

# CEDC Safeguarding Framework

QLD Child Safe Standards

Version 1: June 2026

CATHOLIC EDUCATION DIOCESE OF CAIRNS

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# CEDC Safeguarding Framework

## Introduction

The Child Safe Organisations system was recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission) in 2017 and is underpinned by a child rights, strengths-based approach.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse heard from thousands of Australians about their experiences as victim-survivors of abuse. The stories they shared about the abuse they were subjected to within a wide range of institutions, from religious and educational settings to the military, led to significant changes in how we understand child sexual abuse, who perpetrates it, and how.

The Royal Commission emphasised that members of the public, children, young people, parents, carers, families, and communities should be confident that organisations working with children provide safe environments where children's rights, needs and interests are met. It identified specific elements that institutions should adopt to be child safe, and its final report proposed 10 National Principles to provide guidance to organisations about how to achieve effective safeguarding.

The 10 National Principles were endorsed by all states and territories in 2019 and since then have been, or are in the process of being, adopted into state-based child safeguarding legislation. Queensland's *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* and the associated systems commenced from 1 October 2025.

The Child Safe Standards incorporating a Universal Principle of Cultural Safety under Queensland's law aims to make prevention a collective institutional responsibility. They align Queensland with national and international child protection standards, ensuring we are a leader in safeguarding children.

The Queensland Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 establishes an integrated child safe organisations system in Queensland that includes:

- mandatory [child safe standards](#) by in-scope organisations
- a nationally consistent [reportable conduct scheme](#)

The CEDC Safeguarding Framework helps our organisation to:

- identify potential risks of harm to children
- implement solutions to minimise risks
- create consistent practices for staff and volunteers

In alignment with the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* and the Queensland Government's implementation of the **Child Safe Standards**, the CEDC Safeguarding Framework replaces our previous Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy. It reflects our commitment to embedding a proactive, transparent, and accountable culture of child safety across all aspects of Catholic Education Diocese of Cairns (CEDC). This framework outlines the principles, policies, and practices that guide our efforts to create a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment where every child and young person is respected, protected, and empowered.



The CEDC Safeguarding Framework is categorised into the following components that align with the Queensland Child Safe Standards:

COMMITMENT	CAPABILITY	CONSISTENCY
<b>UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE</b>		
<b>STANDARD 1</b>	<b>STANDARD 5</b>	<b>STANDARD 9</b>
Leadership and cultural	People	Continuous improvement
<b>STANDARD 2</b>	<b>STANDARD 6</b>	
Voice of children	Complaints management	
<b>STANDARD 3</b>	<b>STANDARD 7</b>	<b>STANDARD 10</b>
Family and community	Knowledge and Skills	Policy and Procedures
<b>STANDARD 4</b>	<b>STANDARD 8</b>	
Equity and diversity	Physical and online environment	

## Universal Principal

The Universal Principle is a legislative requirement under the Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 to embed Cultural Safety within each Child Safe Standard. Consistent with the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNACC) definition of cultural safety, culturally safe environments are those in which First Nations children, families, and communities feel safe to be themselves, express their culture, spirituality and identify, and are protected from racism, exclusion, and harm. We know a strong connection to Culture is a protective factor for First Nations children and an important way to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

## Foundation Principles

In a Catholic education setting, a culturally safe framework is founded on principles that are child-centred, grounded in Catholic Identity, and responsive to place-based and local contexts.

Being child-centred means recognising each student as a unique person made in the image and likeness of God, with inherent dignity, voice, and right to safety, belonging, and respect. Catholic Identity shapes cultural safety through Gospel values of love, justice, hospitality, and solidarity, calling communities to honour diversity, challenge exclusion, and actively promote right relationships. A place-based approach acknowledges the significance of local context, including the histories, cultures and lived experiences of First Nations peoples.

Together, these principles commit Catholic schools to creating environments where all children feel spiritually, emotionally, and culturally safe, and where learning and wellbeing are nurtured through respect for identity, connection to Country, and authentic partnership with families and communities.

## Cultural Safety Framework

Cultural Safety is recognised as an individual and systemic responsibility. The Cultural Safety Framework has been developed by the Catholic Education Queensland Limited (CEQL) First Nations Education Forum as an expression of collective responsibility to strengthen culturally safe, child-centred practice across Catholic Education in Queensland.

The Cultural Safety Framework provides foundation principles to ensure that culture safety within Catholic schools is not symbolic or aspirational, but a lived, measurable, and accountable reality for First Nations children across Queensland.

Cultural safety requires awareness, competence and responsiveness to others, alongside critical reflection on one's own identity, assumptions, power, and privilege. The framework is brought to life through nine elements. The nine elements are interconnected with the Child Safe Standards and support their implementation in culturally responsive ways.



**Catholic  
Education**  
Diocese of Cairns

*Learning with Faith and Vision*

### 1. Cultural Humility

Cultural humility is a lifelong, reflective practice grounded in openness, respect, and a willingness to learn. It recognises the limits of one's knowledge, prioritises listening to lived experience, and addresses power imbalances. Cultural humility underpins cultural safety through shared authority, relational accountability, and ongoing, community-guided learning.

