



**Catholic  
Education**  
Diocese of Cairns

*Learning with Faith and Vision*

# Student Protection Handbook for Volunteers

UPDATED 2025

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# Volunteer Handbook

## Welcome

Volunteers play an important role in the education of children and young people in partnership with Catholic Education Diocese of Cairns (CEDC) staff. We know that volunteers make an invaluable contribution to the school community by giving their time and sharing their skills and expertise. Our commitment to you as a volunteer is to:

- Ensure you are with treated with honesty, integrity, courtesy, compassion, and respect for both you and your cultural heritage.
- To provide you with an environment free of bullying, discrimination, or any form of harassment while you are volunteering for the school.
- Treat any concerns you raise in a confidential and supportive way and to provide appropriate recognition.
- Keep all information provided by you to become a volunteer in accordance with the Australian Privacy Act 1998.
- Comply with all other Federal, State, and local laws relevant to volunteers.

CEDC is committed to providing safe, supportive and respectful teaching and learning communities that promote student rights, safety and wellbeing, including compliance with child protection obligations mandated by law, the United Conventions on the Rights of the Child and Church teachings.

This document outlines your responsibilities as a volunteer in the vital area of student protection and it is important that you read this document, in conjunction with the *Catholic Education Parent and Volunteers Code of Conduct*.

## Practice Self Care

Volunteers should be aware that the content of this handbook includes detailed information on recognising, responding to, and reporting instances of child abuse. By being informed and prepared, volunteers can play a vital role in safeguarding the well-being of students but we also recognise that this can be distressing and/or trigger strong emotional responses from your own past experiences or the experiences of somebody you know.

If you find yourself needing assistance or someone to talk to, we recommend you reach out to your support network. We have also included a list of external support services in [Appendix A](#).

## Safeguarding Children and Young People

We take child protection very seriously. As a volunteer, expectations are that you will:

- Wear a visitor badge at all times while volunteering
- Sign-in and out at the front office each time you visit the school to volunteer
- Never use the student toilets
- Never work alone with a student unless in view of a staff member
- Show respect towards all members of the school community and honour the dignity of each individual



- Maintain professional boundaries – any physical contact with a student needs to be age and context appropriate and transparent in nature
- You will keep confidential information gained through working with a child other than raising any worries you may have with the class teacher (or Principal) – not with parents.
- You recognise that it is the teacher’s responsibility to deal with inappropriate behaviour
- Agree and abide by the [CEDC Safeguarding Children and Young People policy](#) and [Safeguarding Statement of Commitment](#)
- Declare situations that may give rise to, or the perception of a conflict of interest

## Important

*If you are a parent volunteering at your child’s school you do not require a working with children check (Blue Card) however if you are a **restricted person**, you cannot rely on this exemption. A restricted person is a person who either:*

- *has been issued a [negative notice](#)*
- *has a suspended blue card*
- *is a [disqualified person](#)*
- *has been charged with a [disqualifying offence](#) that has not been finalised, or*
- *is the subject of an adverse interstate Working with Children Check decision that is in effect*

Further information on negative notices, disqualified person and disqualifying offences can be found in Appendix 2

## Reminder

*Volunteer parents will require a current Working with Children Check (Blue Card) when attending overnight excursions or camps. The parent exemption no longer applies in these circumstances*



# Our Strategic Context



## Queensland Child Safe Standards

The Queensland Child Safe Standards are designed to enhance child protection within organisations arising from the work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and aligning with the National Child Safe Standards. The National Catholic Safeguarding Standards also align with this work with an additional focus on children and vulnerable adults.

They guide what institutions need to do to be child safe by setting best practice to drive and guide performance, adopting strategies and actions that promote child wellbeing and prevent harm to children and young people.

The Queensland Child Safe Standards include a Universal Principle embedded within each standard that expects a child safe entity to provide an environment that promotes and upholds the right to cultural safety for all First Nations children.

## Code of Conduct

The *Code of Conduct for Parents, Volunteers and Visitors*, applies to all interaction with CEDC. There are two main Principles that provides a context for the expectations within this Code of Conduct:

1. Be communities sustained by life-giving relationships
2. Build constructive covenants with all partners

Guidance on how each Principle is met includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Helping children to develop positive attitudes to school and respecting the staff, other parents and students
- Respecting the rights, dignity and views of our students, staff and parents
- Committing to a school community free from unlawful discrimination, bullying and harassment
- Communicating via all modes in a constructive, timely, honest, respectful, and courteous manner
- Upholding and complying with applicable laws, policies and procedures at a diocesan, state and federal level (including Student Protection and Work Health and Safety)
- Identifying, reporting and resolving any situations that have potential for conflict in a manner which is consistent with this Code of Conduct and Catholic Education's grievance/complaints processes
- Ensuring the integrity of confidential, private and sensitive information is maintained at all times
- Ensuring that parents and volunteers, in participating in school activities, are free from the influence of alcohol, illicit substances, and medications that might impair responsible behaviour (with the exception of the responsible consumption of alcohol at school social functions)
- Following the safety procedures of the school

School staff and volunteers rely on the fostering of positive and respectful relationships between adults and children, in ways that do not compromise children's safety and wellbeing.



