration in peer relationships and/or generally poor peer relationships
- trouble concentrating at school/unexpected drop in school academic performance
- frequent absences from school without substantiated or acceptable explanations
- being aggressive, stealing or running away
- evidence of extreme or continually aroused emotional states
- out of character behaviour
- behaviour that is not age appropriate nor typical of peer behaviour
- in younger students: separation anxiety, changed eating patterns
- in older students: drug/alcohol use, sexual promiscuity, self-harm or reckless and risk-taking behaviour.
In relation to the specific causes of harm you may observe the following.

2.4.1.1 *Physical*
- Bruises or lacerations, especially on face, head and neck.
- Burns/scalds.
- Multiple injuries or bruises, especially over time.
- Fractures, dislocations, twisting injuries.
- Explanation offered by the child not consistent with the injury.
- Repeated injuries with a recurring or similar explanation.

2.4.1.2 *Neglect*
- Delay in achieving developmental milestones.
- Medical or therapeutic needs not attended to.
- Poor personal hygiene leading to social isolation.
- Scavenging for/stealing food; lack of adequate school lunches.
- Extreme seeking of adult affection.
- Flat and superficial way of relating.

2.4.1.3 *Domestic violence*
- Difficulties in eating and sleeping.
- Hyper-vigilance.
- Regression to age-inappropriate behaviours.
- Developmental delays.
- Child is over-protective of a parent.
- Excessively controlling or aggressive/violent behaviour.
- Abuse of siblings/parent.

2.4.1.4 *Emotional/Psychological*
- Inability to value self and others.
- Lack of trust in people.
- Statements from the child, e.g., ‘I’m bad’; ‘I was born bad’.
- Extreme attention-seeking behaviours.

2.4.1.5 *Sexual abuse*
- Direct or indirect disclosures of abuse.
- Age-inappropriate sexual behaviour and knowledge.
- Use of threats coercion or bribery to force other children into sexual acts.
- Sexual themes/fears expressed in artwork, written work or play.
- Repeated urinary tract infections, especially in little girls.
- Physical trauma to buttocks, breasts, genitals, lower abdomen, thighs.
- Unexplained accumulation of money/gifts.
- The presence of sexually-transmitted diseases, especially in younger children.
2.5 Forming a reasonable suspicion

A reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse, harm or likely harm from any source, or inappropriate behaviour by a staff member towards a student, may be formed by a staff member in the light of the staff member’s knowledge and experience, if:

- a student reports or discloses to a staff member information of concern about him/her or about another person’s behaviour
- another student reports or discloses information of concern about a student or about another person’s behaviour in relation to that student
- a parent or another person reports information of concern about a student and/or another person’s behaviour. (This information may come from a relative, friend, acquaintance of the student, or sometimes could be anonymous.)
- relevant observations (appearance, behaviours, and situations) are witnessed or other relevant firsthand knowledge is gained.

It should be noted that at times information may come to a staff member’s attention indirectly (perhaps third hand). In these cases the following issues should be considered.

- In some cases, seeking the minimum amount of additional information required to clarify the situation may be appropriate.
- It is not the role of the staff member or of the school to investigate, confirm or substantiate the validity of the information.
- If the information received gives rise to a staff member forming a reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse, harm or likely harm from any source or inappropriate behaviour by a staff member towards a student, then the staff member must follow the relevant reporting process described in this document.
- Details about how the information came to the staff member’s attention should be included in the report that the staff member provides.

2.6 Likely sexual abuse or harm

Situations involving likely sexual abuse or harm are those where a reasonable person, given a reasonable view of the evidence available to him/her, would form the view that unless someone intervenes to prevent it, harm is more probable than not to occur in the future.

2.7 Responding to a student disclosure

2.7.1 Pastoral guidelines for dealing with a disclosure

School personnel are often the first people students may tell when they are feeling unsafe. It is important for staff members to be aware of how children/young people disclose and how to respond most appropriately.

If a student tells you about being abused or harmed:

Do

- Listen attentively, actively and non-judgementally.
- React calmly to the information the student provides.
- Only question the student if absolutely necessary and restrict yourself to questions such as ‘Tell me what happened … and/or Tell me more about that … ’.
• Reassure the student that they have done the right thing to tell, e.g., ‘I am pleased you have told me these things’.
• Reassure them they are not to blame for the behaviour of others.
• Provide pastoral support to the student and be aware of the privacy issues involved.
• Be honest about your responsibility to take action.
• Make detailed notes.

Do not
• React emotionally or accuse.
• Seek any more information than is absolutely necessary.
• Ask leading or probing questions or put words in the student’s mouth.
• Make promises that you cannot keep – particularly about not telling others about the information such as the Principal or another Student Protection Contact.
• Leave the student alone immediately after a disclosure.
• Discuss the situation with parents, caregivers or others (other than with those designated, e.g., Principal or other Student Protection Contact).

2.7.2 General advice about handling disclosures
• Remember it is not a school staff member’s role to investigate a suspicion of sexual abuse, likely sexual abuse, harm or likely harm, or alleged inappropriate behaviour by another staff member. It is the role of qualified Officers of Child Safety Services and/or Queensland Police to investigate and collect evidence in such cases.
• Only ask enough questions to help you decide whether you have reasonable grounds to form a suspicion of sexual abuse, likely sexual abuse, harm or likely harm, or inappropriate behaviour by another staff member. Be aware that any questioning beyond this could cause distress and confusion and could interfere with any subsequent investigation undertaken by relevant authorities.
• As soon as possible after the disclosure take detailed relevant notes about any signs, disclosures, injuries, and behaviours that cause you to be concerned for the student’s safety or wellbeing.

2.7.3 Taking photographs of injuries
• Staff must not take photos of injuries to students. If required, this will be done by the Queensland Police Service.

2.7.4 Contact with parents/carers
• When concerns of sexual abuse, likely sexual abuse, harm or likely harm to a student are in relation to someone in the student’s family and/or someone who resides in the student’s home, the parents/guardians must not be informed of the concerns by the school or staff member concerned before or after the report is made without first receiving advice about this from the relevant state authority.
2.8 Legal Issues

The following points are general guidelines only. Should other issues arise in relation to specific cases it is recommended that further legal advice be sought.

- In reporting cases of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse, harm or likely harm to a student, school personnel reporting to a relevant State authority are not required to prove the case, they need only report of their reasonable suspicion and their reasons for it.

- School personnel should be very careful, however, to report only to those authorities that need to know and reports should only be made to the persons or agencies that are mentioned within this document.

- The matter must remain highly confidential and should never become a topic of gossip and should never be spoken freely about with others.

- If you communicate the restricted and confidential report to others, an action for damages for defamation could be taken by the person suspected or a complaint may be made to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner in relation to a breach of the child’s privacy.

- The identity of individuals who report to Child Safety Services and Queensland Police Service of their concerns about a child is confidential and they are protected from civil liability. Protection from civil liability means that the person is protected from legal action taken against him/her. (s.22 Child Protection Act 1999 and s.366 (5) & (6) and s.366A (6) & (7) Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.

- However, staff members may be subpoenaed to attend court as a witness. In this instance the identity of the notifier cannot be kept confidential. DCEO can be of assistance to a staff member who is subpoenaed to attend court.

- In the unlikely event of civil action being brought against a staff member as a consequence of reporting, Catholic Education, through the terms and conditions of its insurer’s policy will indemnify (i.e., accept responsibility to defend or settle claims) those school personnel who have acted conscientiously within the scope of their professional duties.
ACTION
3 Student reporting processes

Important Information

If you believe a child or young person is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, you can contact the Queensland Police Service immediately by dialling 000.

Nothing that is written below should prevent a student from reporting any matter of concern to his/her parent(s), to any employee at a school, or to the police.

If a student has reported a concern according to these processes but does not feel sure that the appropriate action is being taken he/she should contact the Assistant Director: Schools or Student Protection Coordinator at DCEO and/or police directly.

Should a student wish to report sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse, harm or likely harm to himself/herself or to any other student, he/she may report this to the Principal or other Student Protection Contact at the school.

Should a student consider that the behaviour of staff member towards him/her or towards another student is or has been inappropriate, he/she may report this to a Student Protection Contact at the school.

A student may make the report orally, in writing, or through any other means of communication.

A student’s parent or carer may make the report to the Principal or other Student Protection Contact on behalf of the student.

Whether or not the staff member receiving the report is a Student Protection Contact, on receiving such a report from or on behalf of a student, the staff member must respond in accordance with processes set down in Section 4 and the following sections.
4 When and how staff should act

Interventions to be used in relation to:

- a reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student by another person
- a reasonable suspicion of harm or likely harm to a student from any source
- a complaint or reasonable suspicion of inappropriate behaviour by a staff member towards a student.

**Important Information**

If you believe a child or young person is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, contact the Queensland Police Service immediately by dialling 000.

Nothing that is written below should prevent a staff member or any other person from taking immediate action to notify police, particularly if he/she believes that it is essential to act to ensure a student’s safety.

If a staff member has reported a concern according to these processes but does not feel sure that the appropriate action is being taken to ensure a student is safe from harm he/she should contact the Assistant Director: Schools or Student Protection Coordinator at DCEOs and/or police directly.

Incidents that initially appear to warrant one type of intervention may turn out to be more serious or complex than first thought. If this occurs, the intervention process must be halted and steps taken immediately to escalate the matter to the appropriate level.

4.1 Summary of a staff member’s responsibilities

A staff member has a responsibility to make a report in any of the situations listed below.

1. If he/she reasonably suspects:
   1.1. sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student by another person.
   1.2. Harm or likely harm to a student from any source.
   1.3. inappropriate behaviour by an employee towards a student.

2. If a staff member becomes aware of any such allegation against him/her.

4.2 Summary of reporting processes for staff

4.2.1 Sexual abuse/likely sexual abuse

If a staff member reasonably suspects, in the course of his/her employment at the school, that a student attending the school has been sexually abused or is likely to be sexually abused by another person, the first staff member who reasonably suspects the sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse must, by law, immediately give a written report (Form A) of the matter to the Principal or the Diocesan Director. If the first person is the Principal, the Principal must immediately give a written report to a police officer and then the Diocesan Director. Specific details of the reporting processes involved are contained within Section 5.
4.2.2 Harm

If a staff member reasonably suspects, in the course of his/her employment at the school, that harm from any source has been caused to a student or is likely to be caused to a student (not being sexual abuse) the staff member is compulsorily required by Catholic Education, to give a written report to the Principal or another Student Protection Contact at the school without delay. Specific details of the reporting processes involved are contained within Section 6.

4.2.3 Inappropriate behaviour

4.2.3.1 Reporting process

If a staff member reasonably suspects, in the course of his/her employment at the school, that an employee has behaved inappropriately towards a student (not being sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse and not where harm has been caused or is likely to be caused), the staff member is compulsorily required by Catholic Education, to give a written report to the Principal or another Student Protection Contact at the school without delay. Specific details of the reporting processes involved are contained within Section 8.

