# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY – (QLD)

Our Service is committed to providing a child-safe environment where children's safety and well-being are supported and children feel respected, valued, and encouraged to reach their full potential. Our Service embeds the **10 Child Safe Standards** and the **Universal Principle** for creating culturally safe environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families. (Effective 1 January 2026). Our Service promotes a culture of safety and well-being to minimise the risk of child abuse or harm to children whilst promoting children's sense of security and belonging. We will ensure all employees and volunteers understand the meaning, importance, and benefits of providing a child-safe environment and, critically, understand their obligations and requirements as mandatory reporters. Our Service adheres to and aligns with legislative requirements related to taking images or videos of children.

**NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)**

| **QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY** | | |
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| 2.2 | Safety | Each child is respected. |
| 2.2.1 | Supervision | At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard. |
| 2.2.2 | Incident and emergency management | Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented. |
| 2.2.3 | Child Safety and Protection | Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities regarding child safety, including the need to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect |

| **EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS** | |
|---|---|
| S. 2A | Paramount consideration |
| S. 4 | How functions to be exercised |
| S. 5 | Meaning of serious incident |
| S. 162A | Child protection training |
| S. 162B | Child safety |
| S. 165 | Offence to inadequately supervise children |
| S. 166 | Offence to use inappropriate discipline |
| S.166A | Offence relating to inappropriate conduct |
| S. 167 | Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazard |
| S. 174 | Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority |

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|---|---|
| S. 175 | Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents |
| PART 6A | Devices in education and care services |
| S. 188 | Offence to engage person to whom prohibition notice applies |
| S. 269B | National Early Childhood Worker Register |
| S. 269E | Approved provider must give information to the National Authority for the National Early Childhood Worker Register |
| 12 | Meaning of serious incident |
| 84 | Awareness of child protection law |
| 86 | Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness |
| 87 | Incident, injury, trauma and illness record |
| 115 | Premises designed to facilitate supervision |
| 145 | Staff records |
| 149 | Volunteers and students |
| 155 | Interactions with children |
| 168 | Education and care service must have policies and procedures |
| 170 | Policies and procedures to be followed |
| 175 | Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority |
| 176 | Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority |
| 181 | Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider |

| **ADVENTIST IDENTITY EARLY CHILDHOOD STANDARDS** | | |
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| 2.3 | Promote and support children to honour Jesus by taking care of their health, safety, and wellbeing | Support children's faith development in a holistic, respectful, safe, and healthy environment. |
| | | Teach children that they are created by God as unique and valued individuals and help them recognise and practice safe and healthy behaviours. |
| | | Share with children that Jesus loves them and will always be with them. |
| | | Nurture children's well-being and support personal care routines. |

## LEGISLATION

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| *Child Protection Act 1999* | Education and Care Services Act 2013 (ECS Act) |
| *Child Safe Organisations Act* | *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* |

## RELATED POLICIES

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|---|---|
| Behaviour Guidance Policy<br>Child Safe Environment Policy<br>Code of Conduct Policy<br>Dealing with Complaints Policy<br>Family Communication Policy<br>Health and Safety Policy<br>Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy<br>Nappy Change and Toileting Policy<br>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy<br>Protected Disclosures (Whistleblower) Policy | Recruitment Policy<br>Respect for Children Policy<br>Responsible Person Policy<br>Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy<br>Staffing Arrangements Policy<br>Student, Volunteer and Visitors Policy<br>Supervision Policy<br>Work Health and Safety Policy |

## PURPOSE

All educators, staff, and volunteers are committed to identifying possible risks and significant risks of harm to children and young people at the Service. We comprehend our duty of care responsibilities to protect children from all types of abuse and neglect and will always adhere to our moral and legislative obligations. We believe children's safety is the paramount consideration for early childhood professionals and embed child safety in our daily practices, policies, and procedures. Our Service ensures that child safety, wellbeing and best interests take priority over all other considerations, including financial interests or other obligations of management, and are embedded in our daily practices, policies and procedures.

We aim to implement effective strategies to assist in ensuring the safety and well-being of all children. Our Service will act in the best interest of each child, assisting them to develop to their full potential in a secure and child-safe environment.