## Student Protection Processes

All adults have a responsibility to protect children and young people. Understanding what child abuse is, how it occurs, and how to create safe environments for children and young people is an important step in preventing it.

School staff have mandatory and organisational responsibilities in relation to reporting and responding to the safety and wellbeing of students.

The [Student Protection Processes and Guidelines](#) document is located on the CEDC public website. CEDC has a legislative and organisational responsibility to ensure all adults and students who are part of our community are aware of the processes that must be adhered to when reporting and responding to a student protection matter.



## Types of Abuse

Child abuse can take many forms and occur in many different settings. As part of the Child Safe Standards and our organisations commitment to safeguarding children we need to ensure staff and volunteers understand what child abuse is, how child abuse can be prevented and how to respond to a reasonable suspicion of child abuse.

Child abuse can be a single incident or several incidents that take place over time.

## Harm

Harm is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is the impact of the abuse on a child.



**Table 1: The relationship between abuse and harm**

| TYPES OF ABUSE                                  |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| Physical Abuse                                  | Emotional Abuse                                    | Sexual Abuse   | Neglect   |
| <i>Hitting<br/>Punching</i>                     | <i>Rejection<br/>Persistent hostility</i>          | <i>Sexual Exploitation<br/>Penetration<br/>Exposure to pornography</i> | <i>Inadequate supervision<br/>Poor hygiene/ nutrition</i> |
| TYPES OF HARM                                   |  |  |   |
| Physical<br>(refers to body)                    | Emotional<br>(ability to express emotions)         | Psychological<br>(mind & cognitive processes)                          |   |
| <i>Bruising Fractures<br/>Internal injuries</i> | <i>Depression<br/>Hypervigilance<br/>Self-harm</i> | <i>Learning and developmental delays<br/>Impaired self-image</i>       |   |

## Sources of abuse

Students can be abused, or experience harm from a number of sources. These include:



### *Person associated with the school*

(staff member, volunteer/other personnel or another student at the school)



### *Family member/relative of the student*

(parent/carer, sibling, grandparent, other relative)



### *Other person in the community*

(family friend, neighbour, coach, tutor, stranger)



### *The student themselves*



## Sexual Abuse

Child sexual abuse is any act that exposes a child or young person to, or involves a child or young person in, sexual activities that:

- they do not understand
- they do not or cannot consent to
- are not accepted by the community
- are unlawful.





Staff have mandatory reporting responsibilities to the Queensland Police Service (QPS) if they reasonably suspect a student is currently, has been or is at risk of being sexually abused. The definition provided by legislation is as follows:

Sexual abuse of a student occurs where a person engages in sexual behaviour with a student, and:

- the other person bribes, coerces, exploits, threatens or is violent toward the student; and/or
- the student has less power than the other person; and/or
- there is a significant disparity between the student and the other person in intellectual capacity or maturity.

Characteristics of a power imbalance include significant differences in:

- age;
- developmental ability;
- authority, influence or some kind of control over the student.

It is important to remember that child sexual abuse is inclusive of a range of behaviours and relational dynamics not always specified in legal definitions of child sexual 'assault'.

## Examples

- Making obscene or sexually explicit remarks to a child
- Sending obscene or sexually explicit material to a child
- Exposing a child to pornographic films, photographs, magazines or other material
- Grooming (see below)

Likely sexual abuse is where it is more probable than not that a student will be sexually abused in the future. One situation where a reasonable suspicion of likely sexual abuse could be formed is where 'grooming' behaviours towards a student are identified.

## Important

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



## Grooming

Grooming describes behaviours that manipulate and control a child, their family, kin and carers or other support networks, or organisations. The intent of manipulation is to:

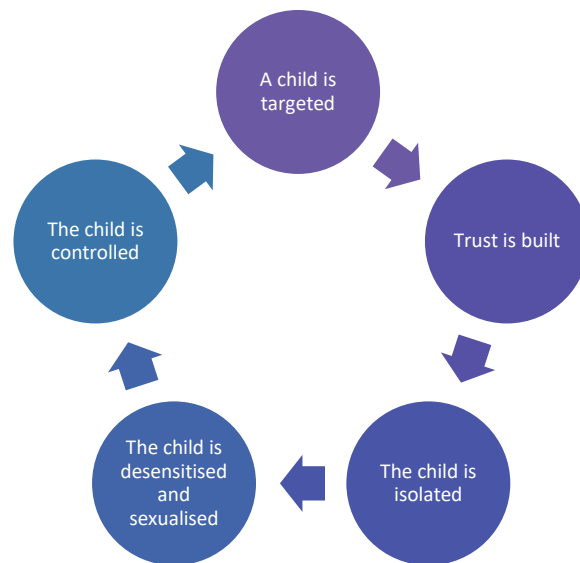
- gain access to the child
- obtain the child's compliance
- maintain the child's silence
- avoid discovery of sexual abuse.

