

Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy

Status	Approved
Effective	Apr-2024
Review	Apr-2025
Owner	Principal
Approver	The Sycamore School Governing Body

1 Purpose

The purpose of The Sycamore School’s Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy is to help to provide a safe and supportive environment to students through identifying potential risks of harm to students and implementing strategies to minimise the risks of harm.

2 Scope

- Parents/Carers/Guardians
- Students
- Staff which includes:
 - *Employees (full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed term and casual)*
 - *Contractors/subcontractors and their employees*
 - *Directors*
 - *Apprentices/Trainees*
 - *Student teachers*
 - *Volunteers*
 - *Anyone undertaking work experience or vocational placement at the School*
 - *Employees of a labour hire company*

3 Definitions/Acronyms

Breach	A breach can be an action or inaction by any person within scope who does not comply with any part of this strategy.
Child	A child is an individual under 18 years.
Harm	<p>Harm, to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child’s physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. 2. Harm can be caused by <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or b) sexual abuse or exploitation. 3. Harm can be caused by

	<p>a) a single act, omission or circumstance; or b) a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances. [Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld) s.9]</p>
<p>Disclosure of harm</p>	<p>A disclosure of harm occurs when someone, including a child, tells you about harm that has happened, is happening, or is likely to happen to a child.</p> <p>Disclosures of harm may start with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘I think I saw...’ • ‘Somebody told me that...’ • ‘Just think you should know...’ • ‘I’m not sure what I want you to do, but...’ <p>It is important to act quickly and in the best interests of the child or young person after a disclosure of harm is received, irrespective of the alleged source of harm.</p>
<p>Suspicion of harm</p>	<p>A suspicion of harm is when someone has a reasonable suspicion that a child has suffered, is suffering, or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm. This includes circumstances which relate to an unborn child who may be in need of protection after he or she is born. A child who has been, or may be experiencing, abuse may show behavioural, emotional or physical signs of stress and abuse.</p> <p>You can suspect harm if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child or young person tells you they have been harmed. • Someone else, for example, another child, a parent, or an employee, tells you that harm has occurred or is likely to occur. • A child or young person tells you they know someone who has been harmed (it is possible that they may be referring to themselves). • You are concerned about significant changes in the behaviour of a child or young person, or the presence of new, unexplained and suspicious injuries, or • You see the harm happening.

4 Policy

4.1 Statement of Commitment

The Sycamore School is committed to providing services to students on the autism spectrum to assist them to improve their live outcomes by providing a safe and inclusive education environment aimed at achieving academic, social, emotional and behavioural goals.

The School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all students and will provide a safe and supportive environment for students by taking all reasonable steps to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students enrolled at our School and their protection from foreseeable harm.

The School's values of respectful, kinds, accepting, brave, creative and patient reflects the culture that we are committed to promoting and achieving.

- **RESPECTFUL.** We value all perspectives.
- **KIND.** We are selfless and giving.
- **ACCEPTING.** We value uniqueness.
- **BRAVE.** We face our challenges with conviction.
- **CREATIVE.** We think outside the box.
- **PATIENT.** We accept that all things happen in their own time.

4.2 Staff Code of Conduct

The Sycamore School's Employee Code of Conduct (Code of Conduct) sets out the standard of behaviour expected by all employees of the School. All employees of the School must comply with the Code of Conduct, including employees employed full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed term or casual.

The Code of Conduct states that employees are expected to always behave in ways that promote the safety, welfare and well-being of our students. Employees must actively seek to prevent harm to students, and to support those who have been harmed. In addition, the Code of Conduct covers an employee's duty of care obligations to students, clear guidelines on supervision of students, clear guidelines on circumstances where it might be necessary to have physical contact with a student and what and what is not an appropriate relationship with a student.

4.3 Recruitment, Selection, Training and Management

The Sycamore School is committed to recruiting, selecting, training and managing employees in such a way that limits risks to students.