### 2. Reflexivity

Reflexivity is the ongoing, intentional practice of critically examining one's own identity, culture, values, assumptions, power, privilege, and professional behaviours and understanding how these shape relationships, decisions, and outcomes for others.

### 3. Social and Emotional Wellbeing

In First Nations cultures, social and emotional wellbeing is understood holistically, encompassing quality of life, Country, cultural identity, spirituality, family, and community. Wellbeing is seen as the interconnected balance of physical, social, and emotional domains, with strong connections to Country, culture, and spirituality. These connections strengthen identity, foster belonging, and support an overall positive wellbeing.

### 4. Racial Literacy

Racial literacy is the knowledge, skills, and critical awareness required to recognise, name, and respond to racism in its individual, institutional, and structural forms. In the Australian education context, racial literacy involves understanding how colonisation, settler ideologies, and racial hierarchies continue to shape schooling systems, curriculum, policy, and everyday interactions. It requires educators and leaders to move beyond intentions of inclusion towards deliberate, sustained anti-racism action that centres First Nations sovereignty, truth-telling, and self-determination.

### 5. High Expectation Relationships

High Expectation Relationships (HE-R) are grounded in dignity, respect, and relational justice. They focus on awareness, connection, and understanding of context rather than compliance or requirements. They are enacted when educators reflect critically on assumptions, honour culture, and context, and are both firm and fair. HE-R requires educators and systems to build trust, through relational practice and respectful dialogue which honours human dignity.

### 6. Accountability and Cultural Integrity

Cultural integrity means doing the work the right way, acting with honour, respect and responsibility towards First Nations peoples, cultures, knowledge systems, and Country. Accountability means being answerable for cultural impact, creating culturally safe environments, using First Nations defined measures, and acting decisively when racism or cultural harm occurs.

### 7. Intentional Language/Communication

Using intentional language and communication are critical components of upholding the Universal Principle of Cultural Safety and the Child Safe Standards. Language is a core determinant of the attitudes we foster and the depth of the relationships we build, which can critically impact the safety and wellbeing of First Nations children, families, and communities. When educators use intentional, culturally respectful language and communication, they cultivate environments where children feel safe to learn, speak up and thrive.

### 8. Two-Way Learning Partnerships

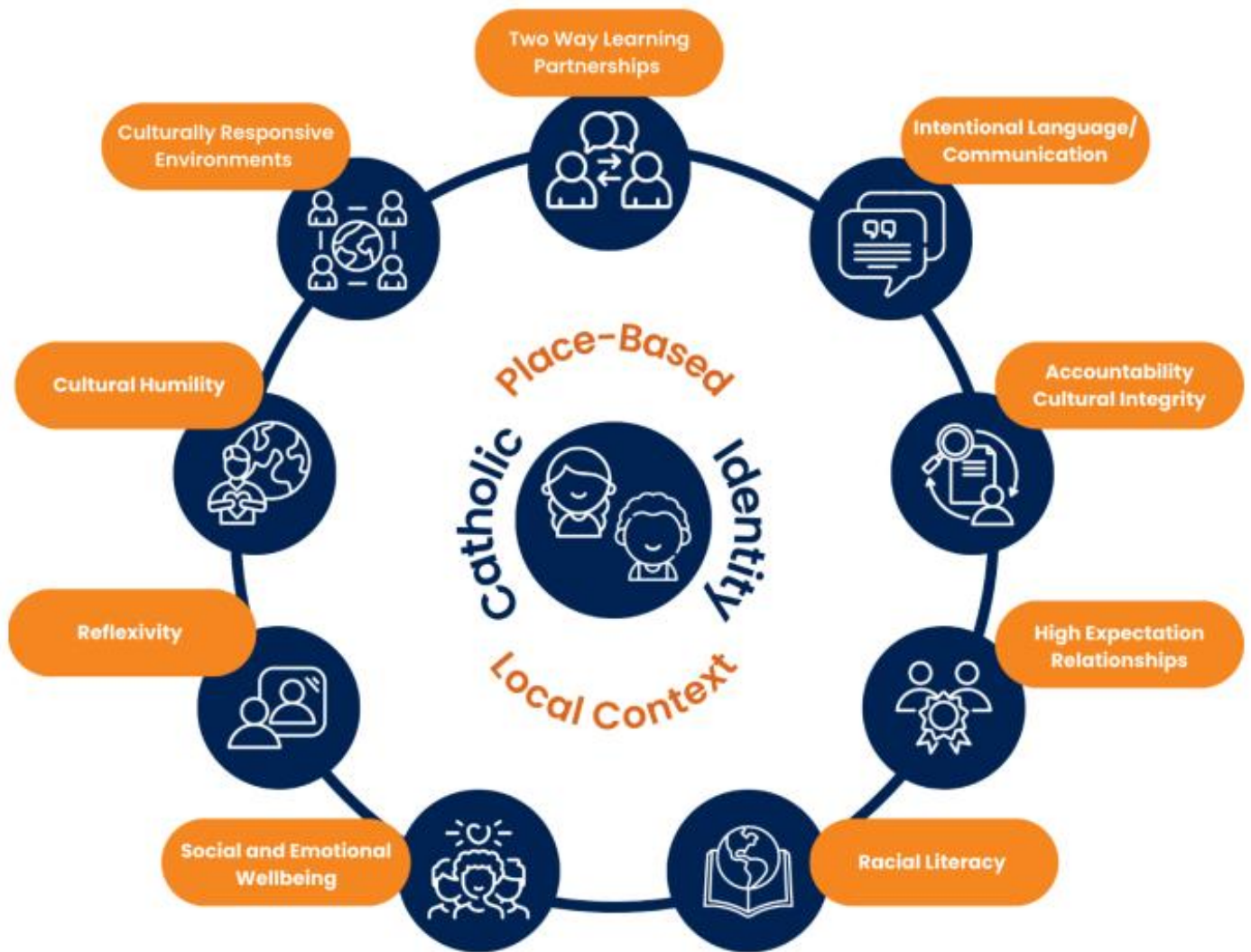
Two-Way Learning Partnerships recognise First Nations students, families, and communities as knowledge holders and co-educators. Grounded in trust, deep listening, and shared responsibility, they honour local context, culture, and lived experience. In Catholic schools, these partnerships reflect Gospel values of dignity, reciprocity, and justice, strengthening culturally safe, and child-centred learning environments.

