



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. PURPOSE

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide written processes about the health and safety of the Burdekin Christian College staff and students and about the appropriate conduct of the College's staff and students to comply with accreditation requirements.

Scope

This policy applies to all students and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements at Burdekin Christian College and covers information about the reporting of harm and abuse.

References and Related College Policies

- [Child Protection Act 1999 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Education \(Accreditation of Non-State Schools\) Act 2017 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Education \(Accreditation of Non-State Schools\) Regulation 2017 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Act 2000 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Regulations 2020 \(Qld\)](#)
- Burdekin Christian College Complaints, Grievances and Concerns Policy
- Burdekin Christian College Child Risk Management Strategy (for the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)*)
- Burdekin Christian College Work Health and Safety Policy (for the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)*)
- Burdekin Christian College Report of Suspected Harm or Sexual Abuse form

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Childhood, as a special place in time and society, should be a time of playing, learning and growing in peace and in the comfort of love and protection of others. Sadly, for many children, this is not the case. Each person in the community has a responsibility for actively ensuring the protection of all children within our community.

The safety, well-being and best interests of students are of primary importance at Burdekin Christian College. In this responsibility, Burdekin Christian College will protect students from harm as far as it is reasonable able and provide an educational environment and curriculum that fosters healthy growth and development spiritually, emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually.

Scripture indicates the nurture of children is a great responsibility given to the community with **specific** responsibility given to parents.

To parents: **“Fathers, do not exasperate your children, instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”** Ephesians 6:4 (NIV)

To the nation: **“ ... do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.”**
Deuteronomy 4:9 (NIV)

All staff members at the Burdekin Christian College have a responsibility to love the children in their care. This love will guide staff actions and direction as they stand in the place of parents.

“Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres” 1 Corinthians 13: 6,7 (NIV)

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

The College will ensure that staff and volunteers have a positive notice (“Blue Card”) as required by the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* or that they are registered teachers.

The college obtain two references for anyone seeking to be employed or volunteer in positions involving work with children.

The College will also ensure the health and safety of staff in accordance with relevant workplace health and safety legislation.

2. DEFINITIONS

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

Health and Safety

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

Responding to Reports of Harm

When the College receives any information alleging 'harm'¹ to a student (other than harm arising from physical or sexual abuse) it will deal with the situation compassionately and fairly so as to minimise any likely harm to the extent it reasonably can. This is set out in the college's Child Risk Management Strategy. Information relating to physical or sexual abuse is handled under obligations to report set out in this policy².

Conduct of Staff and Students

All staff, contractors and volunteers must ensure that their behaviour towards and relationships with students reflect proper standards of care for students. Staff, contractors and volunteers must not cause harm to students³.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

Reporting Inappropriate Behaviour

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

- (a) Glen Griffin (Compliance Officer), or
- (b) Debra Creed (Principal)⁴.

Dealing with Report of Inappropriate Behaviour

A staff member who receives a report of inappropriate behaviour must **report it to the Principal**. Where the Principal is the subject of the report of inappropriate behaviour, the staff member must **inform a Director of the BCC Board**⁵. Reports will be dealt with under the College's Complaints, Grievances and Concerns Policy.

Reporting Sexual Abuse⁶

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

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

then the staff member must give **a written report about the abuse or suspected abuse to the Principal or to a Director of the College's Board of Directors immediately**.

The College's Principal or the BCC Director must immediately give a copy of the report to a police officer.

If the first person who becomes aware or reasonably suspects sexual abuse is the College's Principal, the Principal must give **a written report about the abuse, or suspected abuse to a police officer immediately** and must also give **a copy of the report to a Director of the BCC Board immediately**.

A report under this section must include the following particulars:

- (a) the name of the person giving the report (the **first person**);
- (b) the student's name and sex;

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

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

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

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

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

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

- (c) details of the basis for the first person becoming aware, or reasonably suspecting, that the student has been sexually abused by another person;
- (d) details of the abuse or suspected abuse;
- (e) any of the following information of which the first person is aware:
 - i. the student's age;
 - ii. the identity of the person who has abused, or is suspected to have abused, the student;
 - iii. the identity of anyone else who may have information about the abuse or suspected abuse⁷.

Reporting Likely Sexual Abuse⁸

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

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

then the staff member must give a **written report about the suspicion to the Principal or to a Director of the BCC Board immediately**.