The School will:

- Ensure that its recruitment and selection procedures act to reduce the risk of harm to students from employees as follows.
 - Accurate role descriptions, including whether the applicant must be a teacher registered with the Queensland College of Teachers (who has been subject to relevant police and other safety checks), whether a blue card is necessary for the applicant, the responsibilities associated with the position, the nature and environment of the service provided to students, and the experience and qualifications required by the applicant.
 - Making it clear to applicants that they will be subject to a teacher registration check or blue card screening, referee checks, identification verification and be required to

disclose any information relevant to their eligibility to engage in activities involving students.

- A selection process, including an interview, to assess suitable applicants against the role description.
- Referee checks with the most recent employer to verify the identity of the prospective employee, the accuracy of details provided about previous employment, and the suitability of the individual to work with students.
- A probationary period of employment, which allows the School to further assess the performance and suitability of the new employee before permanently confirming their employment.
- Ensure that its training procedures act to reduce the risk of harm to students from employees by:
 - Providing ongoing training for employees to ensure that they are appropriately trained and aware of the responsibilities of their roles.
 - Clearly identifying mandatory training to all staff and specifying how frequently it should occur, for example, training in relation to your risk management strategy and reporting disclosures or suspicions of harm must occur with initial induction and then refresher training must be undertaken annually.
 - Keeping records of training provided to employees.
- Ensure that its management processes are consistent, fair and supportive to reduce the risk of harm to students from employees including:
 - Professional development and performance appraisals, including regularly reviewing the skill sets of staff, identifying training needs and setting goals in relation to issues which impact on the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
 - Complaints management.
 - Supportive processes for employees when they are experiencing challenges, such as mentoring, mediation, conflict resolution, coaching, additional training, and external support and counselling services.
 - Performance management, including processes for addressing issues related to performance which may impact on the safety or wellbeing of children.
 - An induction program which addresses the School's policies and procedures, particularly its expectations regarding child risk management, and assists new employees to understand their role in providing a safe and supportive environment for students.
 - Exit interviews to assist the school to identify broader issues of concern that may impact on the safety and wellbeing of students at the school.

4.4 Reporting Disclosures or Suspicions of Harm

Any of the types of concerns below should be managed and reported as outlined in The Sycamore School's Child Protection Policy.

- All staff members with concerns about sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a child by another person.
- Teachers, nurses and early childhood education and care professionals who form a reportable suspicion in the course of their engagement that there is a reasonable suspicion that the child:

- has suffered, is suffering, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse; and
- may not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm
- All staff members who have received a report from a student who considers the behaviour of another staff member to be inappropriate.

A summary of reporting harm (who, what, test and applicable legislation references) and child protection decision trees for board members/principals, teachers and non-teachers are included in the procedure section of this document.

To report any type of harm, all staff should use the Report of Suspected Harm or Sexual Abuse Form at the end of this document.

Furthermore, and in accordance with section 76 of the *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005* (Qld), the Principal of The Sycamore School will report to the Queensland College of Teachers any investigations into allegations of harm caused, or likely to be caused, to a student because of the conduct of a teacher at the school.

Any report made under this section, or The Sycamore School Child Protection Policy will fulfill the reporting obligations of all adults under the *Criminal Code Act 1899* (Qld).

4.5 Managing Breaches of this Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy

The Sycamore School is committed to appropriately managing breaches of this Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy in accordance with its other relevant policies as appropriate in the circumstances. A breach is any action or inaction by any member of the organisation, including children and young people, that fails to comply with any part of the strategy which includes its Child Protection Policy, Employee Code of Conduct, Performance and Misconduct Policy and Complaint Handling Policy.

The Sycamore School Governing Board is committed to the annual review of this strategy or after any incidents to ensure that risks continue to be addressed and minimised as the School. The Sycamore School must be mindful that appropriate confidentiality is maintained at all times to protect the privacy of children and young people.

The Principal will record, monitor, and report to the Board regarding any breaches of the strategy.

4.6 Risk Management for High-Risk Activities

The Sycamore School is committed to identifying risks, assessing risks, eliminating, and minimising risks and the monitoring of risk to the safety of students on an ongoing basis.