4.2.3.2 Complaint

If a student, parent or other person complains to a staff member about an employee’s behaviour towards a student that the student or parent considers to be inappropriate, the staff member must immediately report the matter to the Principal or another Student Protection Contact at the school.

4.2.3.3 Awareness

If a staff member becomes aware of any such allegation against him/her in relation his/her alleged conduct, he/she must report the matter to the Principal at the school without delay.
4.3 Reporting process

Reasonable suspicion by a staff member of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student by another person?

No

Reasonable suspicion of harm or likely harm to a student from any source?

No

Complaint of or reasonable suspicion of inappropriate behaviour by a staff member towards a student?

Yes

Staff member first aware reports to principal or another Student Protection Contact at the school. If the Student Protection Contact informed is not the principal, he/she informs the principal (or Assistant Director: Schools if the principal is implicated).

(Section 9)

Yes

Staff member who first suspects ("first person") must immediately provide a written report to principal/Diocesan Director.

If "first person" is the principal, the written report must be given to the police and Diocesan Director.

(Section 5)

Does the principal (or other Student Protection Contact) reasonably suspect that harm has been caused or is likely to be caused?

Yes

Principal (or other Student Protection Contact) should make a report to police and/or Department of Communities Child Safety Services. Assistant Director: Schools or student protection coordinator are also to be informed.

(Section 6)

No

Yes

Nature and/or circumstances of alleged inappropriate behaviour such as to justify disciplinary sanction if substantiated?

No

Yes

School-level intervention. Resolved through local guidance/correction/mediation/conciliation. Documented by report to AD: Schools.

(Section 9)

(Section 9)
5 Suspected sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student

If you believe a child is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, contact the Queensland Police Service immediately by dialling 000.

5.1 Mandatory reporting

Mandatory reporting is a requirement of the law and a staff member may be liable to prosecution should he/she fail to act, as well as being subject to disciplinary sanctions.

The Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 requires that if a staff member (the first person) reasonably suspects, in the course of his/her employment at the school, that a student under 18 years of age attending the school has been sexually abused or is likely to be sexually abused by another person, the first person must immediately give a written report to the Principal or the Diocesan Director who must immediately provide a copy of the report to the police.

If the first person is the Principal, the Principal must immediately give a written report to a police officer and then the Diocesan Director.

5.2 Mandatory reporting responsibilities

5.3 Staff members

A staff member (the first person) who in the course of the staff member’s employment at the school, reasonably suspects that a student has been sexually abused or is likely to be sexually abused by another person, must immediately make a written mandatory report (Section 1: Form A) to the Principal or the Diocesan Director and keep appropriate records.

If the ‘first person’ reasonably suspects sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student by the school Principal, the first person must immediately provide the mandatory written report (Form A) to the Diocesan Director.

5.4 Principal and Diocesan Director

Following the receipt of a mandatory report, the Principal or Diocesan Director must not conduct an investigation into the suspected sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse. Upon receiving the written report (Form A) from the ‘first person’, the Principal or Diocesan Director must immediately complete Sections 2 and 3 of this mandatory report form and then forward to the police. (Section 5.5)

If the Principal is the ‘first person’ then he/she must immediately provide a written report (Form A) to the police having completed sections 1, 2 and 3. (Section 5.5)

After having provided a mandatory report to the police, the Principal should also forward a copy of the mandatory report (Form A) to the Diocesan Director without delay.

The Diocesan Director will keep a copy of the mandatory report in a separate confidential file.
5.5 Making and following up on the mandatory report to police

The Principal or Diocesan Director would normally give a mandatory report to police through a Queensland Police Service district Child Protection & Investigation Unit (CPIU).

Details showing the locations of these units and how to contact them are to be found on the Principals’ or Student Protection pages on the DCEO Mysuite Portal. Otherwise, call Policelink on 131 444. Reports are normally transmitted to the CPIU by email or fax.

After sending the mandatory report, the Principal, Diocesan Director (or the Diocesan Director’s delegate) should follow up with a phone call to the CPIU to ensure that the report has been received. This call should also be used to establish communication between the school and the police so that further information can be shared as necessary to assist the school to manage issues as they may arise. Where necessary the DCEO Student Protection Coordinator or the Assistant Director: Schools is available to assist the Principal in liaising with the relevant state authorities.

There are many cases where a mandatory report to police should be followed up by informing the Department of Communities - Child Safety Services of the matter. This will include cases of suspected sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse within families. Suspected sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse from outside the family should also be reported to Child Safety Services if there is evidence that the student does not have a parent willing and able to protect him/her, or that other children may also be at risk of abuse. Because of the complexity that is often encountered, schools should seek guidance from the Assistant Director: Schools or Student Protection Coordinator at DCEO about whether Child Safety Services should be involved following mandatory reporting to police.

The initial step in reporting to Child Safety Services would be to contact the appropriate Regional Intake Service by phone. Details of these Intake Services and how to contact them are to be found on the Principals or Student Protection pages on the DCEO Mysuite portal. Outside normal business hours and at weekends, contact the Child Safety After Hours Service Centre on 1800 177 135 or 3235 9999. The Service Centre operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

In providing information to Child Safety Services it would be important to indicate that the matter has already been the subject of a mandatory report to police. Following the initial phone call, the information to be provided to Child Safety Services would be the Report Form A. Reports are normally transmitted to the Regional Intake Service by email or fax following the phone contact.

5.6 Informing parents

When a mandatory report is to be given to police, it is important that parents are not contacted before the report is made. Following the mandatory report, in order to assist in the management of the situation at the school level and to ensure the immediate safety of any students involved, it is advisable for the school to request from the police, and, if necessary Child Safety, some indication regarding their involvement in the reported case and the possible timing of their intervention. It is important for the school to have this information because, for example, in cases of student-to-student sexual behaviour especially, it is preferable for the parents or caregivers of students involved in such incidents to be advised as soon as possible after the incident has occurred to ensure the best support and protection for their child. However, this should not occur until it has been ascertained from the state authority that informing the parents will not jeopardise an investigation.
5.7 Risk management and case management

The school has a responsibility to proactively case manage ongoing issues relating to the wellbeing of students and staff, and relationships with carers and families. Some steps would include the following.

- Monitoring the situation, including risk assessment, and action to minimise/manage risk, particularly to students.
- Establishing case management roles and responsibilities.
- Establishing communication channels with the Officer-in-Charge and/or the investigating officer within CPIU so that information may be shared as appropriate. The Assistant Director: Schools and the Student Protection Coordinator at DCEO are available to provide assistance and support to staff in managing what can be complex issues.
- Establishing communication channels and providing support structures to ensure that those involved receive regular pastoral contact can access information on the processes being followed, and are connected to potential sources of external support.
- Ensuring that all those involved respect the confidentiality of the matter and the privacy of those involved.
- Securing relevant evidence and consulting DCEO about protocols around how evidence may be made available to police if required. Legal advice will be obtained if required.

5.8 Action to be taken if the suspected sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse relates to the behaviour of a staff member, other employee, or volunteer

5.8.1 Action by DCEO personnel

When a suspicion of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse is about a staff member, overall case management will be provided by the Assistant Director: Schools working in association with the Principal, Diocesan Director and the Student Protection Coordinator. It is important for the case manager to establish communication with the Officer-in-Charge and/or the investigating officer within CPIU so that information may be shared as appropriate. The Student Protection Coordinator at DCEO is also available to provide assistance and support to staff in managing what can be complex issues.

Following the provision of a mandatory report to police, an investigation into the suspected sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse must not be conducted by or on behalf of Catholic Education, pending the result of police inquiries. However, the Assistant Director: Schools (AD:S) will take immediate steps to ensure that a risk assessment is undertaken to determine whether the employee or volunteer subject to the allegations should continue to be allowed to work in the school. As a result of the risk assessment, and following consultation with police, the employee or volunteer may be stood down from his/her duties, or have his/her duties restricted. If the employee is not an employee of Catholic Education the appropriate steps in this regard will be taken by the Diocesan Director (or delegate) in association with that person’s employer.

The parent(s) or carer of the student about whom a report has been made in relation to suspected sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse by a staff member, other employee or volunteer (unless the suspected sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse relates to the behaviour of a family member) will be
informed by the Principal as soon as practicable that a mandatory report has been provided to police, stressing the confidentiality of the matter.

If the report of suspected sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse by a staff member, other employee or volunteer relates to the behaviour of a member of the student’s family, school and DCEO personnel will not inform the parent(s) or carer of the student concerned without prior consultation with the police. They will only inform the parent(s) or carer(s) of the student if the advice of the police is that this will not jeopardise an official investigation.

The Diocesan Director will keep a copy of the mandatory report in a separate confidential file.

The Assistant Director: Schools will establish liaison with the Queensland Police Service to assist in the management of the issue.

On receiving a copy of a mandatory report in which the suspected sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse is by a registered teacher, the Diocesan Director (or delegate) will without delay make a written notification of this to the Queensland College of Teachers.

If the mandatory report concerns the behaviour of a staff member, other employee or volunteer who is a cleric or religious, or who was a cleric or religious at the time of the alleged behaviour, the Diocesan Director will inform the Director of Professional Standards as soon as possible.

5.8.2 Notifying the employee or volunteer

The Assistant Director: Schools will seek advice from the police as to if and when the employee or volunteer should be informed of the allegation. As soon as it is deemed appropriate to inform the employee or volunteer, a meeting will be held between the employee or volunteer and the Assistant Director: Schools (supported by the Principal where appropriate). The employee or volunteer will be advised that he/she can have a support person at this meeting. At the meeting, the employee or volunteer will be informed that a suspicion of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse has been reported about him/her and that this information has been handed to the police. He/she will also be given the details of a nominated person (normally the Assistant Director: Schools) to contact who will be available to provide information regarding the processes being undertaken and to facilitate the accessing of other support. The information communicated verbally at the meeting will also be provided in writing. If the employee is not an employee of Catholic Education, the appropriate steps in this regard will be taken in association with that person’s employer.

In the case of a staff member being the subject of the report, he/she will be reminded that he/she may access the confidential counselling services available through ACCESS Counselling Services.

5.8.3 Standing down from duties

If, as the result of a risk assessment, it is decided by the Diocesan Director that the employee or volunteer should be stood down from his/her duties, or have them restricted, the police should be consulted to ensure that the timing and circumstances of this does not unnecessarily interfere with their inquiries.

The employee or volunteer concerned will be informed of the decision to stand him/her down or restrict his/her duties. The basis for this decision will be provided to the employee or volunteer in writing following the meeting at which this information has been communicated verbally. He/she will also be given the details of a nominated person (normally the Assistant Director: Schools) to contact who will be available to provide information regarding the processes being undertaken and to facilitate the accessing of other support.
In the case of a staff member being the subject of the report, he/she will be reminded that he/she may access the confidential counselling services available through ACCESS Counselling Services.