Grooming can be done by people already well known to the child, including by a child's family member, kin or carer.

Child sexual abuse often occurs after or alongside grooming, and frequently continues after child sexual abuse has commenced.

It is important to note that grooming is based on *intent* or *motivation* to abuse, not whether sexual abuse occurs.

Source: [National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse](#)



## Physical Abuse

Physical abuse refers to non-accidental use of physical force against a child by another person that results in **significant harm** to the child. Physical abuse does not always leave visible marks or injuries. The definition of physically abusive behaviour extends to fabrication, exaggeration and inducing the illness symptoms in a child. Examples of physical abuse may include beating, shaking or burning, assault with an implement and female genital mutilation.

A person does not have to intend to physically harm a child to have physically abused them (for example, physical punishment that results in bruising or fractures would generally be considered physical abuse). Physical abuse does not always leave visible marks or injuries. Physical abuse can result in significant physical harm (for example, fractures, burns or bruises) and/or emotional/psychological harm (for example, hypervigilance, depression or persistent state of fear and anxiety) to a child.



## Emotional/ Psychological Abuse

Emotional abuse happens when a child is treated in a way that negatively impacts their social, emotional or intellectual development. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of reasonable exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction.

It also can include hostility, public humiliation, scapegoating and exposure to Domestic and Family violence.



## Domestic and Family Violence

Domestic and family violence is an ongoing pattern of behaviour by one person in a relationship who uses violence or abuse to control their partner through fear.

Abusive behaviours can include threats to cause harm, physical and sexual violence, verbal and emotional abuse, restricting someone's access to money or who that person can talk to, monitoring their whereabouts, stalking or damaging their personal property.

Experiences of family violence create significant risks to social, emotional, psychological and physical health and wellbeing. The longer a child experiences family violence, the greater the impact can be.

### Critical Information

*Family violence can include physical violence, verbal abuse, emotional and physical abuse, sexual abuse and financial and social abuse.*



## Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to provide for a child's basic physical and emotional necessities of life such that the child's health and development are affected. This includes failing to provide an adequate standard of nutrition, medical care, clothing, shelter or supervision.

### Basic needs include:

- Food
- Adequate clothing
- Housing
- Personal hygiene
- Health care
- Adequate supervision

More information about understanding child abuse and harm can be found on the Department responsible for [Child Safety Services](#) website.

## Indicators of harm to children

It is important to remember:

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



## Important

*For some children who have been abused, the impacts will not be evident in their behaviour. It is also important to keep an open mind when encountering these signs, as their presence does not necessarily mean that the student is experiencing harm caused by abuse and/or neglect. However, they may identify concerns for a student and indicate that further consideration and monitoring is the appropriate response.*

Children may experience a range of emotional, psychological and physical problems as a result of being harmed including:

- low self esteem
- increased fear, guilt and self-shame
- disrupted attachments with those who are meant to keep them safe
- mental health disorders such as anxiety, attachment, post traumatic stress and depression disorders
- self-harming or suicidal thoughts
- developmental delay, eating disorders and physical ailments

## Criminal Code: Failure to Report Offence

*Section 229BC of the Criminal Code states a criminal offence is committed when any adult in Queensland, including students who are 18 years or older, parents/guardians and volunteers fails to report to the Queensland Police Service (QPS) a reasonable belief that a child sexual offence is being or has been committed against a child by another adult without a reasonable excuse.*

*A reasonable excuse not to make a report includes that a report has already been made under:*

- the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (reporting sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse)
- the Child Protection Act 1999 (reporting significant harm or risk of significant harm).