### 9. Culturally Responsive Environments

Culturally responsive learning environments are grounded in high expectations, strong relationships, and cultural safety. They value diversity as a strength and are built through respectful partnerships with families and communities. Educators affirm First Nations cultures and identities, supporting wellbeing, belonging and academic excellence through ongoing reflection and improvement.



# Cultural Safety Framework Map



# Commitment

## Standard 1: Leadership and culture

### Cultural Safety Framework

Cultural Humility

Reflexivity

Two-way Learning

Social & Emotional Wellbeing

Racial Literacy

Intentional Language/Communication

High Expectation Relationships

Accountability and Cultural Integrity

Culturally Responsive Environments

### Child Safety and wellbeing is embedded in our leadership, governance and culture

#### Overview

We create a culture where every decision, action and process prioritises the safety, and wellbeing of children. Strong leadership and clear governance lay the foundation for a proactive, accountable, and child-focused organisation.

#### Safeguarding Children Commitment

We are 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 Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child and Catholic teachings. We recognise that student spiritual, psychological, and physical wellbeing is paramount and recognise that every student has a fundamental right to a safe school environment and protection from harm and risk of harm.

#### Codes of Conduct

##### Code of Conduct - Staff

We have a [Code of Conduct – Staff](#) which applies to all staff members and contactors, within CEDC, engaged on a casual, fixed term or continuing basis, either pursuant to a contract of employment or appointed to a role at the school pursuant to an agreement with a religious order. The Code of Conduct states that our staff must always act appropriately and professionally in their interactions with students and observe

appropriate boundaries, behaviour and contact with students. The Code of Conduct also addresses expectations of staff in relation to risk management and duty of care obligations to students, including but not limited to compliance with laws, standards and CEDC policies and procedures.

##### Parents, Carers and School Community

We have a [Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers and School Community](#) that defines their standards of conduct to ensure a safe learning environment for all students and staff. It relates to all parents, volunteers and visitors who interact within our schools, colleges and CEDC and applies to when present at school and school sponsored meetings/functions within and outside of school hours.

#### Governance Structures

Child safety is embedded in governance through clear accountability frameworks, regular reporting to senior leadership and governing bodies, and compliance with legislative requirements.

#### Leadership Practice

Leaders model a culture of care and vigilance by promoting transparent communication, encouraging staff to raise concerns, and ensuring that safeguarding responsibilities are understood and enacted at all levels.



## Child Safe Standards Actions

Each school is required to identify priorities aligned with the Child Safe Standards that outlines clear, achievable priorities for the year. The identified priorities ensure a proactive approach to embedding child safety and wellbeing across all aspects of school operations. These priorities are captured within the Annual School Performance Plans and serve as a practical roadmap for continuous improvement, guiding schools in implementing strategies that strengthen safeguarding practices, enhance student voice, and foster a culture of safety and respect. Progress against the plan is regularly monitored and reported to leadership to ensure accountability and transparency.



## Standard 2: Voice of Children

### Cultural Safety Framework

Cultural Humility

Social & Emotional Wellbeing

High Expectation Relationships

Reflexivity

Culturally Responsive Environments

Accountability and Cultural Integrity

Racial Literacy

Intentional Language/Communication

### Children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

#### Overview

We empower children, informing them of their rights, and involving them in decision-making is fundamental to safeguarding their wellbeing. Child Safe Organisations foster an environment where the children's voices are heard and actively shape outcomes that affect them.

#### Key Elements

Made in the image of God, every child possesses inherent dignity and is recognised as an active citizen whose voice, agency and participation are central to a safe and just educational community.