A staff member will normally continue on full pay during the stand down period unless disqualified or prevented from performing his/her duties by an external authority. The Assistant Director: Schools (supported by the Principal where appropriate) will discuss with the person what statement, if any, will be made to staff concerning his/her absence from school. (The AD:S may consult with the Diocesan Director and Student Protection Coordinator about the nature of this statement.) The contents of any such statement may be limited by legislation.

If the employee is not an employee of Catholic Education, the appropriate steps in this regard will be taken by the Diocesan Director (or delegate) in association with that person’s employer.

5.8.4 Pastoral care and support

Pastoral care and support will be provided to the complainant, to the employee or volunteer against whom the allegation has been made, and any others involved. The welfare and best interests of any students involved will be paramount and advice will be sought from DCEO Student Protection Coordinator about appropriate support for the student and his/her family.
6  Harm or likely harm to a student from any source

6.1  Compulsory reporting

Compulsory reporting is a requirement of Catholic Education, and is consistent with Catholic Education responsibilities under the provisions of the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001 and Regulation 2001. A staff member is subject to disciplinary sanction as an employee should he/she fail to act.

A staff member who, in the course of his/her duties, reasonably suspects that harm has been caused or is likely to be caused in the future to a student from any source is compulsorily required to report this matter to the Principal or other Student Protection Contact.

6.2  Situations involving harm having been caused

Harm is considered to have been caused in situations that result in any detrimental effect of a significant nature on a student’s physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It does not matter how the harm is caused.

To reasonably suspect physical harm, there will generally be evidence of a student having suffered a physical injury.

To reasonably suspect that psychological or emotional harm has been caused, there must be evidence of a detrimental effect of a significant nature having occurred to the student, such as an inability or major difficulties in handling emotions, difficulties in forming peer relationships, references to self-harm, speech and language delays, etc.

To reasonably suspect neglect there will generally be evidence of the failure by the parent or caregiver responsible for the student to provide the student with adequate nutritious food, clothing, shelter, supervision and protection required by the student for the student’s optimal growth and development. Child neglect occurs when a child is harmed by the failure to provide the basic physical and emotional necessities of life.

6.3  Situations involving likely harm in the future

Likely harm is indicated when a reasonable person, given the knowledge that is available to him/her, would come to the conclusion that unless someone intervenes to prevent it, harm is more likely than not to occur in the future.

Factors that would be taken into account would include the frequency, severity and duration of any concerning behaviour, relevant contextual knowledge about family background or socio-economic circumstances, the source of the possible harm, the apparent vulnerability of the child, the willingness and ability or parents or caregivers to protect the child, the availability of support networks both formal and informal and the accessibility or apparent use of weapons.

If a deadly weapon is used to threaten, this would most likely give rise to a reasonable suspicion that harm has occurred or is likely to occur in the future. Catholic Education requires that incidents involving the possession of weapons should be reported to the police.
6.4 Compulsory reporting responsibilities

6.4.1 Staff members

A staff member who reasonably suspects that harm from any source has been caused to a student, or is likely to occur in the future, must not conduct an investigation into the matter but must make a written report (Section 1: Form B) to the Principal, or another Student Protection Contact at the school, and keep appropriate records.

6.4.2 Principal or other student protection contact (and Assistant Director: Schools)

A Principal or other Student Protection Contact who reasonably suspects that harm from any source has been caused to a student, or is likely to occur in the future, must not conduct an investigation into the allegation.

If a compulsory report (Form B), is received by a Student Protection Contact other than the Principal, the Student Protection Contact must provide a copy of the report to the Principal as soon as practicable and keep appropriate records, unless the allegation is made against the Principal, in which case the Student Protection Contact must provide a copy of the report to the Assistant Director: Schools (unless the allegation is about sexual abuse when it must go directly to the Diocesan Director).

If the Principal or other Student Protection Contact, upon receiving a compulsory report (Form B) believes that it gives rise to a reasonable suspicion that harm has been caused or is likely in the future, he/she must complete and sign the compulsory report to a State Authority (Sections 2 and 3) and forward it without delay to the police and/or Department of Communities Child Safety Services. (Section 6.5)

He/she should also forward copies of the report to the Assistant Director: Schools and the Student Protection Coordinator without delay.

If the Principal or other Student Protection Contact, upon receiving a compulsory report (Form B) believes that it does not give rise to a reasonable suspicion that harm has been caused or is likely in the future, he/she must document this, the reasons for his/her decision and inform the Assistant Director: Schools or the Student Protection Coordinator. He/she must also inform the staff member who has provided the compulsory report of his/her decision. The relevant documentation must be retained in a confidential file at the school. If the report is about a current employee, the matter must then be dealt with as suspected inappropriate behaviour by an employee towards a student. (Sections 8 and 9) If the report is about the behaviour of another student, a volunteer or other member of the school community, the Principal is responsible for ensuring that appropriate steps are taken including minimising the risk of harm to the student concerned and/or others within the school.

6.5 Compulsory reporting of suspected harm or likely harm

6.5.1 Who to report to

As a general rule, harm or likely harm within families, including self-harm, is reported to the Department of Communities (Child Safety Services). If a possible criminal offence is suspected within the family (for example physical abuse) the matter should also be reported to a Queensland Police Service Child Protection & Investigation Unit (CPIU). Cases of harm or likely harm from outside the family are generally reported solely to the CPIU unless there is evidence that the student does not have a parent willing and able to protect him/her, or that other children may have also been
harmed or are likely to be harmed. In those cases a report to both Child Safety Services and CPIU is required. Because of the complexity that is often encountered, schools can seek guidance about which State Authority to report to from the Assistant Director: Schools or the Student Protection Coordinator at DCEO in the course of the assessment of the issue.

6.5.2 Reporting of harm or likely harm to police

Reporting to the police would be done through a Queensland Police Service Child Protection & Investigation Unit (CPIU). Details of the location of these units and how to contact them are to be found on the Principals and Student Protection pages on the DCEO Mysuite Portals. Otherwise, call Policelink on 131 444. See below for the details of what information should be provided over the phone. Reports are normally transmitted to the CPIU by email or fax following the phone contact.

After sending the compulsory report, the person sending it should follow up with a phone call to ensure that it has been received. This call should also be used to establish communication between the school and the investigating officer so that further information can be shared as necessary to assist the school to manage issues as they may arise. Where necessary the DCEO Student Protection Coordinator is available to assist the school in liaising with the relevant state authorities.

6.5.3 Reporting of harm or likely harm to Child Safety Services

During normal business hours contact the appropriate Regional Intake Service by phone. Details of these Intake Services and how to contact them are to be found on the Principals and Student Protection pages on the DCEO Mysuite Portals. See below for the details of what information should be provided over the phone. Reports are normally transmitted to the Regional Intake Service by email or fax following the phone contact.

Outside normal business hours and at weekends, contact the Child Safety After Hours Service Centre on 1800 177 135 or 3235 9999. The Service Centre operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

6.5.4 Making phone contact with Child Safety Services and/or CPIU

After deciding which Child Safety Services Regional Intake Service and/or CPIU is closest to the child’s home address, a phone call should be made. Request to speak to an ‘intake officer’ and provide the following prepared information. If necessary, a request can be made for the agency to indicate its response to the report to assist with the appropriate management of the case within the school.

The following prepared information should be provided.

- Name and position of notifier.
- Name of student/s.
- Date of birth of student/s.
- Names of other family members if available, e.g., mother, father, guardian, siblings and/or other people living in the house.
- Address of the family.
- Relevant concerns, e.g., disclosures, physical and/or behavioural signs, dates, etc.
- Other relevant information such as any court orders known to be in place (e.g., Family Court Orders or Domestic Violence Orders) and any other information that may assist the authority to assess the risk to the student.
If difficulties occur with the telephone reporting process, such as not being able to access a Child Safety Services Regional Intake Service or CPIU (police) personnel or being unable to obtain an appropriate response from the State Authority notified, the DCEO Student Protection Coordinator can assist in liaising with the State Authority involved.

After making the report by phone the Principal or Student Protection Contact will complete the reporting form. (Form B) The Principal (or delegate) should sign the form if possible.

6.5.5 After the phone contact has been made

The Principal or Student Protection Contact will send a copy of the signed form to the relevant State Authority and then send (preferably by email or fax to the Directorate) a copy of the signed form to the Assistant Director: Schools and the Student Protection Coordinator at DCEO.

The Diocesan Director (or delegate) will keep a copy of the compulsory report in a separate confidential file.

The form is also filed confidentially at school level for accountability and compliance requirements to record and demonstrate that the Student Protection Processes have been followed.

The school has a responsibility to proactively case manage ongoing issues relating to the wellbeing of students and staff, and relationships with carers and families. When a suspicion of harm or likely harm is about a staff member, overall case management will be provided by the Assistant Director: Schools, working in association with the Principal and the Student Protection Coordinator. It is important for the case manager to establish communication with the relevant personnel within Child Safety Services and/or CPIU so that information may be shared as appropriate. The Student Protection Coordinator at DCEO is also available to provide assistance and support in managing what can be complex issues.

6.5.6 Informing parents

When a compulsory report is to be given to police and/or Child Safety Services, it is important that parents are not contacted before the report is made. Following the report, in order to assist in the management of the situation at the school level and to ensure the immediate safety of any students involved, it is advisable for the school to request from the police and/or Child Safety some indication regarding their involvement in the reported case and the possible timing of their intervention. It is important for the school to have this information because it is preferable for the parents or caregivers of students involved in incidents to be advised as soon as possible after the incident has occurred to ensure the best support and protection for their child. However, this should not occur until it has been ascertained from the state authority that informing the parents will not jeopardise an investigation.

6.6 Risk management and case management

The school has a responsibility to proactively case manage ongoing issues relating to the wellbeing of students and staff, and relationships with carers and families. Some steps would include the following.

- Risk assessment and action to minimise/manage risk, particularly to students.
- Establishing case management roles and responsibilities.
- Establishing communication channels with the Officer-in-Charge and/or the investigating officer within CPIU so that information may be shared as appropriate. The Student Protection Coordinator at DCEO is available to provide assistance and support to staff in managing what can be complex issues.
- Establishing communication channels and providing support structures to ensure that those involved receive regular pastoral contact, can access information on the processes being followed, and are connected to potential sources of external support.
- Ensuring that all those involved respect the confidentiality of the matter and the privacy of those involved.
- Securing relevant evidence and consulting DCEO about protocols around how evidence may be made available to police if required. Legal advice will be obtained if required.

6.7 Action to be taken if the suspected harm or likely harm to a student relates to the behaviour of a staff member, other employee, or volunteer

6.7.1 Diocesan Catholic Education personnel

Following submission to the police of a compulsory report alleging that harm to a student has been caused or is likely in the future as a result of the behaviour of a staff member, other employee or volunteer, an investigation into the matter must not be conducted by or on behalf of Catholic Education, pending the result of police inquiries. However, the Assistant Director: Schools (or delegate) will take immediate steps to ensure that a risk assessment is carried out to determine if the staff member, other employee or volunteer subject to the allegations should continue to be allowed to work in the school. As a result of the risk assessment, the employee may be stood down from his/her duties, or have his/her duties restricted. If the employee is not an employee of Catholic Education, the appropriate steps in this regard will be taken by the Diocesan Director (or delegate) in association with that person’s employer.