**Table 2: Signs of possible abuse and harm**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Physical</b></p>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bruises or lacerations, especially on face, head, and neck</li> <li>• burns/scalds</li> <li>• multiple injuries or bruises, especially overtime</li> <li>• fractures, dislocations, twisting injuries</li> <li>• explanations offered by the child not consistent with the injury or the injury is unable to be explained by the child</li> <li>• a child hiding injuries</li> <li>• repeated injuries with a recurring or similar explanation.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Neglect</b></p>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• delay in achieving developmental milestones</li> <li>• medical or therapeutic needs not attended to</li> <li>• poor personal hygiene leading to social isolation</li> <li>• scavenging for/stealing food; lack of adequate school lunches</li> <li>• extreme seeking of adult affection</li> <li>• flat and superficial way of relating.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Domestic and Family Violence</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• difficulties in eating and sleeping</li> <li>• hyper vigilance</li> <li>• regression to age-inappropriate behaviours</li> <li>• developmental delays</li> <li>• child is over-protective of a parent/carer</li> <li>• excessively controlling or aggressive/violent behaviour</li> <li>• abuse of siblings/parent/carer</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Emotional and Psychological</b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inability to value self and others</li> <li>• lack of trust in people</li> <li>• statements from the child e.g. “I’m bad; I was born bad”</li> <li>• extreme attention-seeking behaviours.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Sexual</b></p>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• direct or indirect disclosures of abuse</li> <li>• concerning sexual behaviour and/or age-inappropriate sexual knowledge</li> <li>• use of threats, coercion, or bribery to force other children into sexual acts</li> <li>• sexual themes/fears expressed in artwork, written work or play</li> <li>• repeated urinary tract infections, especially in younger girls</li> <li>• physical trauma to buttocks, breasts, genitals, lower abdomen, thighs</li> <li>• unexplained accumulation of money/gifts</li> <li>• presence of sexually transmitted infections, especially in younger children</li> <li>• risk taking behaviours such as self-harm, disordered eating, or suicidal behaviour.</li> </ul> |



## Reasonable Suspicion

A reasonable suspicion of abuse or harm 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.

Generally, the ways in which a volunteer may form a reasonable suspicion are as follows



*A student makes a direct disclosure*



*A parent/carer or any person reports information*



*Direct observation*



*Relevant observations*

## Student Disclosures

Children very rarely make direct disclosures, however when a child trusts another adult enough to talk about what is worrying them it is important that you have an awareness of how to respond.



### LISTEN

- Be calm
- Let the child use their own words - avoid asking leading questions



### REASSURE

- Reassure the student that they are doing the right thing in sharing what their worries are
- Always believe the student
- Address any concerns about the students safety



### RESPECT

- Respect the student may only disclose some details
- Do not make promises you cannot keep (you will need to share this with a school staff member )
- Keep the student informed as to what happens next



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## Protective Interrupting

If a student begins to make a disclosure at a time when there are other students present, protective interruption is a technique that can be used to redirect the conversation and offer the student an opportunity to talk in a safe and confidential manner. For example:

*‘Thank you, it sounds as though you have something important to share, why don’t we finish this and then you can tell me what you want to talk about’*

## Professional Boundaries

Where personal and professional boundaries conflict with one another, the boundaries set by the organisation will need to prevail. This is because organisational boundaries are set in accordance with compliance requirements, such as legislation and based on organisational policies and procedures.

As a volunteer in our school, it is important to maintain professional boundaries at all times. While you may have existing relationships with other parents outside of the school environment, it is crucial to separate these personal connections from your volunteer role. This helps ensure that all interactions within the school are conducted in a professional and respectful manner, fostering a positive and productive atmosphere for students and staff alike.

When volunteering, please remember to focus on your assigned tasks and responsibilities. Avoid discussing personal matters or engaging in conversations that could compromise your professional role. By maintaining clear boundaries, you contribute to a supportive and effective learning environment, where the primary focus remains on the students' educational and wellbeing needs.

Inappropriate behaviour or boundary violations includes ( but is not limited to) any behaviour, including words, towards a student/s that is contrary to what is accepted under the [Code of Conduct for Parents, Volunteers and Visitors](#).

**Table 3: Examples of Boundary Violations (include but not limited to)**

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Physical Boundaries</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Using force to manage a students behaviour</li><li>• Grabbing a student</li><li>• Unnecessary or unwanted physical contact</li></ul>   |
| <b>Emotional Boundaries</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shaming, embarrassing or humiliating a student</li><li>• Making overfamiliar or personal commentary about a student</li><li>• Using intimidating behaviours (i.e. threats or fear)</li></ul> |
| <b>Behavioural Boundaries</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Using unprofessional language (i.e swearing)</li><li>• Disclosing inappropriate personal information to a student</li><li>• Sharing secrets with a student</li></ul>                         |



# Volunteer Reporting Requirements

## Flowchart 1: Reasonable suspicion child abuse and/or harm

Concern a child is being, has been or is at risk of being harmed



Notify the classroom teacher



Email your concerns to the classroom teacher and Principal

You can also discuss your concerns with a Student Protection Contact for additional guidance/support

### Important

*Nothing that is written within this document should prevent a volunteer from making a direct report to Child Safety Services and /or the Queensland Police Service.*

