

Policy Statement

St Peters Lutheran College (the College) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of students enrolled at the school. In accordance with sections 171 and 172 of the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)*, St Peters Lutheran College is dedicated to eliminating and minimising risks to child safety through this Strategy which includes and refers to various other policies and procedures to effectively ensure the safety and wellbeing of children in the school's care.

This Child Risk Management Strategy is evidence of St Peters Lutheran College commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm in fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1) (a) of the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011 (Qld)*.

Implementation

In practice, St Peters Lutheran College's commitment to acting in accordance to the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act ("the Act")* to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students means that it will implement the measures outlined below in points 1 – 8.

1. Code of Conduct

At St Peters Lutheran College, we expect our employees to conduct themselves as follows:

College employees are expected to always behave in ways that promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people. They must actively seek to prevent harm to children and young people, and to support those who have been harmed.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Employees should avoid situations where they are alone in an enclosed space with a student.
- When physical contact with a student is a necessary part of the teaching/learning experience, employees must exercise caution to ensure that the contact is appropriate and acceptable. Employees must always advise the student of what they intend doing and seek their consent.
- Employees must not develop a relationship with any student that is, or that can be interpreted as having a personal rather than a professional interest in a student.
- Employees must not have a romantic or sexual relationship with a student.

This commitment is evidence of St Peters Lutheran College's fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1) (b) of the Regulation.

2. Recruitment, Selection, Training and Management Procedures

St Peters Lutheran College is committed to recruiting, selecting, training and managing employees in such a way that limits risks to children. In particular, St Peters Lutheran College will:

- Ensure that its recruitment and selection procedures act to reduce the risk of harm to children from employees via:
 - Accurate position descriptions, including whether the successful applicant must be a teacher registered with the Queensland College of Teachers (who has been subject to relevant police and other safety checks), ensure the successful applicant has or will apply for a Working with Children - Blue Card, the responsibilities and supervision associated with the position, the nature and environment of the service provided to children, and the experience and qualifications required by the successful applicant.
 - Advertising the position with a clear statement about the school's commitment to safe and supportive work practices and identifying that candidates will be subject to a teacher registration check or Blue Card screening, a police check, referee checks, identification verification and the requirement to disclose any information to the candidates' eligibility to engage in activities including young people.
 - A selection process that includes assessing the application via an interview process and referee and other checks (as identified above) based on the accurate position description
 - A probationary period of employment, which allows the school to further assess the suitability of the new employee and to act as a check on the selection process.

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- Ensure that its training and management procedures act to reduce the risk of harm to children from employees via:
 - Management processes that are consistent, fair and supportive
 - Performance management processes to help employees to improve their performance in a positive manner
 - Supportive processes for staff when they are experiencing challenges, such as mentoring, mediation, conflict resolution, coaching, additional training, and external support and counselling services
 - An induction program which thoroughly addresses the school's policies and procedures, particularly its expectations regarding child risk management and to assist employees to understand their role in providing a safe and supportive environment for children.
 - Training new and existing staff on an ongoing basis to enhance skills and knowledge and to reduce exposure to risks as follows:
 - The school's policies and procedures
 - Identifying, assessing and minimising risks to children
 - Handling a disclosure or suspicion of harm to a child
 - Keeping a record of the training provided to employees
 - Exit interviews to assist the school to identify broader issues of concern that may impact on the safety and wellbeing of children at the school

This commitment is evidence of St Peters Lutheran College's fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1) (c) of the Regulation.

3. Handling Disclosures or Suspicions of Harm

Any of the types of concerns or reports below should be reported and managed under the St Peters Lutheran College Child Protection Policy and Procedures, as follows:

- All staff with concerns about sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse
- Teachers with concerns of sexual or physical abuse
- All staff who have received a report of inappropriate behaviour by another staff member.

In accordance with the *Child Protection Act 1999*, if a staff member, teaching or non-teaching, is aware or reasonably suspects harm has been caused to a student under 18 years and the harm has not been reported under the Child Protection Policy, the staff member must report the harm in writing to the Chief Executive of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, then advise the Head of College or his/her delegate. The types of harm reported may include emotional or psychological abuse or neglect or sexual exploitation.

If the Head of College is aware or reasonably suspects harm has been caused and that the student is in need of protection, the Head of College must report the harm or suspected harm to the Queensland Police and the Chief Executive of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (or other department administering the *Child Protection Act 1999*). In assessing whether a student is in need of protection, the Head of College will consider the "Significant Harm Test" and the "Parent Willing and Able Test" as detailed in the St Peters Lutheran College Child Protection Policy and Procedures, as well as utilise the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services' Child Protection Guide resource.