The parent(s) or carer(s) of the student about whom a report has been made in relation to suspected or likely harm by a staff member, other employee or volunteer (unless the suspected or likely harm relates to the behaviour of a family member) will be informed by the Principal of the school or college as soon as practicable that a report has been provided to police, stressing the confidentiality of the matter.

If the report of suspected or likely harm by a staff member, other employee or volunteer relates to the behaviour of a family member, the School or DECO personnel will not inform the parent(s) or carer(s) of the student concerned without prior consultation with the police. They will only inform the parent(s) or carer(s) of the student if, on the advice of the police, he/she believes that this will not jeopardise an official investigation.

On receiving a copy of a compulsory report in which the suspected or likely harm arises from the behaviour of a registered teacher, the Diocesan Director (or delegate) will without delay make a written notification of this to the Queensland College of Teachers.

The Diocesan Director will keep a copy of the compulsory report in a separate confidential file.

The Assistant Director: Schools (or delegate) will establish liaison with the Queensland Police Service to assist in the management of the issue.
If the compulsory report concerns the behaviour of a staff member, other employee or volunteer who is a cleric or religious, or who was a cleric or religious at the time of the alleged behaviour, the Diocesan Director (or delegate) will inform the Director of Professional Standards as soon as possible.

6.7.2 Notifying the employee or volunteer

The Assistant Director: Schools (or delegate) will seek advice from the police as to if and when the employee or volunteer should be informed of the allegation. As soon as it is deemed appropriate to inform the employee or volunteer, a meeting will be held between the employee or volunteer and the Assistant Director: Schools (or delegate). The employee or volunteer will be advised that he/she can have a support person at this meeting. At the meeting, the employee or volunteer will be informed that a report of suspected harm or likely harm has been made about him/her and that this information has been handed to the police. He/she will also be given the details of a nominated person (normally the Assistant Director: Schools) to contact who will be available to provide information regarding the processes being undertaken and to facilitate the accessing of other support. The information communicated verbally at the meeting will also be provided in writing. If the employee is not an employee of Catholic Education, the appropriate steps will be taken in association with that person’s employer in this regard.

In the case of a staff member being the subject of the report, he/she will be reminded that he/she may access the confidential counselling services available through the ACCESS Counselling Services.

6.7.3 Standing down from duties

If as the result of a risk assessment it is decided by the Diocesan Director that the employee or volunteer should be stood down from his/her duties, or have them restricted, the police should be consulted to ensure that the timing and circumstances of this does not unnecessarily interfere with their inquiries.

The employee or volunteer concerned will be informed of the decision to stand him/her down or restrict his/her duties. The basis for this decision will be provided to the employee or volunteer in writing following the meeting at which this information has been communicated verbally. He/she will also be given the details of a nominated person (normally the Assistant Director: Schools) to contact who will be available to provide information regarding the processes being undertaken and to facilitate the accessing of other support.

In the case of a staff member being the subject of the report, he/she will be reminded that he/she may access the confidential counselling services available through ACCESS Counselling Services.

A staff member will normally continue on full pay during the stand down period unless disqualified or prevented from performing his/her duties by an external body. The Assistant Director: Schools (or delegate) will discuss with the person what statement, if any, will be made to staff concerning his/her absence from school. (The AD:S may consult with the Diocesan Director and Student Protection Coordinator about the nature of this statement.) The contents of any such statement may be limited by legislation.

If the employee is not an employee of Catholic Education the appropriate steps in this regard will be taken by the Diocesan Director (or delegate) in association with that person’s employer.
6.7.4 Pastoral care and support

Pastoral care and support will be provided to the complainant, to the employee or volunteer against whom the allegation has been made, and any others involved. The welfare and best interests of any students involved will be paramount and advice can be sought from the DCEO Student Protection Coordinator about appropriate support for the student and his/her family.
6.8 Reporting process of alleged harm

Responding to allegations of student harm or likely harm by a person who is not another student at the school (not including suspicions of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse).

Staff member receives allegation/report or makes observations of concern or has reasonable suspicion of harm or likely harm to student.

If Principal or other Student Protection contact reasonably suspect that harm has been caused or is likely:

Staff member reports to Principal or other Student Protection contact.

If Principal or Student Protection contact unsure if harm has been caused or is likely contact is made with Assistant Director Schools or Student Protection Coordinator.

Assessment by principal/Student Protection Contact in consultation with AD: S or Student Protection Coordinator.

Decision to report to the relevant state authority.

Report to Child Safety and/or Police. Information is requested regarding what intervention if any will occur.

Principal informs staff member who made the report that the report has been lodged.

Support for student and family and/or appropriate referral.

Copy of report to AD: S and Student Protection Coordinator.

Decision not to report to a state authority.

Principal informs staff members/complainants of decision (and reminds them they may independently report if they do not agree with school decision).

Staff member together with Principal and Student Protection contact to monitor student.

Support for student and family and/or appropriate referral.
6.9 Reporting allegations or suspicions of harm by another student

Responding to allegations or suspicions of student harm or likely harm by another student (not including suspicions of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse).

[Diagram of process]

- Staff member has reasonable suspicion of harm or likely harm caused to one student by another.
- Staff member immediately ensures the safety of all students involved.
- Staff member reports to the principal or Student Protection Contact and writes a clear account of what they observed or became aware of.
- If principal or Student Protection Contact reasonably suspects that harm has been caused or is likely to occur, report is made to the police. This report should indicate if a weapon is involved.
- Written report to AD's 5 and to Student Protection Coordinator.
- Where possible and if appropriate, efforts should be made to reconcile parties involved.
- Key stakeholders (parents, teachers and students) should be kept informed.
- Adopt whole of school strategies to prevent and mediate incidents of bullying and other student-to-student issues.
6.10 Reporting allegations or suspicions of self-harm

Responding to allegations or suspicions of student self-harm (not including suspicions of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse).
7 Recording and record-keeping

7.1 Making student protection records

The notes/records/reports staff make about student protection concerns are important documents. School personnel could be interviewed as part of an investigation, or required to attend court. They may need to refer to their notes later or these documents could be subpoenaed. In making any record of concerns about any student protection issue, staff are encouraged to keep in mind the following.

Do

- Be as objective as you can and record factual information as soon as possible.
- Write down exactly what has been observed or heard, noting the date and time.
- Record accurately the actions you have taken.
- Always sign and date the record. It should be clear whether the record was made on the same day as the incident, or after.

Do not

- Record an opinion about what was observed or heard.
- Record your judgements about people or situations.
- Interpret what you believe was observed or heard.
- Use emotive language.
- Use language that could be interpreted as prejudicial.

The Student Protection Coordinator at DCEO is available to give advice as to the type of material that should and should not be documented.

7.1.1 Reporting forms

Copies of the reporting forms to be used are to be found in Section 14. Electronic versions of the forms are available on the Principals and Student Protection pages on the DCEO Mysuite Portals.

Completed DCEO student protection reporting forms should be retained as vital school records demonstrating that the school is following the Catholic Education’s Student Protection Processes and so fulfilling a component of compliance under the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001. Copies of completed reporting forms should also be sent (preferably by email or to the Directorate fax) to the Assistant Director: Schools and the Student Protection Coordinator at DCEO.

7.1.2 Storing student protection records

The completed forms with other student protection records should be filed in a confidential file and not be available to staff generally except on a strict need to know basis as established under school protocols and procedures. Keeping the information in a central file apart from individual staff or student files ensures accountability and assists in the continuity of information from year to year. These records may be the subject of a subpoena in court processes.
7.2 Supporting members of the school community

The following suggestions are provided to assist those responsible for the ongoing support of members of the school community.

7.2.1 Ongoing support of students

Specific support intervention for a particular student should be a part of case management and responsibility for it should be allocated to those holding the appropriate roles within the school. Other staff with a need to know should only know what is strictly necessary and understand that their role is only to provide generalised support.

The following suggestions are provided to assist those responsible for the ongoing support of students.

- Refer students who have been affected to the School counsellor.
- Remind the student of other people who can talk with him/her if required.
- Employ techniques that help build the student’s self-esteem and sense of security.
- Caringly guide the student towards healthy relations with others.
- Do not tolerate negative behaviour; state your expectations clearly and be consistent.
- Very importantly, do not dwell or continually revisit the issue; discourage the student from allowing it to become a means of getting attention.
- Assist in preparing the student for any transitions and changes if possible.
- Continue to observe, monitor and review the student’s behaviour and progress to manage risk and enable the early identification of issues that may arise.

If appropriate, Counsellors at schools and colleges and the DCEO Student Protection Coordinator will be available to advise and assist in linking students with appropriate support networks and community agencies if required.

7.2.2 Ongoing support of parents and families

Specific support interventions for parents and families should also be a part of case management and responsibility for it should also be allocated to those holding the appropriate roles within the school. Counsellors at schools and colleges and the Student Protection Coordinator at DCEO have experience in working with parents and families affected by student protection issues and can offer advice and support to those involved, including linking parents and families with appropriate support networks and community agencies if required.

7.2.3 Ongoing support of Principal and staff

Taking action in student protection matters can be stressful for all staff involved. Staff need to be aware of their own reactions. They may need support and assistance with their own feelings of anger, fear and helplessness. It is suggested that the Principal should ensure that any staff member involved in any student protection incident is provided with opportunities for support and debriefing. Principals are also strongly encouraged to debrief with an appropriate person. The DCEO Student Protection Coordinator will be available to support staff involved in student protection incidents and to assist in the linking of those involved with supportive networks if required. Staff should also be reminded that they may access the confidential counselling services available through ACCESS Counselling Services.
8 Suspected inappropriate behaviour by a staff member towards a student (other than suspected or likely sexual abuse or suspected or likely harm)

8.1 Reporting of inappropriate behaviour

The reporting of inappropriate behaviour by a staff member towards a student is a requirement of Catholic Education. This requirement is in accordance with Catholic Education, responsibilities under the provisions of the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act and Regulation 2001. A staff member is subject to disciplinary sanction as an employee should he/she fail to act.

A staff member who reasonably suspects inappropriate behaviour by another staff member towards a student is required to report this matter to the Principal or other Student Protection Contact.

If a staff member reasonably suspects inappropriate behaviour towards a student by a person other than another staff member, he/she is responsible for acting upon this in accordance with school and Catholic Education’s policies and guidelines.

Inappropriate behaviour includes but is not limited to any behaviour, including words, towards a student that is contrary to what is required of staff members under Catholic Education’s Code of Conduct.

If a student, parent or other person makes a complaint in relation to an employee’s behaviour towards a student that the student or parent considers as inappropriate, this must be responded to in accordance with the processes detailed within this document or supporting documentation.