The College's Principal or the Director of the BCC Board must immediately give a copy of the report to a police officer.

If the first person who reasonably suspects likely sexual abuse is the college's Principal, the Principal must give a **written report about the suspicion to a police officer immediately** and must also give a **copy of the report to a Director of the BCC Board immediately**.

A report under this section must include the following particulars:

- (a) the name of the person giving the report (the **first person**);
- (b) the student's name and sex;
- (c) details of the basis for the first person reasonably suspecting that the student is likely to be sexually abused by another person;
- (d) any of the following information of which the first person is aware:
 - i. the student's age;
 - ii. the identity of the person who has abused, or is suspected to be likely to abuse, the student;
 - iii. the identity of anyone else who may have information about suspected likelihood of abuse⁹.

Reporting Physical and Sexual Abuse¹⁰

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

A **reportable suspicion** about a child 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.

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

⁷ *Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.68*

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

⁹ *Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.69*

¹⁰ *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16 (2)(d)*

A report under this section must include the following particulars:

- (a) the basis on which the person has formed the reportable suspicion¹¹;
- (b) the child's name and sex;
- (c) the child's age;
- (d) details of how to contact the child;
- (e) details of the harm to which the reportable suspicion relates;
- (f) particulars of the identity of the person suspected of causing the child to have suffered, suffer, or be at risk of suffering, the harm to which the suspicion relates;
- (g) particulars of the identity of any other person who may be able to give information about the harm to which the reportable suspicion relates¹².

Child Safety Regional Intake Service P: 1300 706 147 (Business hours 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday)

Child Safety After Hours Service Centre P: 1800 177 135

Child Safety Service Centre – Townsville South and Burdekin

L2 187-209 Stanley Street, Townsville Qld 4810

P: 4796 6200

Police Link P: 131 444

Qld Police Service – Ayr Station P: 4790 3555

Responsibilities under Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld)

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

Failure to Report¹³

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

Failure to Protect¹⁴

Under section 229BB of the Code, all adults in positions of power or responsibility within institutions to reduce or remove the risk of child sexual offences being committed must take reasonable steps to protect children in their care from a child sexual offence. A failure to protect is an offence.

¹¹ *Child Protection Act 1999 s.13G(2)(a)*

¹² *Child Protection Regulation 2011 (Qld) s.10 "Information to be included in report to chief executive"*

¹³ *Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) s.229BC*

¹⁴ *Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) s.229BB*

Awareness

The College will inform staff, students and parents of its processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students in communications to them and it will publish these processes on the BCC website¹⁵.

The communication methods used by BCC to inform the College community may include:

- college newsletters;
- college assemblies;
- staff meetings;
- student handbook;
- staff handbook;
- college intranet.

Accessibility of Processes

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

Training

The College will train its staff in processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students on their induction and will refresh training annually¹⁷.

The methods used by BCC to ensure that staff are trained in implementing the College child protection processes may include:

- annual professional development week training – recorded in agenda and attendance register;
- discussion at staff meetings - recorded in agenda and minutes;
- staff induction.

Implementing the Processes

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

Complaints Procedure

Suggestions of non-compliance with the college's processes may be submitted as complaints under the Burdekin Christian College Complaints, Grievances and Concerns Policy¹⁹.

¹⁵ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(4)(a)

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

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

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

¹⁹ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(5) and s.16(6)

EXAMPLES OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Indicators of Perpetrating Sexual Abuse ON students at Burdekin Christian College

Examples of sexual abuse include, but not exclusively, the following activities:

- Exposing a student to pornography or prostitution.
- Intentional exposure of any student to sexual behaviour of others or self.
- Coercion of a student to engage in sexual behaviour with another person regardless of age.
- Verbal threats of sexual abuse.
- Vaginal or anal penetration by a finger, penis or any other object (except where carried out by an authorised medical practitioner for proper medical purposes).
- Oral sex.
- Any indecent act, defined as one which righted minded persons would consider contrary to community standards of decency.
- Indecent assault, being defined as an assault, a touching without consent, accompanied by an indecent act.
- Fondling or touching genitals, breasts, buttocks or thighs of a student.
- Fondling or touching of own genitals, breasts, buttocks or thighs in the view of a student.
- Masturbation in the view or presence of a student.
- Sexually suggestive behaviour towards a student.
- Taking sexual advantage of a student through misuse of power.
- Conversations with lewd or sexual theme.