***Keeping children safe: a shared responsibility.***

## SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers, and visitors of the Service.

**DEFINITIONS** for additional definitions and key terms used within this policy, refer to *Key Terms – Policies and Procedures*.

**Inappropriate conduct** to a child is any behaviour that a reasonable person would consider to be inappropriate in an education and care service, taking into account the child's age, development, safety, wellbeing and the context of the interaction.

**Mandatory Reporting** Is the legislative requirement for selected classes of people to report suspected child abuse and neglect to government authorities. In Queensland, mandatory reporting is regulated by the *Child Protection Act 1999.*

**Mandatory Reporters -** Mandatory reporters in Queensland are people who deliver the following services, wholly or partly, to children as part of their paid or professional work:

- teachers
- doctors

- registered nurses
- police officers with child protection responsibilities
- a person performing a child advocate function under the Public Guardian Act 2014
- early childhood education and care professionals.

All staff have a responsibility to recognise and respond to concerns for safety, welfare, and the well-being of children and young people, and to report these concerns to management and Child Safety.

## TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The QLD Government identifies the following types of abuse and neglect:

- physical
- sexual
- emotional
- neglect.

There are common physical and behavioural signs that may indicate abuse or neglect. The presence of one of these signs does not necessarily mean abuse or neglect. Behavioural or physical signs that assist in recognising harm to children are known as indicators.

One indicator on its own may not imply abuse or neglect. However, a single indicator can be as important as the presence of several indicators. Each indicator needs to be deliberated in the perspective of other indicators and the child's circumstances. A child's behaviour is likely to be affected if he/she is under stress. There can be many causes of stress, and it is important to find out specifically what is causing the stress. Abuse and neglect can be single incidents or ongoing and may be intentional or unintentional. The QLD Government provides definitions and physical indicators: **Types of child abuse**

## CHILD PROTECTION GUIDE

Professionals who encounter concerns related to possible abuse or neglect of children will use the online **Child Protection Guide** (CPG) to assist in making decisions about where to report or refer their concerns.
The online Child Protection Guide is a tool to assist professionals' decision-making if concerns arise about a child who appears:

- to have experienced or is likely to experience significant harm AND
- may not have a parent willing and able to protect them from harm.

The CPG will help professionals decide whether to report to the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women (Child Safety) or refer to other service providers, to help families receive appropriate supports.

## BLUE CARD

Queensland's Working with Children Check is administered by the Blue Card Services. Blue Card Services monitors and audits service providers to ensure compliance, including risk management, to ensure that appropriate safeguards are implemented and maintained to protect children from harm. Our Service will not

employ or engage a person who does not hold a valid Blue Card. Our Service will register with Blue Card Services and verify all staff, educator, students and volunteer Working with Children Checks in accordance with the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*.

Any interstate worker must hold a WWCC that is recognised under the national mutual recognition arrangements. The National Continuous Checking Capability (NCCC) will be used to support real-time monitoring of worker criminal history across all jurisdictions.

The regulatory authority and Blue Card Services may immediately suspend a person's WWCC if there is any credible information suggesting risk.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service strongly opposes any type of abuse against a child and endorses high-quality practices concerning protecting children. We have policies and procedures in place that demonstrate our aim and willingness to keep children and young people safe in accordance with the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (the Act) and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2020, and the Child Safe Organisations Act.

Educators and staff have an important role to support children and young people and to identify concerns that may jeopardise their safety, welfare, or wellbeing, including:

- a duty of care to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent harm to children
- obligations are met under child protection legislation
- obligations are met under work, health, and safety legislation
- Our Service promotes a culture of child safety and wellbeing within the Service. The approved provider, staff, educators, volunteers and students will be required to complete mandatory National Child Safety Training for the Early Childhood Education and Care Sector. This applies to any person working in the Service whether or not they work directly with children.
- Child Safety Training will be recorded on *the Training Register* and refresher training to be completed every 2 years. Staff, educators, students and volunteers must demonstrate an understanding of the role of mandatory reporter, including when a report must be made and how to make a report
- Our Service will develop and maintain a *Child Protection Concerns Register* for recording child protection concerns. The register will include information to record all concerns, disclosures, or suspicions of child abuse or neglect. The register ensures concerns are documented, monitored, and followed up, the register is kept confidential, stored securely, and accessible only to authorised personnel.