Such an allegation might constitute inappropriate behaviour of a physical, sexual, emotional or psychological nature.

8.2 Inappropriate behaviour – reporting responsibilities

8.2.1 Staff members

A staff member who:

- observes or reasonably suspects inappropriate behaviour by an employee towards a student, which does NOT involve sexual abuse, likely sexual abuse, harm or likely harm …

  or

- becomes aware of a complaint or allegation in relation to an employee’s behaviour towards a student that the student (or the student’s parent) considers to be inappropriate, but which does NOT involve sexual abuse, likely sexual abuse, harm or likely harm …

… must make a written report (Form C) to the school Principal or another Student Protection Contact at the school and keep appropriate records.

The fact that a complaint or allegation is not presented formally or in writing is not a valid reason to fail to follow the processes outlined below.
8.2.2 Student Protection Contact

If reported to a Student Protection Contact other than the Principal, the Student Protection Contact must provide a copy of the report to the Principal as soon as practicable and keep appropriate records, unless the allegation of inappropriate behaviour is made against the Principal, in which case the Student Protection Contact must provide a copy of the report to their Assistant Director: Schools.

8.2.3 Principal/Assistant Director: Schools

If a Principal:

- observes or reasonably suspects inappropriate behaviour by an employee towards a student, which does NOT involve sexual abuse, likely sexual abuse, harm or likely harm ...

or

- becomes aware of a complaint or allegation in relation to an employee’s alleged behaviour towards a student that the student (or the student’s parent) considers to be inappropriate but which does NOT involve sexual abuse, likely sexual abuse, harm or likely harm ...

... the Principal must take action in relation to the matter and document it in accordance with the processes outlined in this document and other documents issued by Catholic Education.

The fact that a complaint or allegation is not presented formally or provided in writing is not a valid reason to fail to follow the processes outlined below.

8.2.4 Intervention and reporting

Where there are allegations about an employee’s inappropriate behaviour towards a student the Principal (or Assistant Director: Schools where the allegation is against the Principal) will determine as quickly as possible the level of response required and the appropriate procedures to be followed. Allegations can be categorised into either allegations of minor inappropriate behaviour or allegations that are more complex or serious.

8.3 Situations that constitute minor inappropriate behaviour

A typical incident covered by minor inappropriate behaviour could include a one-off allegation of inappropriate behaviour by an employee, where no physical injury results and there is no suggestion of sexual misconduct or criminal behaviour. An intervention must not be undertaken if there is an allegation or reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse, likely sexual abuse, harm or likely harm of a student. The appropriate interventions for such situations are covered in Sections 5 & 6.

Minor incidents relate to allegations that, if substantiated, may constitute a breach of the Code of Conduct and possibly be deemed to be professional misconduct, they are not so serious as to make it likely that the employee would face a formal disciplinary sanction. When allegations relate to repeated or multiple possible minor breaches, they may need to be seen differently as explained in Section 8.5.
Examples of minor inappropriate behaviour requiring interventions include the following, but are not restricted to:

- using unprofessional language or otherwise inappropriate comments to or in the presence of a student
- making disrespectful personal comments about a student and/or a student’s family to or in the presence of a student
- shaming, humiliating or unfairly embarrassing a student
- pushing or grabbing a student (no injury)
- exposing a student to inappropriate material
- disclosing inappropriate personal information to a student
- inadequate questioning of a student about personal and private matters
- unreasonable, unfair and/or unjust disciplinary measures
- unfairly failing to follow a school’s behaviour support policy and procedures
- the imposition of manifestly unreasonable expectations
- unfairly exerting power over a student through the use of fear, threats, or unwarranted moral pressure.

8.4 Situations that constitute more complex or serious inappropriate behaviour

There will be times when there are allegations of repeated, more complex or serious inappropriate behaviour by an employee towards a student. Such behaviour, if substantiated, would constitute professional misconduct and would justify a formal disciplinary sanction against the employee. An intervention must not be undertaken if there is an allegation or reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse of a student, or likely sexual abuse in the future, or an allegation or reasonable suspicion of harm or likely harm to a student in the future. The appropriate interventions for such situations are covered in Sections 5 & 6.

Examples of more complex or serious inappropriate behaviour requiring interventions include but are not restricted to:

- repeated behaviour of a kind that has previously been dealt with by a Principal or Assistant Director: Schools
- multiple instances of behaviour, reported at or about the same time, of a type that would normally be dealt with by an informal intervention, but which taken together could justify a formal disciplinary sanction
- inappropriate physical contact causing minor injury
- harsh verbal (including digitally transmitted) abuse or belittling of students including derogatory language and demeaning names
- significant or repeated victimisation
- exposing or subjecting a student to significant threats and/or intimidation

† Even minor assaults can be criminal offences. The management of these matters will depend on factors like the seriousness and circumstances of the allegation, the wishes of the parties involved, whether the police have become involved, and whether the employee has a previous history of similar conduct. If it is reasonably suspected that harm has been caused the Principal must report such a matter to the police as a Compulsory Report Section 6).

‡ Ibid
- exposing a student to material that is significantly offensive or inappropriate to his/her age/maturity
- verbal (including digitally transmitted) or non-verbal communication that significantly breaches professional boundaries.

8.5 Situations involving volunteers or employees who are not employees of Catholic Education

If the person against whom an allegation of inappropriate behaviour has been made is a volunteer or an employee who is not employed by Catholic Education, the Principal will take appropriate steps, with the relevant employer if necessary, to deal with the matter in a manner that is consistent with the procedures outlined in this document as they apply to an employee of Catholic Education.
9 Inappropriate staff behaviour intervention processes

9.1 Allegations of minor inappropriate behaviour

An inquiry is carried out with the authority of the Principal (or Assistant Director: Schools if the allegation is against the Principal). A documented record of the process and of the outcomes is provided to the Diocesan Director at the end of the intervention process.

Allegations giving rise to an inquiry are generally resolved through informal resolution processes that are managed locally by the Principal and may include such responses as supervisory guidance and correction and in some cases mediation and/or conciliation. If the allegation involves the Principal, the response is co-ordinated by the Assistant Director: Schools.

9.1.1 Responsibilities

9.1.1.1 Principal (or Assistant Director: Schools)

The response to an allegation against an employee will be co-ordinated locally by the school Principal (or Assistant Director: Schools where the allegation is against the Principal). The Principal (or Assistant Director: Schools) will determine how to best address the allegation with the employee and how to initiate any disciplinary consequences that may be determined to be appropriate. This might involve consultation with relevant personnel in the Diocesan Catholic Education Office (e.g., Assistant Director: Schools, Legal Counsel, Student Protection Co-ordinator).

Where an allegation of minor inappropriate behaviour is made against the Principal, the Assistant Director: Schools may request the matter to be carried forward by another Assistant Director: Schools (or delegate).

The resolution of all minor incidents remains the responsibility of the Principal (or Assistant Director: Schools where the allegation is against the Principal). The Principal or Assistant Director: Schools will assess the matter so as to formulate a plan to address it with the employee. Management guidance will be provided and appropriate support will be extended to all concerned. Strict confidentiality shall be maintained regarding the matter.

Should an employee deny or contest the allegation of inappropriate behaviour towards a student, the Principal (or, if the matter involves the Principal, the Assistant Director: Schools) must decide whether or not further information-gathering at the school level is required or whether management guidance will suffice. The decision regarding whether and how to gather further information will depend on factors such as the seriousness of the allegation, the attitude of the complainant(s), any record of past allegations of inappropriate behaviour on the part of the respondent and the likelihood of an allegation being able to be substantiated given the circumstances.

If, in the opinion of the Principal/Assistant Director: Schools, a formal investigation is warranted, a report should be provided to the Diocesan Director (see below) in order to obtain authorisation for an investigation. A formal investigation (as opposed to data gathering to allow an assessment of the case to be made) must not be undertaken at the school level without the authorisation of the Diocesan Director.

An employee may admit inappropriate behaviour. The inappropriate behaviour will then be addressed through documented management guidance and/or correction. Conciliation/mediation may be provided if desired by the complainant.
At the completion of the intervention, the employee will be formally advised of the outcome. The parent/caregiver of the student/s concerned is to be advised in writing of the outcome unless there are extraordinary reasons why this should not occur, in which case the reasons should be documented. Any other complainants (including students) are also advised of the outcome.

A report form (Form C) should be completed by the Principal (or Assistant Director: Schools), with any relevant details attached. The report should include, as a minimum, the details and circumstances of the allegation, the action taken by the Principal (or Assistant Director: Schools) to assess and investigate the allegations, and the outcome. The outcome should document the staff member’s account of the incident, state whether or not the behaviour alleged has been admitted to by the employee and should contain clear details of the advice/guidance that has been provided to the employee. The outcome should also indicate if the behaviour alleged is judged to be not contrary to the Code of Conduct.

The original report should be kept on a confidential file at school level (or by the Assistant Director: Schools if the allegation concerns the Principal). A copy of the report is forwarded to the Assistant Director: Schools for placing in a confidential file and another copy must be provided to the employee.

9.1.1.2 Diocesan Catholic Education personnel
The Assistant Director: Schools (or delegate) is responsible for ensuring that reports are checked for completeness, accuracy, and relevance, and whether any previous reports have been received concerning the employee.

Where previous reports have been received concerning the employee, the Assistant Director: Schools will determine what further action, if any, needs to be taken.

The Diocesan Director will receive and keep the report in a separate confidential file.

9.1.2 Pastoral care and support
Pastoral care and support will be provided to the complainant, to the employee against whom the allegation has been made, and any others involved. The welfare and best interests of any students involved will be paramount and advice may be sought from DCEO Student Protection Services about appropriate support for the student and his/her family.

9.2 Allegations of more complex or serious inappropriate behaviour
An inquiry at this level is carried out under the authority of the Diocesan Director or delegate. The matter is formally reported to the Diocesan Director at the commencement and end of the intervention process.

9.2.1 Intervention responsibilities
9.2.1.1 Principal (or Assistant Director: Schools)
As soon as the Principal (or Assistant Director: Schools) is aware that the allegation is of such a nature as to require an investigation, a report (Form C) must be completed and forwarded to the Diocesan Director without delay.
9.2.1.2 **Diocesan Catholic Education personnel**

On receipt of an allegation of inappropriate behaviour against an employee, the Diocesan Director (or delegate) will assess the matter and determine how it is to be progressed. The Diocesan Director (or delegate) will consider the details of the allegation and as necessary will clarify it and any issues related to it by consulting with relevant persons such as the Principal, Assistant Director: Schools, Legal Counsel, and/or the Diocesan Student Protection Coordinator. The Diocesan Director (or delegate) will also consider any previous reports on file of allegations of inappropriate behaviour made against the employee.

The Diocesan Director (or delegate) will take immediate steps to ensure that a risk assessment is carried out to determine if the employee subject to the allegations should continue to be allowed to work in the school. As a result of the risk assessment, the employee may be stood down from his/her duties, or have his/her duties restricted.