Please refer to the Independent Schools Queensland's Child Protection Decision Support Trees for information of the process for reporting all types of harm, including sexual abuse.

To report any type of harm, all staff members should use the Child Protection Policy – Reporting Suspected Harm form – A copy of which is found on the portal. Furthermore, and in accordance with section 76 of the *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005*, the Head of College will report to the Queensland College of Teachers any investigations into allegations of harm caused, or likely to be caused, to a child because of the conduct of a relevant teacher at the College.

This commitment is evidence of St Peters Lutheran College's fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1) (d) of the regulation.

4. Managing Breaches of this Child Risk Management Strategy

St Peters Lutheran College is committed to appropriately managing breaches of this Child Risk Management Strategy in accordance with its other relevant policies as appropriate in the circumstances, such as its Child Protection Policy and Procedure, Code of Conduct, Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedures and Enterprise Bargaining Agreement or equivalent, and this is evidence of fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1) (e) of the Regulation.

5. Implementing and Reviewing the Child Risk Management Strategy

This Strategy in its entirety and its related policies and procedures are evidence of fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1) (f) (i) of the Regulation relating to implementation. The introduction to this Child Risk Management and the “Compliance and Monitoring” section below states that St Peters Lutheran College is committed to annually reviewing its Strategy and this being evidence of fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1) (f) (i) of the Regulation for review.

6. Blue Card Policies and Procedures

St Peters Lutheran College is committed to acting in accordance with chapter 8 of the Act relating to the screening of employees in such a way that limits risks to children. In particular, St Peters Lutheran College will:

- Require current employees, volunteers, trainee students and school board members to apply for a Blue Card or Exemption Notice, and check the validity and appropriateness of any currently held notices as appropriate, in accordance with St Peters Lutheran College’s position description and the Act.
- Complete an *Authorisation to confirm a valid card* application
- Submit a *Change in police notification* form when notified by employee that such a change has occurred
- Not allow a person to continue to work with children if their Blue Card or Exemption Notice is cancelled or suspended or a negative notice is received after a change of police information
- Submit a *No longer with organisation* form when appropriate
- Appoint a school contact person who will be responsible for managing the screening process and all related documentation and records
- Keep written records of all the above actions, decisions and outcomes, including the dates of expiry of Blue Cards and Exemption Notices
- ensure that all information in relation to Blue Cards and Exemption Notices is kept confidential
- Act to remind employees to keep their Blue Card or Exemption Notice up to date.

This commitment is evidence of St Peters Lutheran College’s fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1) (f) (ii) of the Regulation.

7. High Risk Management Plans

St Peters Lutheran College is committed to identifying risks, eliminating and minimising risks and the monitoring of risk to the safety of children on an ongoing basis. St Peters Lutheran College will utilise various risk management tools to assist in this process and will keep appropriate records of decisions made and actions taken in relation to risks to children.

This commitment is evidence of St Peters Lutheran College’s fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1) (g) of the Regulation.

8. Strategies of Communication and Support

St Peters Lutheran College’s commitment to making this Child Risk Management Strategy available to students, parents and employees via its enrolment package, employee handbook and the school’s website is evidence of fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(h)(i) of the Regulation.

St Peters Lutheran College is committed to training employees in relation to risks to children and will conduct this training regularly via annual formal training events, informal updates at staff meetings and regular discussions between managers and their staff, and this is evidence of fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(h)(ii) of the Regulation.

9. Responsibilities

St Peters Lutheran College is responsible for developing and implementing this Child Risk Management Strategy and related policies and procedures to ensure it fulfils its obligations.

All employees at St Peters Lutheran College are responsible for acting in compliance with this Child Risk Management Strategy and related policies and procedures.

10. Compliance and Monitoring

St Peters Lutheran College is committed to the annual review of this Strategy. St Peters Lutheran College will also record, monitor and report to College Council, Senior Leadership Team and others as appropriate at the school regarding any breaches of the Strategy.

In addition, St Peters Lutheran College is committed to other various compliance and monitoring arrangements made under relevant policies and procedures.

11. Helpful Links

- Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services' [Child Protection Guide](#) resource
- Independent Schools Queensland's [Child Protection Decision Support Trees](#)