The CEDC Student Empowerment Framework supports students in having their voices genuinely heard, while the dynamics of the Encounter Catholic Identity Framework guides how we walk along students.

#### Voice

- Grounded in the dignity of every person, students are invited to share their perspectives on learning and school life.
- We **Respect** the dignity of each student by creating spaces where their voices are heard, valued, and acted upon, fostering dialogue that builds belonging and mutual understanding.

#### Agency

- Students are supported to take ownership of their learning journey, drawing on their strengths, interests, and experiences.
- We **Respect** each student's unique gifts and perspectives by entrusting them with

meaningful choices in their learning, affirming their capacity to take responsibility and shape their educational journey with dignity and confidence.

#### Participation

- Students are recognised as active members of the school community, contributing their insights, gifts, and experiences to shared decision-making.
- We **Connect** students to the life of the school by inviting them into shared decision-making, ensuring their contributions help shape inclusive communities of flourishing and hope.

#### Leadership and Advocacy

- Students are encouraged to lead, both formally and informally, with humility, courage, and care, and in ways that reflect Gospel values and promote justice.
- We **Embrace** servant leadership by supporting students to guide and influence their peers with integrity, and to advocate for justice and human dignity as active citizens of both school and society.

#### Co-Creation and Partnership

- Students and educators work together as valued partners, co-designing learning experiences, initiatives, and school practices.
- We **Reflect** as partners in mission, co-creating learning and community life with students, fostering trust, collaboration, and responsibility for holistic growth.



## Empowerment

- Students are empowered with the confidence, skills, and opportunities to shape their learning, influence their environment, and contribute to the common good.
- We **Embrace** empowerment by celebrating students' contributions, equipping them with skills and confidence to influence responsibly, and nurturing their vocation as agents of hope and transformation.



## Standard 3: Family and community

### Cultural Safety Framework

Cultural Humility	Reflexivity	Two-way Learning
Social & Emotional Wellbeing	Racial Literacy	Intentional Language/Communication
High Expectation Relationships	Accountability and Cultural Integrity	Culturally Responsive Environments

### Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing

#### Overview

We build trust and collaboration with families and communities to create a united front to ensure children's safety and wellbeing is a top priority. Child safety and wellbeing are strengthened when families and communities are informed, engaged and are active partners in promoting safe environments.

#### Parent Engagement

CEDC recognises families as the first educators and essential partners in safeguarding. This partnership reflects a shared commitment to the dignity of each child and the values of respect, care, and justice.

#### Engagement Principles

##### Shared Responsibility

Child safety and wellbeing are a collective responsibility. Families, schools, and communities work together to identify risks, respond appropriately, and foster protective environments.

##### Transparency and Communication

Open, respectful communication ensures families are informed about safeguarding policies, reporting processes, and available supports.

##### Cultural Responsiveness

Engagement strategies respect cultural, linguistic, and faith diversity, ensuring inclusivity and equity for all families.

#### Strategies for Engagement

##### Accessible Information

We provide clear, plain-language resources on child protection policies, complaint procedures, and wellbeing initiatives through multiple channels (school websites, newsletters, parent forums).

##### Regular Updates

We share updates on legislative changes, school safeguarding practices, and community resources via consistent communication platforms.

##### Education and Training

We offer parent workshops and webinars on topics such as online safety, recognising signs of harm, and promoting resilience.

##### Parent – Teacher Interviews

We provide opportunities for teachers to provide feedback on a child's academic progress and collaborate on learning, social and wellbeing needs.

##### Co-design with First Nations families/carers and diverse communities

CEDC continues to work with First Nations families and carers to co-design processes that embed cultural safety, continuity of connection to Country and recognition of cultural identity in all child-safe policies and wellbeing practice.



## Standard 4: Equity and diversity

### Cultural Safety Framework

Cultural Humility	Reflexivity	High Expectation Relationships
Social & Emotional Wellbeing	Racial Literacy	Intentional Language/Communication
Culturally Responsive Environments		

### Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

#### Overview

We embed equity into policies and practices to create a safe and inclusive environment for all children. Challenging ourselves to go beyond compliance and actively ensure that the unique needs of children from diverse backgrounds are recognised, respected and met.

#### Equity

We commit to providing fair access to resources, opportunities, and support so that all students can achieve their potential.

We are committed to ensuring that equity is not just an aspiration but a lived reality within our schools. This means we have:

#### Inclusive Policies

We ensure all policies reflect fairness and accessibility, ensuring that no student is disadvantaged because of ability, culture, language, gender, or socioeconomic background.

#### Responsive Practices

Our teaching and learning approaches are adapted to meet diverse needs, promoting success for every learner.

#### Support Structures

Resources and interventions are provided equitably, prioritising students who require additional support to thrive.

#### Adhere to Obligations

We ensure we are meeting our legislative and organisational requirements by adhering to the Disability Standards in Education 2005 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

#### Diversity

We commit to valuing and celebrating differences in culture, language, ability, gender, and background as enriching our school communities.