Indicators of Sexual Abuse IN Students at the Burdekin Christian College

- Any direct or indirect disclosure of being abused.
- Describing sexual acts
- Age inappropriate behaviour and/or persistent sexual behaviour.
- Age inappropriate knowledge.
- Self-destructive behaviour (self-mutilation, suicide attempts).
- Overtly sexual themes in play, artwork, writing etc.
- Persistent running away from home.
- Anorexia or over eating.
- Going to bed fully clothed.
- Regression in developmental achievement in younger children.
- Unexplained accumulation of money or gifts.
- Adolescent pregnancy.
- Injuries to breasts, buttocks, lowers abdomen and thighs.
- Unexplained bleeding from vagina or external genitalia or anus.
- Student being in contact with known or suspected perpetrator of child sexual assault.
- Other child stress indicators (e.g. poor concentration, nightmares, bed-wetting, marked changes in behaviour or mood, tantrums, aggression or anger, withdrawal, complaints of stomach aches and headaches with no physical findings).

Taken from : Child Protection Council (1998). Making a Difference: Recognising and reporting/notifying child abuse and neglect training manual

INDICATORS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE, EMOTIONAL ABUSE AND NEGLECT

General Indicators

- History of previous harm to the student.
- Abuse or neglect of a sibling.
- Social or geographic isolation of the student or family.
- Family history of violence including injury to children.
- Domestic violence.
- Physical or mental health issues for the parent or care giver affecting the ability to care for the student.
- The parent or care-givers' abuse of alcohol or other drugs affecting their ability to care for the student.
- A developmental disability of the parent or care-giver affecting their ability to care for the student.
- Parent or care-giver experiencing significant problems in managing the student's behaviour.
- A history of injury which is vague, bizarre or variable.
- Marked delay between injury and presentation for medical assistance.
- The student tells you s/he has been abused, or s/he knows someone who has been abused and may be referring to themselves.
- A friend, relative etc. tells you that the student may have been abused.

Specific Indicators

Indicators of Physical Abuse in Students

- Bruising and other injuries to the face, head or neck.
- Bruising to the upper arms.
- Lacerations and welts from physical restraint or punishment.
- Explanation offered by the student inconsistent with injury.
- Bruising and marks which take the shape of an object (belt buckle, hand etc.).
- Bite marks and scratches.
- Multiple injuries or bruises.
- Burns and scalds.
- Ingestion of poisonous substances, alcohol or other harmful drugs.
- Head injury with indications of drowsiness, vomiting, fits or retinal haemorrhages that may suggest the possibility of a student being shaken.
- General indicators of female genital mutilation which could include having a time away from school to attend a special operation associated with a celebration, difficulty in toileting or reluctance to be involved in sport and getting changed at school or in the presence of other peers when previously interested.
- Known domestic violence in the family.
- Admission by student that they heard their parent or caregiver admit they fear harming the student.
- Repeated absence from school for presentation of student to health care services and / or subsequent days away from school for recovery of frequent injuries or minor complaints.

Indicators of Perpetrating Physical Abuse on students at the Burdekin Christian College

- Causing any bruising and other injuries especially to the face, head, neck or upper arms of any student.
- Causing lacerations and welts from physical restraint or punishment.
- Causing any bruising or marks which take the shape of an object (belt buckle, hand etc.).
- Offering differing explanation to that of the student of injury or accident sustained by student whilst they are in your care

Indicators of Emotional Abuse in Students

- Feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves.
- Inability to value others.
- Lack of trust in people and expectations.
- Extreme attention seeking behaviour.
- Behavioural disorders.
- Persistent hostility in parents or caregivers or constant criticism of the child.

Indicators of Perpetrating Emotional Abuse on students at the Burdekin Christian College

- Repeatedly causing, through words or actions, any indicator of emotional abuse or feelings of lesser value than another student within any student for any period of time.
- Publicly or privately belittling, criticising or teasing a student.
- Public or private expression that a student is 'bad' or 'evil' or influenced by 'evil spirits'.
- Ignoring, rejecting or withholding praise, attention or assistance from a student.
- Placing unreasonable demands on a student not expected of other students.
- Using inappropriate and or excessive physical force (e.g.: damaging of property in front of the student) or inappropriate and / or excessive social isolation as a form of discipline and or control.
- Creating a classroom situation where a student inappropriately alters their behaviour to gain attention or they refuse to attend or participate in any activity or lesson where you are in control of the students especially where such behaviour is not previously noted and not displayed for any other teacher.
- Creating fear in students from actions of violence.