If the Diocesan Director forms the view that the matter involves an allegation or reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student or an allegation or reasonable suspicion that harm, likely harm has been or will be caused to a student, the Diocesan Director must immediately make a Mandatory or Compulsory Report. *(Sections 5 & 6)*

If the Diocesan Director forms the view that the matter should be handled as a lower level investigation, the matter is referred back to the Principal. *(Section 9.1)*

If the Diocesan Director believes that a formal intervention is appropriate, a decision is made as to who should most appropriately conduct an investigation into the allegation. The Diocesan Director may authorise the Principal, a DCEO staff member (e.g., Assistant Director: Schools, or Employee Relations staff member), or an external party to conduct the investigation.

The Diocesan Director (or delegate) will inform the parent or carer of the student/s towards whom the inappropriate behaviour is alleged to have occurred in writing that an investigation into the matter has been authorised. The name of a contact person who can provide information about the process being followed will be provided.

9.2.2 **Notifying the employee**

As soon as the Diocesan Director (or delegate) deems it to be appropriate to inform the employee, a meeting will be held between the employee and the Diocesan Director (or delegate). The employee will be advised that he/she can have a support person at this meeting. At the meeting, the employee will be informed that an allegation of inappropriate behaviour has been made against him/her, will be provided with an outline of the allegation(s) and advised that an investigation into the matter has been authorised. The employee will be reminded that he/she may access the confidential counselling services available to all employees through ACCESS Counselling Services. He/she will also be given the details of a nominated person to contact who will be available to provide support regarding the processes being undertaken and to facilitate the accessing of other support. The information communicated verbally at the meeting will also be provided in writing.

9.2.3 **Standing down from duties**

As the result of a risk assessment it may be decided that the employee should be stood down from his/her duties, or have them restricted. In this case, the employee concerned will be informed of the decision to stand him/her down or restrict his/her duties. The basis for this decision will be provided to the employee in writing following the meeting at which this information has been communicated verbally. The employee will be reminded that they may access the confidential counselling services...
available to all employees through ACCESS Counselling Services. He/she will also be given the details of a nominated person to contact who will be available to provide support regarding the processes being undertaken and to facilitate the accessing of other support.

The employee will normally continue on full pay during the stand down period unless disqualified or prevented from performing his/her duties by an external body. The Diocesan Director (or delegate) will discuss with the person what statement, if any, will be made to staff concerning his/her absence from school. Any such statement will be subject to restrictions contained in legislation.

9.2.4 Pastoral care and support

Pastoral care and support will be provided to the complainant, to the employee against whom the allegation has been made, and any others involved. The welfare and best interests of any students involved will be paramount and advice should be sought from the DCEO Student Protection Coordinator about appropriate support for the student and his/her family.

9.2.5 Investigation process

The investigator shall as soon as possible arrange for a meeting to be held to inform the employee of the specific nature of the allegation(s). Prior to the meeting, the employee will be advised that he/she can have a support person at this meeting. A written record of the meeting and outcomes will be provided to the employee, and he/she will be reminded of the free confidential counselling services available to all employees through ACCESS Counselling Services. In the written record of the meeting the employee the allegation(s) will be listed and the employee will be asked to reply to the allegation(s) within a reasonable time (normally no more than seven days).

The investigator will contact the parent(s) or carer(s) of the student/s against whom the inappropriate behaviour is alleged to have occurred and the following issues will be discussed.

- That an allegation has been made and is being investigated.
- The investigation process.
- The provision of parental/carer permission for student/s to be interviewed.
- Parent/carer views, concerns and support needs.
- Communication process for the parent/carer to be updated re the investigation and other related issues.
- The need for confidentiality.

If the investigator determines that it is desirable for other students (e.g., students named as witnesses) to be interviewed, the above guidelines relating to parents/carers will be followed in relation to them also.

Pastoral care and support will be provided to the complainant, to the employee against whom the allegation has been made, and any others involved. The welfare and best interests of any students involved will be paramount.

In conducting the investigation the investigator shall ensure that appropriate confidentiality is maintained.
Should the investigator during the course of the investigation form the view that that the matter involves an allegation or reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student or an allegation or reasonable suspicion that harm has been caused to a student, then, if the investigator is:

- an employee of Catholic Education, he/she must immediately make the appropriate Mandatory or Compulsory report. (Sections 5 & 6)
- not an employee of Catholic Education, he/she must immediately make a written report to the Diocesan Director (or delegate) who will then immediately complete the appropriate Mandatory or Compulsory report. (Sections 5 & 6)

At the conclusion of the investigation, a written report, outlining the process of investigation, the evidence gathered, and the conclusions reached will be provided to the Diocesan Director by the investigator. The report will indicate whether, in the investigator’s opinion, the allegation(s) are substantiated on the balance of probabilities and whether the Catholic Education’s Code of Conduct has been breached.

The Diocesan Director will receive and keep the investigation report in a confidential file.

The Diocesan Director (or delegate) is responsible for informing the Principal and relevant Assistant Director: Schools of the outcome of the investigation. The Diocesan Director (or delegate) advises the parent/caregiver of the student concerned of the outcome unless there are extraordinary reasons why this should not occur, in which case the reasons should be documented. Any other complainants (including students) are also advised of the outcome.

9.2.6 Determination of professional misconduct

If, following the presentation of the investigation report, the Diocesan Director (or delegate) has determined that allegations of inappropriate behaviour are substantiated and that they constitute professional misconduct, the Diocesan Director (or delegate) will communicate this in writing to the employee and advise the Principal accordingly.

If the Diocesan Director is not considering terminating the employee’s employment, the employee will receive a letter stating the seriousness of the misconduct and containing a warning that further substantiated misconduct may lead to termination of the employee’s services.

If, on the evidence, the Diocesan Director is considering the termination of the employee’s services then the Diocesan Director will provide the employee with a timeframe within which the employee is given the opportunity to show cause as to why his/her employment should not be terminated. The Diocesan Director will consider any submission that the employee chooses to make in response within the timeframe given. Following receipt of the submission from the employee, the Diocesan Director will make a decision in relation to the employee’s employment status and will communicate this in writing to the employee.

If an employee whose employment is terminated by the Diocesan Director is a teacher, and the circumstances of the dismissal, in the opinion of the Diocesan Director, call into question the teacher’s competency to be employed as a teacher, the Diocesan Director must give notice of the dismissal to the Queensland College of Teachers within a period of 14 days of the dismissal (Education [Queensland College of Teachers] Act 2005 s.78).
9.2.7 No determination of professional misconduct

If, following the presentation of the investigation report, the Diocesan Director (or delegate) has determined that the allegations of inappropriate behaviour are not substantiated and therefore no professional misconduct substantiated, the Diocesan Director (or delegate) will communicate this in writing to the employee and advise the Principal accordingly.

9.2.8 Finalisation

The Diocesan Director (or delegate) will advise the parent/caregiver of the student concerned of the outcome unless there are extraordinary reasons why this should not occur, in which case the reasons should be documented. Any other complainants (including students) are also advised of the outcome.

Pastoral care and support will be provided to the complainant, to the employee against whom the allegation has been made, and any others involved. The welfare and best interests of any students involved will be paramount.

If the employee continues to work at the school, the Principal will support the pastoral care of the employee, and the employee will be reminded of the confidential counselling services available to all employees through ACCESS Counselling Services. Reasonable steps will be taken by the Principal to manage risks and to provide appropriate ongoing supervision of and support for the employee.

If the employee has been stood down during the investigation and returns to work at the school, all reasonable steps will be taken by the Principal to assist the employee to reintegrate into the school community.
10 Following mandatory or compulsory reporting of employee or volunteer conduct to police

Following a matter being reported to police there can be one of two outcomes. These can be summarised as follows.

- Conviction of a criminal offence in a court of law.
- No conviction. Police may decide not to investigate, to discontinue an investigation or not to lay a charge following an investigation, a prosecution may not go ahead following a charge having been laid, or a matter may go to court but not result in a conviction.

In addition to the scenarios set out above, Catholic Education may become aware that a staff member has been under investigation or has been prosecuted for an offence against a student in circumstances where a mandatory report has not been made by a Catholic Education staff member.

The procedure below will be followed in all the scenarios set out above. Where the matter involves a volunteer or an employee who is not an employee of Catholic Education action will be taken, with the relevant employer if necessary, to deal with the matter in a manner that is consistent with the procedures outlined in this document as they apply to an employee of Catholic Education.

Where the employee or volunteer concerned is a cleric or religious, or was a cleric or religious at the time of the alleged behaviour, the Director of Professional Standards will be informed as soon as possible.

10.1 Conviction

If a current staff member is convicted in a court of law for an offence against a student that is deemed to be an act of serious professional misconduct, then the Diocesan Director will proceed to dismiss the staff member.

The Diocesan Director (or delegate) will document the outcome of the court proceedings in the formal communication regarding the termination of the staff member’s employment.

If the staff member who is convicted is a teacher, the Diocesan Director or delegate will inform, in writing, the Queensland College of Teachers.

If the conviction is for a charge that is deemed to be less than serious professional misconduct but is contrary to the Catholic Education’s Code of Conduct, then the Diocesan Director will proceed to take disciplinary action against the staff member.

The pastoral care of student/s and staff involved will be monitored and support provided.

10.2 No conviction

The failure of a court to record a conviction against the staff member against whom a charge has been made, a decision not to prosecute, does not necessarily mean that the allegation was unwarranted and that the staff member has no case to answer as an employee within a Catholic school. The fact that a staff member has been found ‘not guilty’ of an offence does not automatically mean that a matter has been closed.
The standard of proof required for disciplinary action within the employer-employee relationship is ‘on the balance of probability’, rather than the criminal standard of ‘beyond reasonable doubt’. In addition, a serious breach of the Catholic Education’s Code of Conduct may not be a criminal offence. For this reason, the matter concerned must still be appropriately dealt with by Catholic Education, as a disciplinary matter.

When Catholic Education becomes aware that a police investigation or prosecution will not proceed, or that a conviction has not been recorded, the matter will proceed according to Catholic Education’s Employee Misconduct Processes. Documents on the public record as a result of court proceedings, and/or materials made available as a result of police investigations may be considered as part of any investigation conducted by or on behalf of Catholic Education.
11 Student protection contacts

11.1 Relevant requirements

Section 1

Advice to Principals - Selecting Student Protection Contacts

The Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (s.10) requires Non-State schools in Queensland to nominate at least two stated staff members to whom a student can report behaviour of another staff member that the student considers inappropriate. Catholic Education (Diocese of Rockhampton) also requires that such staff members act as Student Protection Contacts in matters that relate to harm to students from any other source.

It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that at least two Student Protection Contacts are nominated for the school or college. Furthermore, the names of the Student Protection Contacts are to be prominently displayed in the school for the information of students.

In Catholic Education (Diocese of Rockhampton) schools, it is recommended that the Principal be one of the Student Protection Contacts.