We celebrate the richness of diversity. This means we:

#### Honor Cultural Identity

We recognize and respect the cultural heritage and traditions of all students and families.

#### Foster Belonging

We create safe, welcoming spaces where differences are valued, and inclusion is actively practiced.

#### Build Collective Awareness

We actively promote awareness across our community, helping individuals recognise their impact and deepen their understanding of the diverse experiences of others.



### Promote Understanding

We encourage dialogue and learning that deepen appreciation for diversity and challenge bias. CEDC policies explicitly address and support diversity, equity and inclusion for all children, staff and volunteers via the following policies and procedures:

- *Encounter* Catholic Identity Framework
- First Nations Education Strategy
- Inclusion of students who identify as gender diverse and/or intersex
- Inclusive Practices
- Student Behaviour Support
- International Education
- Workplace Equity
- Staff Mental Health & Wellbeing
- First Nations Employment Strategy
- CEDC Reconciliation Action Plan
- International Education
- Workplace Equity
- Staff Mental Health & Wellbeing



# Capability

## Standard 5: People

### Cultural Safety Framework

Social & Emotional Wellbeing

High Expectation Relationships

Racial Literacy

Accountability and Cultural Integrity

Intentional Language/Communication

Culturally Responsive Environments

People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice

#### Overview

We have robust recruitment, training and ongoing support systems in place to ensure all personal embody child safety and wellbeing values in their actions. The suitability and capability of staff and volunteers is pivotal in creating safe environments for children.

#### Recruitment & Selection (under review)

The standard places a strong emphasis on ensuring that recruitment, induction, training, supervision, and management processes are designed to prevent unsuitable individuals from entering or remaining in positions of trust with children.

This Standard reflects the reality that the greatest risks to children often arise not from strangers, but from individuals who deliberately seek out access to children or who misuse the trust placed in them.

Our child safe approach treats recruitment not as a transactional process, but as a critical opportunity to protect children from harm.

Recruitment processes within CEDC ensure a comprehensive practice is adopted when employing new staff that includes child safe processes embedded in the following:

#### Pre-appointment

Effective child safe recruitment begins at the earliest stage of our workforce planning. Position design and advertising clearly articulate child safeguarding responsibilities, our duty of care, and the behavioural expectations that apply to all staff and volunteers. This makes clear to prospective applicants that safeguarding is not peripheral to the role, but integral to its core functions.

#### Selection

Structured interviews provide an essential opportunity to probe suitability to work with children further. Safeguarding-focused questions are incorporated to assess values, attitudes, and an applicant's approach to managing boundaries.

We actively test a person's motivation to work with children, understanding of safeguarding principles and respect for professional boundaries.

Reference checks are rigorous, including questions about conduct, behaviour, and reasons for leaving previous roles. This practice can reveal crucial information about past safeguarding concerns that may not be clear on paper.



Employment Screening procedures also include:

- Obtaining copies of mandatory registration documentation
- Verification of employment history

All successful applicants are required to sign the Acceptance of the Statement of Principles and the CEDC Code of Conduct – Staff via the employment contract.

## Post Appointment

Recruitment is only the first step in protecting children. We recognise that ongoing education, reinforcement, and professional development are critical to embedding a robust safeguarding culture.

### Induction & Training

All new staff members are provided with an induction upon commencement of duties. For our school staff, this process is undertaken through the guidance of the Principal or delegate via an employee induction booklet.

It is also a requirement that all new staff members complete the following mandatory training as soon as practical once employment has commenced and annually after this date:

- Student Protection Reporting Obligations.
- Code of Conduct
- Privacy Awareness
- Discrimination and EEO
- Fire Safety
- Sexual Harassment Prevention
- Acceptable Use of ICT including social media
- Workplace Bullying and Occupational Violence
- Disability Standards for Education.
- Psychosocial Safety

While induction training introduces our safeguarding policies, code of conduct and clear procedures for reporting concerns, our induction also aims to ensure staff understand our commitment to creating a culture where child safety is a shared responsibility.

Ongoing training includes:

- Scenario-based learning that translates policy into practice
- Safeguarding knowledge that is current and responsive to emerging risks

- Role specific safeguarding training

## Ongoing Management

Safeguarding is not treated as a compliance exercise or an optional addition to staff responsibilities. It is embedded into the daily management and supervision of all personnel who work with or around children. Performance management is a critical mechanism through which we set behavioural expectations, monitor adherence, and intervene when early warning signs arise.

## Supervision and Monitoring

We conduct regular supervision meetings where safeguarding is a standing agenda item. This provides an opportunity not only to check compliance but also to reinforce child safe values, discuss emerging risks, and address any challenges staff encounter in applying safeguarding practices. Supervision is both administrative and relational, creating a space where concerns can be raised safely.

### Behavioural Expectations.

Compliance is monitored, not assumed. Clear behavioural expectations are reinforced ensuring staff understand that secrecy is incompatible with safe practice.