### Child Safety Service (Regional Intake Service)

- Regional Intake Service: 1300 684 062
- After Hours & Weekends: 1800 177 135

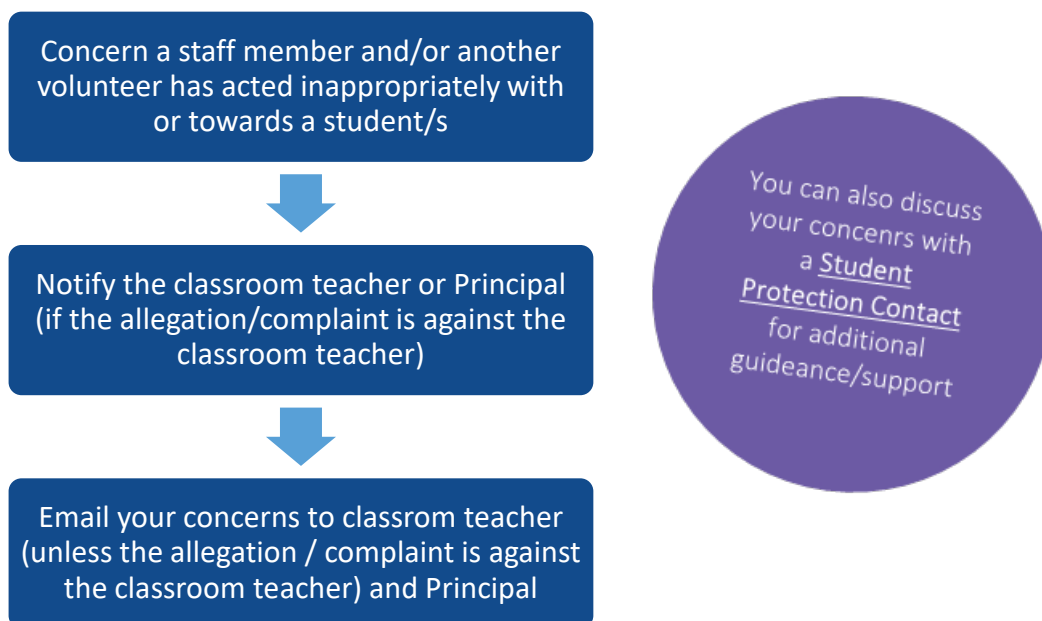
### QLD Police Service

- Cairns Child Protection Investigation Unit
  - 07 4030 7121
  - [CairnsCPIU@police.qld.gov.au](mailto:CairnsCPIU@police.qld.gov.au)
- Innisfail Child Protection Investigation Unit
  - 07 4061 5728
  - [InnisfailCPIU@police.qld.gov.au](mailto:InnisfailCPIU@police.qld.gov.au)
- Mareeba District Child Protection Investigation Unit
  - 07 4091 9820
  - [MareebaCPIU@police.qld.gov.au](mailto:MareebaCPIU@police.qld.gov.au)





## Flowchart 2: Staff / Volunteer inappropriate behaviour towards a student/s



### Reminder

*It is important to recognise that reporting student protection concerns:*

- Can prevent a child from being harmed, or continuing to experience harm
- Can prevent immediate and long-term impacts on a child's health and wellbeing
- Enable a family to receive the support they require promptly
- Enable staff to fulfill their student protection reporting obligations
- Address the student's safety and wellbeing needs and help the student engage in their learning

### Cultural Safety

Cultural safety is the positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination, and more than 'cultural awareness' and 'cultural sensitivity.' It empowers people and enables them to contribute and feel safe to be themselves.

The concept of cultural safety recognises and values the unique cultural context of many different groups and communities in Australia. These include First Nations people; culturally, linguistically, and religiously diverse communities; refugees and displaced people; people with disability; LGBTQIA+ people; people from differing socioeconomic backgrounds; and those living in, or having lived in, care or institutional settings.

Creating cultural safety is both an individual and organisational responsibility. A cultural safe organisation:

- welcomes all
- acknowledges the richness of other cultures
- does not stay silent in the face of racism and discrimination



- models an expectation of behaviour
- ensures staff have genuine engagement in cultural learning
- convey a sense of belonging, safety and positivity for all

## First Nations Education

*Catholic Education Diocese of Cairns is dedicated to fostering an inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsive learning environment for First Nations students across our thirty schools. Our approach infuses the rich cultural heritage, languages, and histories of First Nations peoples. Leading the infusion of the ACARA cross-curriculum priorities, and the provision of culturally responsive learning environments that nurture and grow the genius of students – First Nations is a team of dedicated Consultants First Nations Education in the Directorate First Nations Education*

## Supporting children and young people with diverse needs

At Catholic Education, Diocese of Cairns, we embrace diversity and inclusion, aligning with the Church's social teaching. Our commitment to supporting students with disabilities ensures access to equitable learning opportunities, meeting legislative requirements and our Strategic Directions 2021-2025.