11.2 Selection of student protection contacts

Principals are advised to give serious consideration as to who is selected as a Student Protection Contact in the school. While there is a requirement to have at least two Student Protection Contacts it may be appropriate to nominate more than two in larger schools taking into account the age and diversity of students. Furthermore, gender balance issues ought to be considered in appointing student protection contacts in a school.

In the selection of a staff member for this role some other considerations should be:

1. The employee’s personal attitudes, experiences and beliefs
   - non-judgemental and with the capacity to be objective when managing sensitive issues
   - calm and resilient
   - demonstrates a high degree of integrity, discretion and confidentiality
   - preparedness to assume the responsibilities of the role in addition to their other duties
   - awareness of the ethos of a Catholic School

2. The employee’s role within the school
   - reflects professional standing and experience in working with complex student and family issues
   - enables them to be readily available and accessible

3. The employee’s personal profile within the school
   - approachable
   - trusted by students

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§ It is important to note that unfortunately many of the positive characteristics mentioned here are also evident in the ‘grooming’ behaviours used by child sex offenders towards children, families, colleagues and an organisation. The potential for this dynamic to exist necessitates caution when assessing an employee’s profile within the school community and makes it important not to rely solely on this one aspect of suitability.
• trusted by staff members
• willing and able to respond personally and sensitively
• awareness of confidentiality

4. The employee’s willingness and capacity to work in a proactive partnership with the Principal and any other Student Protection Contact at the school

5. A willingness and ability to make effective and objective student protection records and reports

6. A willingness and ability to attend Student Protection professional learning opportunities when offered

Endorsement by the Diocesan Student Protection Co-ordinator

Principals are to forward the names of the proposed Student Protection Contacts to the Diocesan Student Protection Co-ordinator prior to any formal conversation with the proposed Student Protection Contact for confirmation. Upon receiving such confirmation from the Diocesan Student Protection Co-ordinator of the proposed appointee’s suitability for the position the proposal may proceed. Please use the accompanying form: Proposed Student Protection Contacts Form.

If there are issues regarding suitability of the proposed Student Protection contacts then discussions with the Diocesan Student Protection Co-ordinator will assist and support the Principal in determining more suitable candidates.

11.3 Responsibilities of student protection contacts

• To fully understand and embrace the personal attitudes and obligations of the role (non-judgemental and with the capacity to be objective when managing sensitive issues; calm and resilient; a high degree of integrity, discretion and respect for confidentiality)
• To receive allegations/complaints from either staff or students and to clarify the nature of the claim, if necessary, without setting out to validate the complaint
• To understand the requirement under mandatory reporting (i.e. when there is suspected or likely sexual abuse of a current student from any source including historical matters) to report directly to the Principal or the Director of Catholic Education who will then report directly to police
• To report to a relevant State authority
• To make effective and objective Student Protection records
• To attend student protection professional development (in particular, school student protection training each year as well as the diocesan biennial in-service)

When the Student Protection Contact is not the Principal it is their responsibility:

• To inform the principal of an allegation/complaint (see **)  
• To assist the principal in the management of student protection incidents if requested
• To assist the principal in the support of students and staff when appropriate

** In cases where the principal is the subject of the allegation/complaint then inform the Assistant Director -Schools unless the allegation against the principal is mandatory reporting (suspected sexual abuse of a current student) which should be reported directly to the Diocesan Director of Catholic Education.
When the Student Protection Contact is not the Principal it is their responsibility to:

- inform the Principal of an allegation/complaint.
- assist the Principal in the management of student protection incidents if requested
- assist the Principal in the support of students and staff when appropriate.

** In cases where the Principal is the subject of the allegation/complaint then inform the Assistant Director -Schools unless the allegation against the Principal is mandatory reporting (suspected sexual abuse of a student) which should be reported directly to the Diocesan Director of Catholic Education.
12 Compliance and accountability measures

12.1 Ensuring that the student protection processes that apply in the school are known by employees, students and families

Principals are responsible for:

12.1.1 Ensuring that the Student Protection processes that apply in the school are made known to employees, staff members and families

Each Principal is responsible for ensuring that:

• the documents stipulating the Student Protection processes are freely available to employees, students and families
• employees, students and families are aware of the Student Protection processes including the names of the school’s Student Protection Contacts
• she/he can demonstrate to the Diocesan Catholic Education Office how the Student Protection processes are being implemented within the school.

12.1.2 Ensuring that the documents stipulating Student Protection processes are freely available to employees, students and families

• The Principal will ensure that an up-to-date hard copy of the documents will be placed in the school library and will be freely available for inspection by employees, students and families during school hours.
• The Principal will ensure that the school makes an electronic copy of the documents readily available to students and families through the school’s Internet site/intranet.
• Diocesan Catholic Education Office will publish an electronic copy of the documents on the DCEO Mysuite portal so that they are freely available to staff members.

12.1.3 Ensuring that employees are aware of the Student Protection processes

Principals are responsible for ensuring that:

• all new staff members are made aware of the requirements of the Code of Conduct and the documents that stipulate DCEO Student Protection processes as part of their induction
• the names of the school’s Student Protection Contacts are made known to employees and displayed in the staffroom, and in the staff handbook and/or the school’s intranet site
• all new staff members undertake Catholic Education’s Student Protection training during their initial period of employment, which is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation
• all staff members receive two hours further training about their Student Protection responsibilities on at least an annual basis
• other employees understand their Student Protection responsibilities as appropriate
• all volunteers complete Student Protection training and receive a copy of the Volunteer Code of Conduct
• he/she appoints at least one other suitable staff member to fulfil the role of Student Protection Contact for the school.
Catholic Education is responsible for ensuring that:

- as part of induction all new Principals receive Student Protection training that is appropriate to their roles and responsibilities
- suitable Student Protection programs and training materials are made available and delivered to staff
- student Protection brochures are made available (on request) to schools for distribution
- specialised Student Protection training is made available and delivered to Principals, other Student Protection Contacts and School counsellors
- specialised Student Protection expertise is available to staff members through the work of the Student Protection Coordinator and other staff within Diocesan Catholic Education Office.

12.1.4 Ensuring that students are aware of the Student Protection processes

Principals are responsible for ensuring that:

- the ‘Feeling safe’ Student Protection posters are displayed prominently in areas of the school frequented by students
- the names of the school’s Student Protection Contacts are made known to students and parents in a variety of ways and publicised in the school community, for example, by posters, assemblies, handbooks, the school newsletter, the school’s internet site/intranet and parent information sessions
- students and parents are made aware of the processes for reporting to a Student Protection Contact for example, by posters, assemblies, handbooks, the school newsletter, the school’s internet site/intranet and parent information sessions the behaviour of any staff member that a student considers is inappropriate
- students and parents are made aware that a hard copy of the documents stipulating Student Protection processes are in the school library and freely available for inspection during school hours
- students and parents are made aware that electronic copies of the documents stipulating Student Protection processes are available through the school’s internet site/intranet
- Student Protection and Integrity in Relationships brochures are made available to parents.

Catholic Education is responsible for ensuring that:

- suitable Student Protection brochures are made available in hard copy and electronic formats for distribution by schools
- student Reporting Process Posters are supplied as required.
12.2 Ensuring that the Principal can demonstrate to the Diocesan Catholic Education Office, how the student protection processes are being implemented within the school

The Principal must:

- keep and make available on request records and other evidence that demonstrate that the Student Protection processes are being implemented within the school, and how they are being implemented
- keep updated the names of the school’s Student Protection contacts in the school’s documents
- inform the Diocesan Catholic Education Office annually of the names of the school’s Student Protection Contacts for placing on a centralised register, and of any changes that occur from time to time
- demonstrate the school’s compliance with Student Protection requirements as part of the School Review and Improvement (School Cyclical Review)
- ensure compliance with mandatory training of two (2) hours per year as outlined in the Student Protection Policy. Any variation to this requirement must be authorised by the DCEO Student Protection Coordinator.
13 Sources/references

This document specifying the processes required of schools administered by Catholic Education complements the processes developed by the National Committee for Professional Standards entitled *Towards Healing – Principles and Processes in Responding to Complaints of Abuse against Personnel of the Catholic Church in Australia* (2010). The National Committee for Professional Standards was established by the Australian Catholic Bishops’ Conference and the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes. The document is also in harmony with the principles and behavioural standards contained in the National Committee for Professional Standards resource document *Integrity in the Service of the Church* (2011).

The current document also incorporates key requirements of Queensland legislation in relation to the protection of students.

- The *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005*.
- The *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000*.
- The *Child Protection Act 1999*.

The current document replaces and updates Catholic Education’s previously entitled document: *Student Protection Processes July 2012*.

Further, there are a number of other documents/resources that outline how Catholic Education, will respond to various types of issues in relation to student protection which arise in schools it operates. These include the following.

- *Grievance Procedures for Parents and Students (Policy 2012–02)*.
- *Catholic Education’s Guidelines for Grievance Procedures for Parents and Students*.
- *Prevention and Elimination of Sexual Harassment and Bullying (Policy 2012–02)*.
- *Sexual Harassment and Bullying Procedures and Guidelines* 2010.
- *Anti-Bullying Policy* (currently being developed).
Important information

Although staff members are required to follow the Student Protection processes laid down by, Catholic Education, Diocese of Rockhampton this does not limit the freedom of any person to take immediate action to notify police of any complaint or concern about the safety of a student, particularly if he/she believes that it is essential to ensure a student’s safety.
14 Forms

All forms are private and confidential.

14.1 Mandatory reporting (suspected or likely sexual abuse) to a statutory authority

Form A – Mandatory report form to be completed where there is a reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse. To be submitted to the statutory authority.

14.2 Compulsory reporting (harm/likely harm) to a statutory authority

Form B – Compulsory report form to be completed where there is a suspicion of harm or likely harm. To be submitted to the statutory authority.

14.3 Inappropriate staff behaviour

Form C – Internal report.
Form A - Mandatory Report (suspected sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse) to statutory authority

Private & confidential – valid from January 2013

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Section 1: First person report

This section is to be completed (to the best of their knowledge) by the staff member (the ‘first person’) who suspects the sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student by another person.