Indicators of Neglect in Students

- Poor standard of hygiene.
- Poor appearance of hair, skin and clothing.
- Scavenging or stealing food.
- Extended stays at the college, public places, other homes.
- Being focused on basic survival.
- Untreated physical problems extreme longing for staff affection and attention.
- A flat or superficial way of relating to others.
- Unexpected anxiety about being left at the college.
- Self-comforting behaviours.
- Delays in developmental milestones.

Indicators of Perpetrating Neglect on Students at the Burdekin Christian College

- Failure to provide adequate and safe environment to protect children from harm of any form.
- Abandoning a student to themselves where supervision and guidance is expected and considered the norm.
- Failing to meet students' needs for food, water, clothing, medical attention, medication administration, hygiene, privacy or dignity whilst at college or in the care of a staff member from the college on a daily basis or longer.
- Gross failure as a college to offer adequate opportunity to assist students to meet all their developmental milestones.
- Failure of a teacher or the college to provide opportunity for, or to encourage, students to seek attention for their health care needs and adequate growth and development e.g.: neglecting or obstructing students' medication routines.
- Placing unreasonable and excessive demands on a student not expected of other students for seeking attention for their health care needs and adequate growth and development.

Taken from: Child Protection Council (1998). Making a Difference: Recognising and reporting/notifying child abuse and neglect training manual.

PLEASE NOTE:

- a) Indicators should be seen as a guide and none of these indicators, on their own, should be taken as **clear evidence** of abuse.
- b) **All reports by children personally shall be considered reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, or is in danger of being, abused or neglected and should be forwarded to the Principal for further consideration/referral.**

REPORT OF SUSPECTED HARM OR SEXUAL ABUSE

The report form is on the next page.

Private and Confidential Report of Suspected Harm or Sexual Abuse

Date:	
College:	Burdekin Christian College
College Phone:	(07) 4783 5552
College Email and/or Fax:	office@burdekincc.qld.edu.au

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

FAMILY DETAILS	
Parent/caregiver 1:	Relationship to Student:
Address (if different from student):	
Phone: (H):	(W):
(M):	
Parent/caregiver 2:	Relationship to Student:
Address (if different from student):	
Phone: (H):	
(W):	
(M):	
Is the student in out of home care? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
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; location 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 if not the Principal:

Position:	Signature:	Date:
Principal:	Signature:	Date:
Principal's email address:		
Response requested by college:		

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 Child Safety, Youth and Women
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family and Child Connect

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

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

SAMPLE INFORMATION LETTERS FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

A Leaflet for Parents

This leaflet is designed to explain the Child Protection Policy at the Burdekin Christian College. A copy of this leaflet might be sent with College Handbooks and included in the College Newsletter at least on an annual basis. Copies will be readily available from the College Office.

CHILD PROTECTION AT THE BURDEKIN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

The Burdekin Christian College recognises that protecting students from harm, and the risk of harm, is fundamental to the Christian character of our College community and to maximising the personal and academic potential of each student. For this reason, the welfare and best interests of the students within our College will always be a primary consideration.

We expect our students to show respect to our staff and volunteers and to comply with safe practices, and we expect all employees and volunteers to ensure that their behaviour towards and relationships with students reflect proper standards of care for students, and are not unlawful. The College will respond diligently to a report of suspected or actual harm, or risk of harm to a student.

What does the College mean by “Harm”?

Section 9 of the *Child Protection Act 1999* - “Harm”, to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child’s physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.

1. It is immaterial how the harm is caused.
2. Harm can be caused by:
 - a) physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; *or*
 - b) sexual abuse or exploitation.
3. Harm can be caused by:
 - a) a single act, omission or circumstance; *or*
 - b) a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.

Harm means damage or injury caused by abuse to a child’s body, to a child’s emotional state or to a child’s psychological state. Abuse may be physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect. Harm is the effect or impact on the child of the abuse.

How does the College protect students from Harm?

The College has a comprehensive Child Protection Policy which covers the actions to be taken if a member of staff, fellow student or a parent of the College becomes aware of, or reasonably suspects that, harm has been done, or is likely to be done, to a student of the college by staff, a volunteer, people outside the College or by other students.