## MAKING A REPORT/NOTIFICATION

### The Approved Provider/Management/Nominated Supervisor will:

Dial **000** if a child is at immediate risk and Police or medical assistance is required.

- report all instances (alleged or witnessed) of child abuse, including assault or sexual abuse (including grooming) to QLD Police within 24 hours
- notify Queensland Government, Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services, and Child Safety

**DFSDC Child Safety** if there is a reasonable suspicion that a child has suffered, is suffering, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse within 24 hours

- notify through the QLD Department of Education NQA-ITS (within 24 hours) of any incident or allegation where it is reasonably believed that physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring while the child is being educated and cared for by the Service
- notify the QLD Department of Education through the NQA-ITS (within 24 hours) of:
  - any incident or allegation where it is reasonably believed that physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring while the child is being educated and cared for by the Service
  - any complaints alleging that a serious incident has occurred or is occurring at the Service
  - a serious incident, which may include physical or sexual abuse where emergency services attended the Service
  - any allegation (observed or suspected or disclosures) that a staff member or volunteer is
  - engaging or has engaged in appropriate conduct to a child
  - any change to a person's WWCC or any relevant risk information related to child safety
- ensure documentation is completed to assist in making reports to relevant authorities including an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record*
- comply with legislation for the Reportable Scheme and notify the Queensland Family and Child Commission- QFCC within 24 hours (Reportable conduct scheme in QLD will commence from 1 July 2026- Queensland Family and Child Commission- QFCC)
- develop a 24-hour reporting procedure to ensure that any report made to the approved provider or nominated supervisor, which is deemed notifiable to the regulatory authority, is submitted within the required 24-hour timeframe, including when incidents occur, or are reported, outside of operational hours (e.g. weekends or public holidays).

### Educators will:

- contact the police on **000** if there is an immediate danger to a child and intervene if it is safe to do so
- respect what a child discloses, taking it seriously and following up on their concerns through the appropriate channels
- be aware of the requirement to report a concern or have a suspicion that a child is at risk of abuse, harm, neglect, or ill-treatment to the approved provider or nominated supervisor
- report all instances (alleged or witnessed) of child abuse, including assault or sexual abuse (including grooming) to QLD Police and QLD Department of Education within 24 hours
- comprehend their obligations as mandatory reporters and their requirement to report any situation where they believe, on reasonable grounds, that a child is at risk of significant harm to **Child Safety Services**
- prepare accurate records recording exactly what happened, conversations that took place, and what was observed to pass on to the relevant authorities to assist with any investigation
- NOT investigate suspicion of abuse or neglect, but collect only enough information to substantiate concerns and pass on to Child Safety Services or the appropriate authority

- identify and report any concerns and allegations of reportable conduct involving a staff member, volunteer, or contractor to the approved provider within 24hours (Reportable conduct scheme in QLD will commence from 1 July 2026-**Queensland Family and Child Commission- QFCC)**
- understand that allegations of abuse or suspected abuse against them are treated in the same way as allegations of abuse against other people
- identify and report any concerns and allegations of inappropriate conduct (observed or suspected or disclosures) by other staff members, volunteers or students to the approved provider and QLD Department of Education within 24 hours
- refer families to appropriate agencies where concerns of harm do not meet the threshold of significant harm. These services may be located through **Family and Child Connect.** Family consent will be sought before making referrals.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

It is important that any notification remains confidential, as it is vitally important to remember that no confirmation of any allegation can be made until the matter is investigated. The individual who makes the notification should not inform the suspected perpetrator (if known) nor attempt to investigate any allegation themselves. This ensures the matter can be investigated without contamination of evidence or pre-rehearsed by the appropriate authorities. It also minimises the risk of retaliation on the child for disclosing.

## PROTECTION FOR REPORTERS

All reporters are protected against retribution for making or proposing to make a report under amendments to the *Child Protection Act 1999,* effective 31 August 2020. The identity of the reporter is protected by law from being disclosed, except in certain exceptional circumstances. Provided the report is made in good faith:

- the report will not breach standards of professional conduct of conduct
- the report cannot lead to defamation and civil, or criminal liability
- the report is not admissible in any proceedings as evidence against the person who made the report
- a person cannot be compelled by a court to provide the report or disclose its contents
- the identity of the person making the report is protected.