The School undertakes risk assessment of school activities including activities associated with delivering the curriculum and as part of ongoing review, keeps appropriate records of decisions made and actions taken in relation to risks to students.

4.7 Managing Compliance with the Blue Card System

The Sycamore School is committed to acting in accordance with chapters 7 and 8 of the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* (Qld) relating to the screening of staff in such a way that limits risks to students.

- The Business Manager is the School contact person who is responsible for managing the working with child screening process and all related documentation and records.
- When a new person joins the School, the School requires proof of identity (e.g. driver's license) to confirm the identity of the card holder and links the person to the School, using the Organisation portal, prior to engaging the card holder in work at the School. Individuals will be unlinked on conclusion of their engagement with the school.
- Staff must immediately notify The Sycamore School contact person of any change in their police information. The School will not allow a person to continue to work with children if their working with child authority is cancelled or suspended or a negative notice is received after a change of police information.
- All relevant prospective staff engaging in restricted employment must acknowledge and sign a Restricted Person Declaration Form declaring they are not a restricted person prior to beginning their engagement with the School.
- The School will not allow a person relying on an exemption to continue to work with children if they become a restricted person.
- The School keeps a register which is a written record or register of all business operators, paid employees and volunteers involved in child-related activities at the School, in FACTS.
- All information in relation to working with children authority is kept confidential.
- Staff are reminded to keep their working with children authority up to date and apply for a renewal prior to expiry. If a staff member does not renew their card before it expires, they will not be allowed to continue working at the School until their new blue card has been issued.

4.8 Communication and Support

The Sycamore School's commitment to making this Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy available to students, parents and staff.

The School will inform staff, parents, carers and students of its processes relating to child protection processes in staff briefings, staff inductions, information sessions, newsletters and handbooks.

Processes relating to child protection are readily accessible as follows.

- For staff, processes are accessible in the Policies & Procedures team SharePoint folder or on the School's website.
- For parents, carers and students, processes are accessible on the School's website and available by emailing administration admin@sycamore.qld.edu.au or by asking for a hard copy from administration.

The School will train its staff in processes relating to child protection processes on their induction and will refresh training annually. The School uses the Child Protection eLearning courses developed by Independent Schools Queensland. Training records are maintained in FACTS.

The School has supportive processes for employees when they are experiencing challenges. Support may include mentoring, mediation, conflict resolution, coaching, additional training, and external support and counselling services.

5 Related Legislation

- *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld)
- *Criminal Code Act 1899* (Qld)
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017* (Qld)
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017* (Qld)
- *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (Qld)
- *Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017* (Qld)
- *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005* (Qld) *Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) Act 2011* (Qld)
- *Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011* (Qld)

6 Related Documents

- Child Protection Policy
- Complaint Handling Policy
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Performance and Misconduct Policy
- Blue Card Services Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Organisation's Toolkit
- [QLD Child Protection Guide 2.1 \(dcssds.qld.gov.au\)](https://dcssds.qld.gov.au)
- Report of Suspected Harm or Sexual Abuse Form
- Restricted Person Declaration Form
- [Traffic-LightsBrochure.pdf \(wbsass.com.au\)](https://wbsass.com.au)

7 Procedures

7.1 Summary of Reporting Harm

Who	What abuse	Test	Report to	Legislation
All Staff	Sexual	Awareness or a reasonable suspicion	Principal or Board, through to Police immediately	EGPA sections 366 and 366A