What should you do if you become aware or reasonably suspect that harm has been, or is likely to be, caused to a student of the college by a member of staff, a volunteer, someone outside the college or another student of the college?

You should report your concerns to the Principal or any other member of the College staff.

What will happen next?

If you report your concerns to a member of staff other than the Principal, the member of staff will report it to the Principal immediately or, if the subject of the complaint is the Principal, then the member of staff will report to the Chairman of the BCC Board of Directors.

What will the Principal or the Chairman of the Board do?

If the Principal or Chairman of the Board receives a report of harm or suspected harm to a student of the College, and she/he becomes aware of the harm having been caused or reasonably suspects the harm to have been, or is likely to be, caused, then it will be reported to the police immediately if the harm relates to sexual abuse; or to the Department of Child Safety if appropriate; or it may be dealt with internally if the matter does not require mandatory reporting to an outside body.

What happens about confidentiality?

Your report will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Principal and those directly involved. The Chairman of the BCC Board may also need to be informed. It is the College's policy that confidentiality between the College and parents will be respected as much as possible, and any concerns raised by parents will not rebound adversely on their children.

However, the College is unable to promise absolute confidentiality since the steps of the Policy will require disclosing, internally and externally, certain details involved in responding to the report. Qld authorities can compel people to give evidence about actions under the Policy and to produce documents.

Any action, which needed to be taken under staff disciplinary procedures as a result of an allegation not requiring police intervention, would be handled confidentially within the College.

How will the college help my child?

The Principal will ensure that the following things are done to reduce the chance of harm occurring:

- Ensure that each staff member understands and fulfils their obligation under this Policy and the Policy for reporting abuse.
- Ensure that each staff member and regular volunteer who has contact with children has a current positive Suitability Notice issued by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

If the Principal receives a report of harm to your child, he/she will support the child by:

- Responding rapidly and diligently to the report;
- Reassuring the student;
- Protecting the student's confidentiality as much as possible;
- Offering continuous support;
- Providing counselling if requested.

What should I do if I require more information?

The College's complete Child Protection Policy is available from the website, or in paper copy at the BCC Office. Parents and students may have access to this policy at any time. You may also make an appointment to discuss the policy with the Principal if you wish to clarify any matters.

A Leaflet for Parents

CHILD PROTECTION AT THE BURDEKIN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Every student has the right to feel safe and free from harm while at the Burdekin Christian College. We expect you to respect your teachers and other students, and we expect that you will receive the same respect in return. You should never allow yourself to feel unsafe, or be afraid for someone else's safety, without reporting it to someone you trust.

Who should I tell if I am feeling unsafe at College or at home?

Anyone on staff! You could talk to your own class or Care teacher, or any other teacher you feel comfortable with. You could talk to our College Chaplain. You could talk to any of the Support Officers or one of the ladies in the office. You could talk to the Facilities Manager or a cleaner. If you do not feel like talking to a member of staff you may like to write him or her a letter that tells them your concerns. It is important to tell someone!

What will happen if I report what is happening to a member of staff?

That person will listen – and listen carefully! If the concern is worrying you but not causing you, or anyone else, immediate harm, then the person you have spoken to will discuss with you ways to solve your problem. If the concern is serious, and the member of staff believes that you are, or anyone else is, being harmed or in danger of being harmed, he or she will report it to the Principal.

What if I don't want the member of staff to tell the Principal?

The member of staff will try to keep your concerns confidential as much as possible. However, if they are aware, or reasonably suspect, that harm may be caused by anyone to a student of the College, then the law says that the matter must be reported to the Principal and it may have to be reported to the Police. If the staff member has no choice about reporting what you have told them to someone else, he or she will explain to you exactly what will happen next.

Remember! The most important thing is that you feel safe and free from harm. You must tell someone if you are being harmed or are afraid that you will be harmed.

History:

This policy supersedes Child Protection Policy January 2017.

Related Policy and Procedure:

- Child Risk Management Strategy.
- Complaints, Grievances and Concerns Policy.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Work Health and Safety Policy.

BCC Board Approval Dates:

Version	Approval Date	Next Update
Version 1.2	February 2018	August 2020
Version 1.3	October 2019	October 2020
Version 1.4	December 2020	December 2021
Version 1.5	May 2022	May 2023
Version 1.6	27 March 2023	March 2024