A report is also an exempt document under the *Freedom of Information Act* 1989.

These protections are outlined within our *Protected Disclosures (Whistleblower) Policy,* which supports and protects individuals who report concerns in good faith about child safety, breaches of the National Law, or Service operations.

## SHARING OF INFORMATION

Sharing information is a key part of ensuring that vulnerable children are protected and supported. The *Child Protection Act 1999* sets out the legal framework for reporting concerns about children to Child Safety and referring families to Family and Child Connect and support services, including intensive family support services. It outlines information sharing rights and responsibilities between professionals, Child Safety, and services that support children and families.

Sharing concerns and information about a family with the right service enables a comprehensive assessment, informs decision-making, and leads to better outcomes that ensure the child's safety. Sharing information can also facilitate a coordinated multi-agency response to families with multiple or complex needs.

Where possible, you should obtain a family's consent to share information. You do not need written consent to share information. A verbal agreement or acknowledgment is sufficient. It is advisable to document the conversation for your records.

The legislative provision that enables direct referrals without consent allows early support to be offered to the family before problems escalate and require statutory intervention. Sharing information takes precedence over a parent's right to confidentiality or privacy because the safety, welfare, and well-being of the child are paramount.

### The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor and Management will ensure:

- that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations are met and child's safety and wellbeing are prioritised at all times
- educators, staff, students and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure and are advised on how and where the policy can be accessed
- families are aware of this *Child Protection Policy* and procedure and are advised on how and where the policy can be accessed
- all children being educated and care for by the Service are adequately supervised (Sec. 165)
- staff, student and volunteer records are maintained as per the *Record Keeping and Retention Policy* and entered into the National Early Childhood Worker Register
- to cooperate with the QLD Department of Education and comply with any directions or orders issued by the regulatory authority regarding a show cause, suspension or supervision notice provided to a student, volunteer or visitor, including removing the person from engagement with children immediately
- a *Child Protection Risk Management Plan* is completed and reviewed annually
- a *Child Protection Concerns Register* is completed to record child protection concerns (best practice)
- a range of strategies are used to provide effective supervision, including using attendance records to ensure children are accounted for (head counts)
- they do not subject a child to inappropriate conduct and ensure that no child being educated and cared for by the Service is subjected to inappropriate conduct by any staff member, educator or volunteer
- any allegations, concerns or suspicions of inappropriate conduct are investigated and reported to the regulatory authority in accordance with the *Management of Inappropriate Conduct Procedure*
- staff, educators, volunteers, students and visitors have knowledge of and adhere to legislative requirements and not use, or have access to, any personal electronic devices, including mobile phones or smart watches used to take images or videos when educating and caring for children at the Service

- staff and educators only use electronic devices supplied by the Service for taking images or videos of children enrolled at the Service
- that the premises, including toilets and nappy change facilities are designed and maintained to facilitate supervision of children whilst maintaining their rights and dignity
- students, volunteers and visitors are never left alone with a child whilst at the Service under any circumstance
- educators and staff are provided with training and ongoing supervision to promote a child safe culture and ensure they understand that *child safety is everyone's responsibility*, and they adhere to the 10 Child Safe Standards
- any nominated supervisor or responsible person in day-to-day charge of the Service has successfully completed a course in child protection approved by the regulatory authority
- all educators, staff, volunteers and students have completed mandatory National Child Safety Training
- a thorough recruitment process is implemented to employ people who are committed to children's safety and ensure their views align with the Service's Code of Conduct, Statement of Philosophy and child safety policies and procedures (see *Recruitment Policy*)
- the recruitment process includes pre-employment screening, reference checks and prohibition checks
- all prospective applicants are required to complete a prohibition notice declaration to acknowledge they do not hold any prohibition notices that would prevent them from working with children
- the approved provider registers with Blue Card Services, validates and links each staff, educator, volunteers and students Blue Card in accordance with the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* BEFORE the person begins working or interacting with children
- a WWCC register for all staff, volunteers and students is kept and updated of each Blue Card number, expiry date and status (current/suspended/cancelled) and staff and educators are reminded to renew their Blue Card at least 3 months prior to expiry
- a person is immediately removed from child-related work if their WWCC is suspended, cancelled or under reassessment
- all WWCC applicants engaged at the Service are aware that false or misleading information can result in cancellation of their WWCC and prosecution
- to emphasise child safety throughout the Service with regular discussions at team meetings and with children and families (NQF Safe Culture Guide (2025)
- to regularly check if staff understand child safety policies and procedures via quizzes/surveys (NQF Safe Culture Guide 2025)
- educators and staff are provided with a reporting procedure and professional standards to safeguard children and protect the integrity of educators, staff and volunteers
- *a Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy* is developed to identify potential risk of harm to children and young people