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Details of person/s allegedly responsible for suspected or likely sexual abuse

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<tr>
<th>Relationship to student</th>
<th>Phone no.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Does the report relate to suspected or likely sexual abuse of a student by a staff member/employee/volunteer?  
☐ Yes  ☐ No

Details of suspected or likely sexual abuse (attach extra pages if necessary)

The following information must be included (as per Regulation 68, Education (General Provisions) Regulations 2006 (Qld)):

- The basis for the first person reasonably suspecting the student has been sexually abused;
- Details of the suspected abuse of the student (e.g. time and date of alleged incident, source of information);
- Other relevant information, e.g. other harm (if known)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of any other person whom the first person thinks may have information about the suspected or likely sexual abuse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First person report provided to (one of the following)

☐ Principal  
Date: ____________  
Time: ____________

OR

☐ Diocesan Director  
Date: ____________  
Time: ____________

☐ Emailed to: director_catholiceducationrockhampton@rok.catholic.edu.au

☐ Fax to: 07 4931 3701

First person’s signature: ____________________________
Legal Name of student(s) concerned: ___________________________ Date of report: ________________
Date of Birth: __________________________________________

Section 2
To be completed by principal or Diocesan Director

Source of suspected or likely sexual abuse

- Adult family member
- Child family member
- Other adult (not STAFF MEMBER/EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTEER)
- Student/other child
- Staff member/employee/volunteer
- Unknown

Details of family (if more than one family, attach additional information)

Parent/caregiver 1 _____________________________ Relationship to student _____________________________
______________________________________________
Address (if different from student) _____________________________
______________________________________________
Phone no. (H) ___________________ (W) ___________________ (M) ___________________

Parent/caregiver 2 _____________________________ Relationship to student _____________________________
______________________________________________
Address (if different from student) _____________________________
______________________________________________
Phone (H) ___________________ (W) ___________________ (M) ___________________
Is the student in alternative care? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Other household members (include all known names of children, family and significant others).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>DOB</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Relationship to student</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Legal name of student(s) concerned: ___________________________ Date of report: ___________________________

Date of birth: ___________________________________________________________________________________

Other known information
Please include: Other information about the incident; source of information; physical appearance of any injury; immediate and ongoing safety concerns; any previous incidents of suspected or likely sexual abuse and/or harm/likely harm; behavioural indicators of harm or likely harm; presence of any medical needs or developmental delays; any family law, child protection or domestic violence orders.

Family circumstances/relationships; parental mental health issues; substance use; disabilities; family stresses; mobility (frequent school/family relocations); level of access person suspected to have sexually abused has to the child.

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

Details of any known previous involvement by police/child safety
______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

Other services or supports currently in place for the student (if known) e.g. contact name and contact details of other professionals/support persons.

Protective factors – e.g. Presence of a protective caregiver; a child’s ability to seek external help; positive family relationships.

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

Additional information provided as an attachment □ Yes □ No
Number of pages ____________

Principal ____________________________________________ Signature
__________________________

OR
Diocesan Director
__________________________

Date
__________________________

Time
__________________________

Principal’s email address
OR
Diocesan Director’s email address
director_catholiceducationrockhampton@rok.catholic.edu.au

Information about proposed action by Statutory Authority required by school □ Yes □ No
Legal name of student(s) concerned: ___________________________ Date of report: ______________
Date of birth: ____________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 3: checklist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To be completed by principal or Diocesan Director</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action to be taken by Principal or Diocesan Director</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>If Staff member is the first person and has provided report to Principal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Fax or email this form to Queensland Police Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Fax or email this form also to Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) - only if source of the suspected or likely sexual abuse is a family member of the student or there are concerns about capacity of parent/s to protect the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Fax or email to the Diocesan Director</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **If Staff member is the first person and has provided report to the Diocesan Director** | Diocesan Director to |
| - Fax or email this form to Queensland Police Service |
| - Fax or email this form also to Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) - only if source of the suspected or likely sexual abuse is a family member of the student or there are concerns about capacity of parent/s to protect the student |

| **If Principal is the first person** | Principal to |
| - Fax or email this form to Queensland Police Service |
| - Fax or email this form also to Child Safety (only if source of the suspected or likely sexual abuse is a family member of the student or there are concerns about capacity of parent/s to protect the student) |
| - Fax or email to the Diocesan Director |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report provided to</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name of authorised officer report made to</th>
<th>Reported via</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Queensland Police Service - CPIU</td>
<td>__________</td>
<td>____________________</td>
<td>□ Fax □ Email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) - RIS</td>
<td>__________</td>
<td>____________________</td>
<td>□ Fax □ Email</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

□ Diocesan Director: email director_catholiceducationrockhampton@rok.catholic.edu.au
    fax 07 4931 3701

Principal or Diocesan Director should confirm receipt by Statutory Authorities of faxed or emailed form and ensure original Form A is stored in a secure location along with any other documentation collected for the purpose of this report.
Form B – Report of harm/likely harm to statutory authority

Private & Confidential – valid from January 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Name of student(s) concerned</th>
<th>Date of Report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Birth</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Section 1**

This section is to be completed (to the best of their knowledge) by the staff member (the ‘first person’) who first becomes aware of harm /likely harm to the student.

### Details of school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>School phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Details of student(s)

**Student 1’s full name** (incl. "known as")

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Level</th>
<th>□ Male</th>
<th>□ Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student 1’s residential address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Does the student have a disability?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Known details of disability</th>
<th>□ Verified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cultural background

- □ Aboriginal
- □ Torres Strait Islander
- □ Other

**Student 2’s full name** (incl. "known as")

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Level</th>
<th>□ Male</th>
<th>□ Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student 2's residential address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Does the student have a disability?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Known details of disability</th>
<th>□ Verified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cultural background

- □ Aboriginal
- □ Torres Strait Islander
- □ Other

---

Student Protection Processes Catholic Education, Diocese of Rockhampton (January 2013)
Page 65
### Legal name of student(s) concerned

Date of report

Date of birth

---

### Details of staff member (first person)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Phone no.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Date/time first person reasonably suspected harm/likely harm

---

### Details of person/s allegedly responsible for harm/likely harm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full name (including aliases)</th>
<th>DOB/approx. age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

Relationship to student

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phone no.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Does the report relate to suspected harm/likely harm of a student by a staff member/employee/volunteer?  

- Yes
- No

### Details of suspected harm/likely harm (attach extra pages if necessary)

Please include the following information:
- Details of the basis for the first person reasonably suspecting harm/likely harm to the student;
- Details of the suspected harm/likely harm to the student; (e.g. time and date of alleged incident, source of information)
- Other relevant information.

---

### Name and contact details of any other person whom the first person thinks may have information about the harm/likely harm

---

### First person report provided to (one of the following)

- Principal
- OR
- Student Protection Contact

- Assistant Director Schools (if harm by a Principal)
  
  - Faxed to 07 49313 701

First person’s signature
Legal name of student(s) concerned ___________________________ Date of report ________________
Date of birth ______________________________________________________________________

---

**Section 2**

To be completed by Principal/Student Protection Contact (SPC)/Assistant Director Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of harm/likely harm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Adult family member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Student/other child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Other adult (not staff member/employee/volunteer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause of harm/likely harm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Physical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Likely sexual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Self-harm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Neglect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Domestic violence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details of family (if more than one family, attach additional information)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent/caregiver 1 ___________________________ Relationship to student ________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address (if different from student) ______________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone (H) ______________ (W) ______________ (M) __________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/caregiver 2 ___________________________ Relationship to student ________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address (if different from student) ______________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone (H) ______________ (W) ______________ (M) __________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is the student in alternative care?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other household members (include all known names of children, family and significant others)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal name of student(s) concerned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of birth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other known information**

Please include the following: physical appearance of any injury; immediate and ongoing safety concerns; any disclosures made by student; any previous incidents of suspected sexual abuse and/or harm/likely sexual abuse; behavioural indicators of harm or likely harm; presence of any medical needs or developmental delays; any family law, child protection or domestic violence orders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other services or supports currently in place for the student</th>
<th>Number of pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal's email address</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Director: Schools</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Information about proposed action by Statutory Authority required by school**

- Yes
- No
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Name of student(s) concerned</th>
<th>Date of Report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of Birth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Section 3: checklist

**To be completed by Principal/Student Protection Contact/Assistant Director : Schools**

**Action to be Taken by Principal/SPC/Assistant Director: Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical harm/likely harm</th>
<th>Principal or SPC to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not by Principal</td>
<td>- Fax or email this form to Queensland Police Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Fax or email this form also to Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) - <em>only if source of the harm/likely harm is a family member of the student or there are concerns about capacity of parent/s’ to protect the student</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Fax or email to DCEO Student Protection Coordinator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotional harm/self-harm/neglect</th>
<th>Principal or SPC to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not by Principal</td>
<td>- Fax or email this form to Department of Communities (Child Safety Services)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Copy to the Assistant Director: Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Fax or email to DCEO Student Protection Coordinator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All harm/likely harm by a Principal</th>
<th>Assistant Director: Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Fax or email this form to Queensland Police Service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Report provided to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report provided to</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name of authorised officer report made to</th>
<th>Reported via</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Queensland Police Service - CPIU</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) - RIS</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ DCEO Assistant Director: Schools</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Principal/SPC/Assistant Director: Schools should confirm receipt by Statutory Authorities of faxed or emailed form and ensure original Form B is stored in a secure location along with any other documentation collected for the purpose of this report.*

**Reported under:**

The *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 Section 10*
Form C – Reporting of inappropriate staff behaviour towards a student

Private & confidential – valid from January 2013

For an allegation or reasonable suspicion of inappropriate behaviour by a staff member, volunteer or other employee towards a student (other than sexual abuse/likely sexual abuse/harm/likely harm)

To be completed by the staff member who first becomes aware of the allegation or reasonably suspects the inappropriate behaviour.

Please complete the details below and hand to the Principal or other Student Protection Contact at the school. If the allegation is about the Principal, please hand to the Assistant Director: Schools.

| School’s name |  |
| Principal/Acting Principal’s name |  |
| Staff member making this report | Name ____________________________  |
|  | Role ____________________________  |
|  | Phone no. ____________________________  |
| Employee against whom the behaviour to a student is alleged or suspected | Name ____________________________  |
|  | Role ____________________________  |
| Student(s) concerned | Name ____________________________  |
|  | Year level ____________________________  |
| Summary of incident/allegation (attach additional information to this page) | Time ____________________________  |
|  | Date ____________________________  |
|  | Details ____________________________  |
| Details of the basis for reasonably suspecting inappropriate behaviour | ____________________________  |
|  | ____________________________  |
| Any other relevant information including the name of anyone else who may have information about this allegation/reasonable suspicion | ____________________________  |
|  | ____________________________  |
| Signature of staff member making this report | Signature ____________________________  |
|  | Date ____________________________  |
|  | Time ____________________________  |

Name of the person to whom this form has been passed ____________________________
15 Posters - *Feeling Unsafe?*

Every student has the right to feel safe

Sometimes you may feel unsafe around adults or other students at school or away from school.

If you do not feel safe there are things you can do.

**Tell an adult you trust**

Remember: nothing is so awful that you can't talk about it with someone.

Some of the people you might choose could include:

- A Parent
- A Teacher
- A Counsellor
- The Principal
- Student Protection Officer

Remember: every child has the right to feel safe all the time!

If you don't get the help you need at first, don't give up. Keep reporting your concerns until something is done and you feel safe again.
Feeling Unsafe?

Trust your feelings

Every student has the right to feel safe
Sometimes you may feel unsafe around adults or other students at school or away from school.

If you do not feel safe there are things you can do,
Tell an adult you trust
Remember: nothing is so awful that you can’t talk about it with someone.
Some of the people you might choose could include:
A Parent • A Teacher
A Counsellor • The Principal
Student Protection Officer

Take control to feel safe again

Remember: every student has the right to feel safe all the time!