## Inclusion and Equity

- *We embrace diversity and inclusion, aligning with the Church's social teaching, that every child is made in the image and likeness of God.*
- *Our commitment to supporting students with disabilities ensures equitable learning opportunities.*
- *Evidence-based differentiation practices are embedded in our schools from enrolment until graduation, ensuring that students with disabilities experience equity of access and participation in their learning*

## Complaint Handling

Catholic Education in the Diocese of Cairns is committed to safe, ethical and legal workplaces based on the respectful and responsible behaviour of all members of our system and school communities.



If you have a grievance or complaint please refer to the CEDC [Grievance Policy](#) and CEDC [Grievance Procedure](#). This includes concerns that the processes detailed in this document have not been followed when responding to a student protection matter.

Further information can be found on the CEDC public website on the [Conduct, Complaints and Grievances](#) page.

## Whistleblower Support

*The Diocese of Cairns provides a Whistleblower Hotline through an independent and confidential service provider, STOPLine.*

*This service is available to all members of the Catholic Education community including staff, volunteers, parents, and students.*

*The Whistleblower hotline is not for complaints or grievances (refer to [Complaints and Grievance Posters](#) ) nor does it replace our obligations for mandatory reporting for [Student Protection](#) matters. While we encourage you to use our existing processes to report and resolve concerns, the hotline service is available when our existing processes have not been able to resolve an issue relating to reportable conduct (see below) or where absolute confidentiality is required.*

*The specific role of the hotline is to receive items relating to 'reportable conduct' that the whistleblower reasonably and in good faith believes is:*

- *dishonest;*
- *fraudulent;*
- *corrupt;*
- *illegal (including theft, drug sale/use, violence or threatened violence and criminal damage against property);*
- *in breach of Commonwealth or state legislation or local authority by-laws;*
- *unethical (representing a breach of employer codes of conduct or generally);*
- *other serious improper conduct;*
- *an unsafe work practice;*
- *representative of gross mismanagement, serious and substantial waste and/or a repeated breach of administrative procedures; and*
- *any other conduct which may cause financial or non-financial loss to the Diocese of Cairns or its agencies (including Cairns Catholic Education and schools) or be otherwise detrimental to their interests.*

### STOPLine

Phone: 1300 304 550  
Fax: 03 9882 4480  
Email: [doc@stoline.com.au](mailto:doc@stoline.com.au)  
Website: [doc.stolinereport.com](http://doc.stolinereport.com)



## Confidentiality and Information sharing

As a valued volunteer in our school community, it is essential to maintain the confidentiality of all students. Any information you learn about a student's academic performance, behaviour, or personal circumstances must be kept private. This ensures that we respect the privacy of our students and their families, fostering a safe and trusting environment for everyone

If you have any concerns regarding a student's academic progress or wellbeing, it is crucial to share this information with the appropriate school personnel. Please report any such concerns directly to the classroom teacher or the principal. It is not appropriate to discuss these matters with the student's parents or other volunteers. This protocol helps ensure that any issues are addressed professionally and in the best interest of the student.

### Reminder

*Maintaining confidentiality should never prevent a volunteer from acting to protect a child from harm/abuse or reporting alleged inappropriate behaviour to a student by a staff member/other adult in the school community.*



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## Appendix 1: External Support Services

| SUPPORT SERVICES  |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| SERVICE   | TYPES OF SERVICE   | SPECIALIST SERVICES   | DETAILS  |
| <b>Bravehearts</b>  | Counselling<br>Informtaion   | Children and young people<br><br>Victims and Survivors  | 1800 272 831 Mon to Fri,<br>8:30 am to 4:30 pm AEST<br><br><a href="https://bravehearts.org.au/what-we-do/counselling-and-support/">https://bravehearts.org.au/what-we-do/counselling-and-support/</a> |
| <b>Blue Knot Helpline and Redress Support Service</b>         | Counselling<br>Information<br>National Redress Scheme applications | Victims and survivors   | 1300 657 380 9 am to 5 pm<br>AEST/AEDT, 7 days a week including<br>public holidays<br><br><a href="http://www.blueknot.org.au/">www.blueknot.org.au/</a>   |
| <b>1800RESPECT</b>  | Counselling<br>Crisis and 24/7 support<br>Information              | Domestic, family and<br>sexual violence   | 1800 737 732 24 hours, 7 days a<br>week<br><br><a href="http://www.1800respect.org.au">www.1800respect.org.au</a>  |
| <b>Lifeline</b>   | Crisis and 24/7 support  | Suicide prevention<br>services  | 13 11 14 (24/7)<br><br>Live Chat support service:<br><a href="#">confidential online chat</a> .  |
| <b>13YARN</b>   | Crisis and 24/7 support  | First Nations people  | 13 92 76 (24/7)  |
| <b>Stop It Now</b>  | Counselling  | Victims and survivors<br><br>Individuals worried<br>about their own<br>thoughts or<br>beahaviours towards<br>children | 1800 01 1800<br><br>Mon-Tues: 10.00am – 2.00pm<br>Wed – Thurs: 1.00pm-4.00pm<br>Live Chat support service:<br><a href="#">the website</a> .  |
| <b>National Counselling and Referral Service – Disability</b> | Counselling<br>Information   | People with disability  | 1800 421 468<br><br>Mon – Fri: 9am – 6pm<br>Weekends: 9am – 5pm  |
| <b>Relationships Australia</b>                                | Counselling<br>Support groups                                      | Abused partners<br><br>Abusive partners   | 1300 364 277<br><br><a href="http://www.relationships.com.au">www.relationships.com.au</a>   |