- all educators and staff are aware of their commitment to the *Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy*
- records of abuse or suspected abuse are kept in line with our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*
- records relating to child sexual abuse that has or is alleged to have occurred are kept for at least 45 years (recommendation not mandatory)
- ensure our complaint handling processes are child-focused providing support and guidance for children to know who to talk to if they are feeling unsafe (*See Dealing with Complaints Policy*)
- ensure following any critical incident, children, staff and families are provided with access to support they may need- counselling, debriefing, access to community services
- ensure critical reflection on the incident is conducted with staff and educators to inform required changes to policy, procedures, practices (including supervision) and risk assessments

### All employees, volunteers, and students are:

- provided with a copy of the current *Child Protection, Child Safe Environment, Code of*
- *Conduct and Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policies*
- required to participate in a comprehensive induction and orientation program, including an understanding of child protection law
- provided with access to all relevant legislation, regulations, standards, and other resources to help meet their mandatory reporting obligations
- supported to a create and maintain a child safe culture within the Service by complying with the Child Safe Standards
- provided with support to adhere to a zero-tolerance stance against child abuse
- provided with regular up-to-date knowledge and training on how to identify, understand, report, and respond to child maltreatment, abuse, and harm, including the Reportable Conduct Scheme
- aware of their mandatory reporting obligations and responsibilities
- aware that neglecting to report a belief of a child sexual offence may be deemed a criminal offence
- provided with regular training and resources about the different ways children may express concerns, distress, and disclose harm, as well as the process for responding to disclosures from children- including a complaint that alleges a child is exhibiting sexual behaviours that may be harmful to the child or another child (ACECQA 2023)
- provided with regular training and resources about trauma-informed care, effective supervision and monitoring, appropriate and inappropriate discipline, and online abuse
- required to participate in regular performance reviews
- aware of appropriate positive and consistent approaches to guide behaviour and ensure no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances (Sec. 166)
- aware that it is an offence to subject a child to inappropriate conduct which includes behaviour that is inconsistent with professional standards; is likely to cause emotional, psychological or physical harm to children or has violent or sexual connotations

- aware that if they observe, suspect or receive any allegations or disclosures that a staff member, or volunteer is engaging or has engaged in inappropriate conduct, they must notify the regulatory authority, approved provider and nominated supervisor within 24 hours
- aware of our Service policy and associated procedures for the safe use of digital technologies and online environments.

### Educators and Staff will:

- adhere to the Service's policies and procedures
- promote the welfare, safety, and well-being of children at the Service by creating and maintaining a child-safe environment for all children and adhering to the 10 Child Safe Standards
- foster a culture of openness, respect, and cultural safety where children and young people feel safe to disclose risk of harm to children or report abuse
- participate in a comprehensive induction and orientation program, including an understanding of child protection law
- provide valid Blue Card details during their employment and engagement at the service
- advise the approved provider of any circumstances that may affect their Blue Card clearance
- not use, or have access to, any personal electronic devices, including mobile phones or smart watches used to take images or video of children at the Service
- complete mandatory national child safety training
- implement consistent, appropriate interactions with children
- ensure no child is subjected to inappropriate conduct or discipline
- understand their legal responsibilities to report any allegations or disclosures that a staff member or volunteer is engaging or has engaged in inappropriate conduct to notify the QLD Department of Education, approved provider and nominated supervisor within 24 hours
- allow children to be part of decision-making processes where appropriate
- provide ongoing monitoring and follow-up for children's health and wellbeing.