### Active Verification

Observation is necessary to ensure safeguarding standards are applied in practice. We recognise that policies are not self-executing; it is through deliberate oversight that unsafe practices are exposed.

## Teaching Staff

All teachers in our schools and colleges are registered with the [Queensland College of Teachers](#). Qualifications are sighted or verified by a JP. Teacher registration may be sighted or verified by the QCT website and copies are recorded on the personnel file of the staff member. The Professional Standards and Safeguarding Office (PSSO) additionally adhere to notification processes required by the [Education \(QLD College of Teachers\) Act 2005](#), where allegations or complaints occur resulting in an investigation of harm or possible harm to a student.



## Non-teaching Staff

All non-teaching staff must hold a Queensland Working with Children Check (Blue Card) prior to commencing employment and be linked to the organisation through the Blue Card Organisational Portal.

Schools and colleges are responsible for maintaining a register of Working with Children Check details for all volunteers and contractors. Volunteers must also be linked to the organisation via the Blue Card Organisational Portal. Some contractors must also be linked (i.e. music tutors)

Details of non-teaching employees' Blue Card expiration is managed and recorded by CES Employee and Safety Services. New non-teaching employees must have applied for and received their working with children clearance and have it linked to the organisation prior to the commencement of work - 'No Card' No Link, No Start.'

## Working with Children Checks

Blue Card Services administers the blue card system—Queensland's Working with Children Check (Blue Card).

As per the requirements with the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*, individuals engaged in regulated child-related work must hold a valid Blue Card or Exemption Card issued by QLD Blue Card Services. Teaching staff do not require a Blue Card but do require registration with the Queensland College of Teachers. These requirements apply to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children by verifying the suitability of adults in regulated environments in addition to the additional safeguarding elements listed in this document.

A regulated environment refers to any setting where individuals perform child-related work or services that interact with children, as defined under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*. Whether a Blue Card is required depends on:

- The type of work being undertaken
- The environment where the work is undertaken
- Whether an exemption applies

The presence of an OSHC service within a school environment also triggers additional Blue Card compliance obligations under the Education and Care Services Blue Card category.

To ensure clarity and uphold safeguarding standards, CEDC will prioritise engaging service providers who hold a valid Blue Card, regardless of whether the service is child-related, as part of the organisation's risk management framework.

Managing Compliance with the Working with Children Check includes the following:

- Identifying a designated Contact Person for managing Working with Children applications and existing card holders
- Maintaining a CEDC (Paid Staff) and school based (Volunteers and Contractors) Blue Card Register (including exemptions)
- Working with Children processes in place relating to specific roles within CEDC including Volunteers, Contractors, Tradespeople and Visting Service Providers
- Responding to changes in Police Information of a Volunteer or Blue Card holder
- Safeguards in place to prevent a Restricted Person from working with children
- Ensuring Restricted Employment is managed with risk management oversight

Further information about Blue Card requirements and processes can be obtained from the QLD Government [Blue Card Services](#) website.



## Blue Card Changes Volunteer Parent

A volunteer parent requires a QLD Blue Card if:

- volunteering at an overnight excursion or camp
- volunteering includes close personal contact with another child (e.g. aiding with toileting, dressing a child)
- volunteering activities do not directly involve their own child

## New Regulated Work

- *Entertainment, beauty, and photography* (e.g. DJs at school formals, professional photographers)
- *Education Services and activities conducted inside a school category* (e.g. cultural services, motivational speaker, petting zoo)

## Changes to Existing Categories

- *Child accommodation services* (e.g. homestay providers, school camps)
- *Schools- employees other than teachers* (e.g. groundskeepers)
- *Churches, clubs, and associations* (e.g. executive committee of a church, club, or association)



## Standard 6: Complaints management

### Cultural Safety Framework

Cultural Humility

Reflexivity

Racial Literacy

Accountability and  
Cultural Integrity

Culturally Responsive  
Environments

Intentional  
Language/Communication

### Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused

#### Overview

We have systems in place that are transparent, accessible, and designed to empower children to raise concerns safely and confidently, knowing they will be taken seriously. Effective, child-focused complaint and concern processes are essential for protection children.

#### Student Protection Processes

All school staff are required to follow the procedures set out in the Student Protection Processes and Guidelines document in relation to reporting:

- Reasonable suspicion of sexual/likely sexual abuse of a student to the QLD Police Service.
- Reasonable suspicion of physical or sexual abuse of a child to the department responsible for Child Safety (a belief there may not be a parent able and willing to protect the child).
- Reasonable suspicion of neglect or emotional abuse of a child to the department responsible for Child Safety (a belief there may not be a parent able and willing to protect the child).
- Reasonable suspicion of a Child Sexual Offence (a belief that a child under the age of 16yrs has been sexually offended against by an adult and the reporting of this matter has not been captured under existing reporting obligations as detailed above)
- Reasonable suspicion of inappropriate behaviour by a staff member, other employee, or volunteer towards a student/s

(a belief based on an allegation, complaint, or direct observation)

The Student Protection Processes and Guidelines document includes the following information:

- Harm definition
- Indicators of harm (and other concerns for a student's wellbeing)
- Reasonable suspicion of harm definition
- Identification, reporting and recording a disclosure or reasonable suspicion of harm
- Mandatory reporting obligations
- Non-mandatory reporting obligations
- Position of Authority offences
- Failure to report and failure to protect criminal offences
- Guidance to respond to concerns for a student's wellbeing that do not meet a threshold for a report to a statutory authority.