## Appendix 2: Blue Card Definitions

### Negative Notice

Blue Card Services (BCS) undertakes a comprehensive assessment of all applicants' eligibility to hold a blue card based on their known past police or disciplinary information. A negative notice is issued when this assessment is concluded with the decision that it is not in the best interests of children for the applicant to hold a blue card.

The blue card system places obligations on individuals and employer organisations.

If you have been issued with a negative notice, you cannot:

- apply for a blue card i.e. working with children check
- start or continue in child-related work (paid or voluntary)
- carry on a child-related business regulated by the blue card system

### Disqualified Person

You are a disqualified person if you are:

- convicted of a disqualifying offence—regardless of the penalty and regardless of when and where it occurred— which includes
  - sexual conduct with a child, regardless of the type of relationship e.g. teenage boyfriend/girlfriend
  - grooming of children
  - child exploitation material offences
  - other child-related sex offences
  - murder and other serious sexual or violent offences against an adult or child
- a reportable offender under the [Child Protection \(Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order\) Act 2004](#)
- the subject of an offender prohibition order under the [Child Protection \(Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order\) Act 2004](#)
- prohibited by a court from applying for or holding a blue card or
- the subject of a sexual offender order under the [Dangerous Prisoners \(Sexual Offenders\) Act 2003](#).

### Disqualifying Offence

An offence is categorised as a disqualifying offence under the Act if it is an offence:

- against a provision of an Act detailed in the list of disqualifying offences
- under a law of another jurisdiction that, if it had been committed in Queensland, would have constituted an offence of a kind detailed in the list of disqualifying offences
- of counselling or procuring the commission of an offence of a kind mentioned in the list of disqualifying offences
- of attempting—or of conspiring—to commit an offence of a kind detailed in the list of disqualifying offences
- that has—as an element—an intention to commit an offence of a kind mentioned in the list of disqualifying offences or
- that—at the time it was committed—was an offence of a kind mentioned in the list of disqualifying offences.

All disqualifying offences are listed in [Schedule 4](#) or [Schedule 5](#) of the [Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Act 2000](#). There is also a list of [serious offences](#).

Source: [Blue Card Services](#)



## Appendix 3: Frequently Asked Questions

### Question 1

*What should I do if a student asks to engage with them on a social media platform (i.e. Instagram, Facebook)*

Let them know that as a volunteer it would be inappropriate for you to accept or request social media invites.

### Question 2

*What if I believe a matter should be reported to Child Safety Services and/or QLD Police Service but the school does not?*

You are able to make a direct report to Child Safety Services and/or the QLD Police Service based on your concerns. You are also able to follow the complaints procedure as outlined in this document if you believe the school has not followed their processes as detailed in the CEDC Student Protection Processes and Guidelines document.

### Question 3

*As a volunteer what is my reporting responsibility?*

You are responsible for sharing your concerns with an appropriate staff member. This will normally be the classroom teacher. However you may also share your concerns with a [Student Protection Contact](#) and/or the Principal. If you believe a matter should be reported to Child Safety and/or the QLD Police Service you can contact these statutory authorities directly.

### Question 4

*What if I see a staff member behaving inappropriately with a student (i.e. swearing at or in the presence of a student/s, appearing overly affectionate with a student, providing a student with gifts etc).?*

All staff must adhere to the CEDC Staff Code of Conduct which outlines their required conduct when interacting with students. If you observe or if you are informed of a possible breach of professional boundaries this should be shared with the Principal as soon as possible. You may also discuss your concerns with a [Student Protection Contact](#) to assist you.

### Question 5

*I volunteer at a school in a small community where there are shared activities outside of the school environment and there is contact with students afterhours. What are the expectations in relation to me as a volunteer and as a community member having contact with students outside of the school context?*

There will be legitimate reasons to attend social/cultural events with children and young people with whom you also have contact with as a school volunteer, especially if you have children who are the same age.

Following the guidance should help volunteers to enjoy these social engagements without compromising your role as a volunteer:

- social contact should be generated via the relationship the volunteer has with the parents of children and young people or by an event (such as a sporting event) – not via the volunteer / student relationship.
- volunteers should politely refuse to discuss matters relating to the school and should not discuss children and young people's learning or social progress. These questions can be redirected to the classroom teacher and/or Principal.