### Students/Volunteers/Visitors will:

- adhere to the Service's policies and procedures
- participate in a comprehensive induction and orientation program, including an understanding of child protection law
- provide a child safe environment for all children
- ensure no child is subjected to inappropriate conduct or inappropriate discipline
- provide valid Blue Card clearance details prior to their engagement at the Service
- advise the approved provider of any circumstances that may affect their Blue Card status
- promote the welfare, safety, and wellbeing of children at the Service, fostering a child safe culture
- complete mandatory national child safety training
- not use, or have access to, any personal electronic devices, including mobile phones or smart watches used to take images or video of children at the Service

- report any concern or suspicion that a child is at risk of abuse, harm, neglect or ill-treatment to the approved provider or nominated supervisor (within 24 hours)
- report all instances (alleged or witnessed) of child abuse, including assault or sexual abuse (including grooming) by a staff member or other volunteer to QLD Police and the QLD Department of Education within 24 hours
- identify and report any concerns around staff, educator or volunteer behaviour or inappropriate conduct to the approved provider and the QLD Department of Education as soon as practicable, within 24 hours
- allow children to be part of decision-making processes where appropriate.

## DOCUMENTING A DISCLOSURE

A disclosure of harm emerges when someone, including a child, tells you about harm that has happened or is likely to happen. When a child discloses that he or she has been abused, it is an opportunity for an adult to provide immediate support and comfort and to assist in protecting the child from the abuse. It is also a chance to help the child connect to professional services that can keep them safe, provide support, and facilitate their recovery from trauma. Disclosure is about seeking support, and your response can have a great impact on the child or young person's ability to seek further help and recover from the trauma.

### When receiving a disclosure of harm, the person receiving the disclosure will:

- give the child or young person their full attention
- remain calm and find a place to talk where you can give the child your full attention (ask the child or young person if you can move to a place where you can hear them properly)
- not make promises that can't be kept. For example, never promise that you will not tell anyone else
- honestly tell the child or young person what you plan to do next
- tell the child/person they have done the right thing in revealing the information, but that they'll need to tell someone who can help keep the child safe
- only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter because probing questions could cause distress, confusion, and interfere with any later enquiries
- let the child or young person take his or her time
- let the child or young person use his or her own words
- tell the child or young person that the abuse or maltreatment is not their fault
- support culturally and linguistically diverse children and children with additional needs to express themselves in the child's preferred way of communicating (NQF Safe Culture Guide)
- not attempt to conduct their own investigation or mediate an outcome between the parties involved
- not confront the perpetrator
- document as soon as possible so the details are accurately captured, including:
  - time, date, and place of the disclosure
  - '*word for word*' what happened and what was said, including anything they (the staff member/educator) said and any actions that have been taken
  - date of report and signature.

Source: *Responding to children and young people's disclosures of* abuse (2025). Australian Institute of Family Studies

## BREACH OF CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

A breach is any action or inaction by any individual within the Service, including children and young people, that fails to comply with any part of the policy. All educators, students, volunteers and staff working with children are mandatory reporters under the *Child Protection Act 1999* and have a duty of care to support and protect children. The rights and best interests of children are paramount, and breaches will be treated as serious.

Any allegations of criminal offences against children must be reported to the Police immediately. Failure to report child sexual abuse to the police is a criminal offence. Any person who reports a breach or concern in good faith, will be protected against retaliation under the *Protected Disclosures (Whistle Blower) Policy.*
All breaches will be recorded, and outcomes documented, in accordance with record-keeping requirements. A breach may include (but is not limited to):

- failure to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or risk of harm
- engaging in or failing to prevent inappropriate conduct or inappropriate discipline to a child
- breaching confidentiality about a child protection matter
- failing to maintain a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) (Blue Card)
- not following the Service's Code of Conduct, supervision or reporting procedures
- any action or inaction that places a child at risk of harm.