Who	What abuse	Test	Report to	Legislation
		Sexually abused or likely to be sexually abused		
Teacher	Sexual or Physical	Significant harm Parent may not be willing and able	Confer with Principal, report to Child Safety	CPA sections 13E and 13G
All Staff	Physical, psychological, emotional, neglect, exploitation	Significant harm Parent may not be willing and able	Principal, through to Child Safety	Accreditation Regulations section 16
All Staff	Any	Not of a level that is otherwise reportable to Child Safety, refer without consent	Principal, through to Family and Child Connect	CPA sections 13B and 159M
Principal	Any	Not of a level that is otherwise reportable to Child Safety, refer without consent	Family and Child Connect	CPA sections 13B and 159M
Any Member of the Public	Any	Significant harm Parent may not be willing and able.	Child Safety	CPA section 13A
Any Adult	A child sexual offence against child by another adult	Reasonable belief and, at the relevant time, the child is or was: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • under 16 years; or • a person with an impairment of the mind. 	Police	Criminal Code section 229BC
Employing Authorities (Principal/Board)	Harm or likely harm due to the conduct of a teacher	When you start dealing with an allegation; and When you finish dealing with an allegation	Queensland College of Teachers	QCT, sections 76 and 77

I am the Principal or Board Director of a school.



Child Protection Decision Tree
FOR PRINCIPALS AND BOARD DIRECTORS

During the course of my engagement, I have become aware (complete the school report form), or I have received a report from a staff member or volunteer, that there is a reasonable suspicion that a child has been harmed or is likely to be harmed.

A child is being sexually abused or is likely to be sexually abused, or is the victim of a child sexual offence.
EGPA s366 & 366A; Criminal Code s229BC

NO

YES

A child is being harmed due to physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect, or that a child is likely to be harmed in such a way.
CPA s13E; and Accreditation Regulation s16(2)(a)



Immediately report to police and give a copy to the school's governing body.

SIGNIFICANT HARM TEST FULFILLED?
The child has suffered, is suffering, or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm.
Use the Online Child Protection Guide

Check if a report also needs to be made to Child Safety under the CPA.

YES

NO

PARENT TEST FULFILLED?
The child may not have a parent, willing and able, to protect them from harm.
Use the Online Child Protection Guide



Principal may refer to FaCC with or without consent under the CPA.

IS THE HARM BEING CAUSED BY A TEACHER?
If so, you have additional notification obligations under the QCT Act.

YES

NO



Report to Child Safety as soon as reasonably practical.
CPA; and/or school policy

CPA: Child Protection Act 1999
EGPA: Education (General Provisions) Act 2006
FaCC: Family and Child Connect
QCT: Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005
Accreditation Regulation – Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017

Disclaimer: This resource is intended as a guide only and should not replace a school's written processes for responding to harm.

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS QUEENSLAND
www.isq.qld.edu.au

8 Document History

Version	Description of modification	Modified by	Date
1.6	Review and update with respect to Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Organisation's Toolkit Definitions updated	Vanessa Lyle	16/4/2024
1.5	Changed title to Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy. Addition of definitions/acronyms. Added Decision Trees for different categories of staff.	Sandra Stuckey	23/03/2023
1.4	No change	Sandra Stuckey	20/9/2021
1.3	No change	Sonya Marshall	09/2020
1.2	No change	Ronwyn Collier	16/08/2018
1.1	New policy	Nigel De Maria	13/7/2017

Private and Confidential

Report of Suspected Harm or Sexual Abuse

Date:
School:
School Phone:
School Email:

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

FAMILY DETAILS	
Parent/Caregiver 1:	Relationship to Student:
Address (if different from student):	
Phone: (H):	(W):
(M):	
Parent/Caregiver 2:	Relationship to Student:
Address (if different from student):	
Phone: (H):	(W):
(M):	
Is the student in home care: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any Family Court or Domestic Violence Orders in place? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/>	

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

PROVIDE ALL INFORMATION YOU HAVE WHICH LED TO THE SUSPICION OF HARM OR ABUSE (Attach extra pages if necessary).
Details of any harm and/or sexual abuse to the student – please include: Time and date of the incident; source of information; details of person alleged to have caused the harm or sexual abuse; physical appearance of any injury; immediate and ongoing safety concerns; any disclosures made by student; any previous incidents of harm; behavioural indicators of harm; presence of any medical needs or developmental delays; and if the information relates to an unborn child, the alleged risk to the unborn child.

Please indicate the identity of anyone else who may have information about the harm or abuse.

Additional information provided as an attachment YES NO

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

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

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

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