### Question 6

*I am worried about working with children and how to avoid physically touching them?*

In CEDC schools it is acknowledged that, at times, physical guidance / support is necessary. Examples of appropriate physical contact are:

- helping a student who is hurt
- non-intrusive gesture to comfort a child or young person who is experiencing sadness / distress such as a tap on the shoulder, upper arm or upper back
- non-intrusive congratulations such as a high five, shaking hands or pat on the upper arm/back. Remember to accompany this with positive and encouraging words (i.e well done on completing this reading, you've done a great job)

### Question 7

*I have a concern about the Principals conduct with a student/s and do not feel comfortable discussing with anyone at the school, who can I share these worries with?*

If you do not feel comfortable sharing your concerns with a Student Protection Contact you may:

- Contact 000 if you have immediate safety and wellbeing concerns for a student/s
- Use the [STOPline hotline](#)
- Contact the Professional Standards and Safeguarding Office (PSSO)
  - [professionalstandards@cns.catholic.edu.au](mailto:professionalstandards@cns.catholic.edu.au)
  - 07 4050 9765

The PSSO reviews information, determines if external reporting is required, refers to the schools Director of Effectiveness and/or commences an investigation into the conduct of staff members.

### Question 8

*If I am a parent of a child why do I now need a blue card to volunteer at an overnight excursion or camp?*

A recent amendment to Section 156 of the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*, means that the previous blue card exemption for parents on overnight excursions or camps no longer applies. These changes have been made in alignment with the new QLD Child Safe Standards implementation.

NOTE: The amendment is captured in the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024*





## Appendix 4: Student Protection Contacts

A Student Protection Contact (SPC) is one of at least two persons who are nominated in each school in compliance with the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017, (section 16(3)) to whom a student can report behaviour by a staff member that the student considers inappropriate.

CEDC has also expanded this role to include Student Protection Contacts as staff members who can be consulted with when another staff member, parent and/or volunteer has concerns regarding the safety and/or wellbeing of a student

While it is a legislative requirement that each CEDC school has at least two Student Protection Contacts (SPC) the majority of our schools have more than two SPCs particularly if the school is large and considering the age and diversity of the students.

The Principal is always one of the nominate SPC's with consideration as to the other SPC/s based on the staff members experiences and their role within the school.

Student Protection Contacts role includes but is not limited to:

- being available to staff and volunteers if they have concerns regarding a students safety and/or wellbeing (including worries regarding child abuse, harm and/or an allegation/complaint of staff inappropriate behaviour towards a student/s)
- assisting the Principal in the support of students, staff and volunteers
- ensuring processes are adhered to as detailed in the Student Protection Processes and Guidelines document

Student Protection Contacts receive annual training, in addition to the Annual Mandatory Student Protection Reporting Obligations training and face to face training provided by the Professional Standards and Safeguarding office.

Student Protection Contacts are known to students, parents, volunteers and visitors via the Student Protection Posters placed within the school environment and ongoing communication throughout the school year. A list of the current SPC's for each school are also located on the CEDC public website [Safeguarding](#) page



## Appendix 5: Definitions

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Child   | A child is a person under the age of 18yrs old.   |
| Harm<br>(as defined by section 9 of the Child Protection Act 1999)              | <p>Harm, to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child’s physical, psychological, or emotional well-being.</p> <p>It is immaterial how the harm is caused.<br/>Harm can be caused by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or</li> <li>• sexual abuse or exploitation</li> </ul>  |
| Sexual abuse<br>(as defined by §364 of Education (General Provisions) Act 2006) | <p>Sexual abuse, in relation to a student, includes sexual behaviour involving the student and another person in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the other person bribes, coerces, exploits, threatens or is violent toward the student</li> <li>• the student has less power than the other person</li> <li>• there is a significant disparity between the relevant person and the other person in intellectual capacity or maturity.</li> </ul>   |
| Safeguarding  | <p>Safeguarding means promoting the wellbeing of children and young people and creating safe environments that protect children and young people from abuse, exploitation and harm. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• student protection and student wellbeing</li> <li>• expecting our people, operations and activities to promote the wellbeing of and do no harm to students</li> </ul> <p>developing and maintaining systems and practices that prevent harm alongside procedures to respond to and report effectively any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of students</p> |
| Student Protection Contact  | <p>A Student Protection Contact (SPC) is one of at least two persons who are nominated in each school in compliance with the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017, (section 16(3)) to whom a student can report behaviour by a staff member that the student considers inappropriate.</p> <p>CEDC has also expanded this role to include Student Protection Contacts as staff members who can be consulted with when another staff member, parent and/or volunteer has concerns regarding the safety and/or wellbeing of a student</p>  |