## MANAGING A BREACH IN CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Management will investigate any breaches to this policy in a fair, unbiased, and supportive manner by:

- liaising with the Child Safety and QLD Department of Education for appropriate processes to ensure the chain of evidence is not destroyed or compromised
- not undertaking and investigating the allegation whilst the Child Safety, Safety and QLD Department of Education or the Police are investigating
- following directions from the Child Safety, QLD Department of Education or Police, which may include removal of the educator or staff member (who is the subject of allegations) immediately from a role with contact with children or young people until authorities conclude their investigation
- displaying the Service's compliance history and any compliance actions that are the subject of review by the regulatory authority for families to view

Management may investigate if Child Safety or the Police are not conducting their own investigation, or if their action has concluded.

### Management will:

- give the educator, staff member, student, or volunteer the opportunity to provide their version of events
- document the details of the breach, including the versions of all parties
- record the outcome clearly and without bias
- ensure the matters concerning the breach are kept confidential
- reach a decision based on discussion and consideration of all evidence.

## OUTCOME OF A BREACH IN CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Staff members or educators who fail to adhere to this policy may be in breach of their terms of employment. Visitors or volunteers who fail to comply with this policy may face termination of their engagement. Depending on the nature of the breach, outcomes may include:

- disciplinary procedures if required, including dismissal of employment
- emphasising the relevant element of the child protection policy and procedure not followed
- providing closer supervision
- providing further education and training
- providing mediation between those involved in the incident (where appropriate)
- reviewing current policies and procedures and developing new policies and procedures if necessary
- external regulatory action- including compliance history, fines, suspension of rating or Service closure.

## EDUCATING CHILDREN ABOUT PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOUR

Our program will educate and support children to learn about their rights and encourage them to express their views and feelings. Children will learn:

- about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in both physical and online environments
- about what is appropriate and inappropriate contact at an age-appropriate level, and understanding
- about body safety, using correct names of private body parts to help recognise inappropriate touches and respect for personal space
- about their right to feel safe at all times
- to say '*no*' to anything that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable
- about how to use their knowledge and understanding to feel safe
- to identify feelings that they do not feel safe
- help them identify trusted educators, adults, and friends
- the difference between 'good' and 'bad' secrets
- that there is no secret or story that cannot be shared with someone they trust
- that educators are available for them if they have any concerns
- to tell educators of any suspicious activities or people
- to recognise and express their feelings verbally and non-verbally
- that they can choose to change the way they are feeling.

## RESOURCES FOR INDICATORS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Child Safe Organisations
Kids Helpline
Lifeline
NAPCAN- Prevent Child Abuse & Neglect
Queensland Government- Child Safety Practice Manual
Raising children. Safeguarding children and child sexual abuse.

## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Child Protection Policy* will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management, and notification of any change to policies will be made to families within 14 days. Our policy, procedures and practices will be critically examined regularly to ensure ongoing improvement to maintain and foster a child safe environment and child safe culture within our Service.

## RELATED RESOURCES

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| Child Protection Concerns Register<br>Child Protection Educational Program Risk Assessment<br>Child Protection Notification Procedure<br>Child Protection Notification Record | Child Protection Report Form<br>Child Protection Risk Management Plan<br>Inappropriate Conduct Risk Management Plan<br>Management of Inappropriate Conduct Procedure |

## SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). *Embedding the National Child Safe Principles*
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## REVIEW

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| POLICY REVIEWED BY | KAREN PETRIE | POSITION | PROJECT OFFICER EARLY CHILDHOOD |
| POLICY REVIEWED | FEBRUARY 2026 | NEXT REVIEW DATE | AUGUST 2026 |
| VERSION NUMBER | V6.02.26 | | |

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| MODIFICATIONS | • policy reviewed out of scope due to changes in Education and Care Services National Law to include child safety reforms National child safety training, inappropriate conduct offences<br>• additional definitions added<br>• sources checked for currency and updated as required | |
| POLICY REVIEWED | PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS | NEXT REVIEW DATE |
| AUGUST 2025 | • annual policy review<br>• reporting/notification actions moved within policy to ensure critical importance and consistency<br>• additional information added within policy to adhere to NQF child safety changes (effective 1 September 2025-NQF Guide to Child Safety) and National Model Code<br>• new Child Safe Standard links added<br>• sources checked for currency and updated as required | AUGUST 2026 |