These procedures meet the legislative requirements of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*, *Child Protection Act 1999*, and the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017*.

If a disclosure or suspicion of harm relates to inappropriate behaviour of an employee, a volunteer, or other personnel, at the school towards a student or other child, the staff member must make a written report of the concerns to the Principal. The Principal must then consult with the PSSO and depending on the severity of the concerns a decision will be made as to who is best placed to respond to the concerns.



## Conduct, Complaints and Grievances

Catholic Education Diocese of Cairns is committed to fostering safe, ethical, and legally compliant workplaces that uphold respectful and responsible behaviour across all system and school communities. This commitment is supported by adherence to the Grievance Policy, which provide clear guidance for addressing concerns and ensuring fairness and accountability in all interactions.

### Whistleblower Hotline

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.



## Standard 7: Knowledge and Skills

### Cultural Safety Framework



Staff and volunteers of the entity are equipped with knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training.

#### Overview

Staff and volunteers are not only screened and qualified but also receive ongoing education, training, and capacity building support to build the knowledge, skills and awareness required to proactively safeguard children in all interactions. Staff and volunteers are the backbone of child safe organisations.

#### Key Principles

We ensure ongoing education and training of staff and volunteers to identify, prevent, and respond to the safety and wellbeing needs of all students. Key principles for ensuring safeguarding practices remain current, consistent, and effective include:

##### Commitment to Continuous Learning

Safeguarding is dynamic and we ensure our training reflects evolving legislation, best practice standards, and emerging risks.

##### Role-Specific Competence

Education programs are tailored to the responsibilities of staff and volunteers, ensuring clarity and consistency of practice. Evidence-informed content:

Training content is drawn from contemporary research, emerging trends in child protection, case reviews, and lessons from critical incidents.

##### Skills Based Learning

Effective safeguarding training combines knowledge with practical skill development. Staff are expected to be able to translate theory into action.

##### Accessibility and Support

Training is accessible, well-supported and offered through a range of delivery modes (online, face-to-face, scenario-based learning). This enables all staff to engage meaningfully and ensures capability development is sustained over time.

#### Core Components of Education

##### Induction Programs

All staff and volunteers receive comprehensive safeguarding induction, including:

- Child protection legislation and policy requirements.
- Reporting obligations and escalation pathways.
- Professional boundaries and ethical conduct.

##### Ongoing Professional Development

Staff annual mandatory online training addresses:

- Recognising indicators of abuse and neglect.
- Responding to disclosures sensitively and appropriately.
- Cultural competency and inclusive practices.



### Specialised Training

Added training is provided to Student Protection Contacts (including Principals) and school counsellors in relation to:

- Risk assessment and mitigation strategies.
- Managing complex safeguarding matters
- Trauma-informed approaches.



## Standard 8: Physical and online environments

### Cultural Safety Framework

Cultural Humility

Reflexivity

Two-way Learning

Social & Emotional Wellbeing

Racial Literacy

Intentional Language/Communication

High Expectation Relationships

Culturally Responsive Environments

### Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed

#### Overview

We actively identify, access, and mitigate risks in all spaces that children access to ensure their wellbeing is prioritised and opportunities for harm are significantly reduced. Creating safe environments both physical and online, is a cornerstone of children's safety and wellbeing.

#### Online Environment

This relates to any digital platform, system, network, app, or device used for learning, communication, or school activity.

#### Secure Digital Platforms

All online platforms and resources used within our school are selected and maintained to meet strict security and privacy standards, protecting students from exposure to harmful content and online risks.

#### The IT Due Diligence

Third-Party Digital Systems, Services & Applications Procedure is mandatory for all schools. This procedure ensures that all third-party digital systems, services, and applications introduced into the school environment undergo a rigorous review process prior to approval. The review assesses factors such as data security, privacy compliance, child safety considerations, and alignment with CEDC policies.

By following this process, CEDC mitigates risks associated with digital platforms and guarantees that only vetted and approved applications are implemented, safeguarding students and maintaining the integrity of our online learning environments.

#### Monitoring and Oversight

We have implemented robust monitoring systems to supervise student activity in digital spaces. This includes the use of classroom management tools, filtering systems, and regular audits to detect and address inappropriate or unsafe online behaviour.

#### Ongoing Review and Training

Online environments are subject to continuous review, and staff receive regular training on safe digital practices, cyber safety, and the responsible use of technology.

#### Physical Environment

Our schools prioritize safety and wellbeing as essential to learning and faith formation. This commitment means:

#### Safe Physical Environments

School facilities and activities are designed and maintained to protect students from harm and foster a sense of security. An annual Visibility in Schools checklist is conducted to identify and mitigate.



## Policies and Procedures

There are policies and procedures in place to ensure a proactive approach to creating and maintaining safe spaces for students and staff.

This includes, but is not limited to assisting staff in conducting various activities, managing risks, and making informed decisions via the use of ARMR – (Activity Risk Management Records) and procedures relevant to:

- Chemical Management
- Contractor Management
- Critical Incidents and Emergency Planning
- Excursions and Camps
- Fetes and Events
- First Aid and Infection Control
- Health Conditions and Medication
- Maintenance and Groundskeeping
- Safe Structure and Environment
- Sun and Heat Safety



# Consistency

## Standard 9: Continuous Improvement

### Cultural Safety Framework

Social & Emotional Wellbeing

High Expectation Relationships

Racial Literacy

Accountability and Cultural Integrity

Culturally Responsive Environments

Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.

#### Overview

We proactively create the space and time to review feedback and information gathered from children, families, staff, and volunteers, as well as performance data to identify and address systemic issues. Ensuring children's safety as a core priority means building an organisational culture that is responsive to challenges and new situations and is willing to learn and change.

#### Strategic Governance

PSSO tracks key safeguarding performance indicators via quarterly and annual reports to the Executive Leadership of CEDC and the Board of Governance. Reports include but are not limited to.

#### Operational

- Data informed practice
- Investigations
- Scheduled policy reviews
- Emergent safeguarding responses
- Governance
- Compliance
- Risk Management
- Leadership accountability
- Quality assurance
- Systems

- Unified record keeping and data systems
- Collaborative partnerships
- Integrated safeguarding infrastructure

#### Student Protection Continuous Improvement Audit

As part of the NSSAB five-year cyclic review, each school undergoes a comprehensive Student Protection Continuous Improvement Audit. This process complements the regular quarterly and annual reviews of school reporting and consultation data. Conducting these audits is critical to ensuring ongoing compliance with legislative requirements, maintaining best practice standards, and fostering a safe and supportive environment for all students.

#### Annual Review

An annual review of the Safeguarding Framework is also undertaken including the consideration of:

- Whether policies and/or procedures were followed in responding to safeguarding matters
- Whether any incidents occurred relating to children and young people
- The actual processes used to manage incidents



- A review after an incident where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm or a breach of the strategy has occurred
- The effectiveness of the policies and procedures in preventing or minimising harm to children and young people



# Standard 10: Policy and procedures

## Cultural Safety Framework

Cultural Humility	Reflexivity	Two-way Learning
Social & Emotional Wellbeing	High Expectation Relationships	Intentional Language/Communication
Culturally Responsive Environments		

## Policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children

### Overview

Staff at all levels of our organisation understand their individual responsibility to ensure transparency of all aspects of service delivery in a child safe organisation.

### Purpose

The policy and procedure documents:

#### Affirm our commitment

Clearly state that the dignity and safety of every child is paramount, reflecting Gospel values and Catholic Social Teaching.

#### Define Standards and Expectations

Outline the responsibilities of all staff, volunteers, and contractors in promoting child safety, including mandatory compliance with the Code of Conduct and safeguarding obligations.

#### Provide Clear Guidance

Detail processes for identifying, responding to, and reporting concerns or allegations of harm, ensuring alignment with legislative requirements and organisational expectations.

#### Embed Preventative Measures

Include risk assessment strategies, safe recruitment practices, and ongoing training to prevent harm and foster a culture of vigilance.

#### Ensure Transparency and Accountability

Document how decisions are made, actions are recorded, and compliance is monitored, reinforcing trust and confidence in our safeguarding practices.

### Consequences for Non-Adherence to Policies and Procedures

Failure to comply with CEDC policies and procedures can result in:

- Internal disciplinary action
- Mandatory reporting to regulatory bodies (e.g., Queensland College of Teachers, QFCC, Blue Card Services) if the breach involves harm or risk to a child.
- Legal consequences under the
  - Child Protection Act 1999
  - Child Protection Regulation 2023
  - Criminal Code 1899
  - Child Safe Organisations Act 2024
  - Education (General Provisions) Act 2006
  - Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017
  - Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017
  - Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017



- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000
- Impact on employment status, including suspension or termination for serious breaches.
- Non-compliance may also trigger obligations under the Reportable Conduct Scheme (effective 1 July 2026), requiring investigation and reporting of staff misconduct involving children.

### **Additional staff resources**

CEDC has available policies, processes, and resources to support the pastoral care and wellbeing of students. These are readily accessible to employees on CEDC Intranet, Veritas.

Example policies and processes include, but not limited to:

- Alcohol – Use in schools and on school related activities
- Critical Incidents and Emergency Planning
- Drugs (illicit and unsanctioned substances) in Catholic schools
- First Aid and Infection Control
- Privacy Policy
- Privacy Act – Data Breach Protocols
- Restrictive Practices Policy and Procedures
- Student Attendance
- School Student Supervision
- Student Wellbeing policy
- Students – use of information and communication technologies including social media
- Transport of children

