



RIVERMOUNT COLLEGE

Realising the Potential Within

8.03.02 STUDENT SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish and promote a safe, inclusive and culturally responsive environment for all students, ensuring their safety and wellbeing are prioritised in every aspect of the school's operations. This policy provides written processes about how the College will implement and comply with the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle as required under the *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 (Qld)*.

SCOPE

The College Community – students and staff including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements, members of the broader school community, including parents/guardians, and visitors.

RESPONSIBILITY

Principal reporting to Board of Directors
Chair of the Board

LEGISLATION AND REFERENCES

- [Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Education \(Accreditation of Non-State Schools\) Regulation 2017 \(Qld\)](#)
- [QFCC Guidelines for implementing the Child Safe Standards in Queensland](#)
- 8.03.01 Reporting Concerns of Harm and Abuse Policy (Child Protection Policy)
- Rivermount College Statement of Commitment to Student Safety and Wellbeing

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DEFINITIONS

Child safe entity, as per s10 of the *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD*, is an entity—

- (a) that provides—
 - (i) services specifically for children; or
 - (ii) facilities specifically for use by children who are under the supervision of the entity;and
 - (b) that is either—
 - (i) mentioned in schedule 1; or
 - (ii) prescribed by regulation.
- (2) However, an individual is not a child safe entity unless the individual carries on a business as an entity mentioned in subsection (1), including, for example, as a sole trader or partner in a partnership under the *Partnership Act 1891, section 5*.¹

Child safe standards, as per s9 of the *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD*, are the following standards applying to an entity—

- (a) child safety and wellbeing is embedded in the entity's organisational leadership, governance and culture;
- (b) children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously;
- (c) families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing;
- (d) equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice;
- (e) people working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice;
- (f) processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused;
- (g) staff and volunteers of the entity are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training;
- (h) physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed;
- (i) implementation of the child safe standards is regularly reviewed and improved;
- (j) policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children.²

Student, is any child or young person of any age, enrolled or seeking enrolment at Rivermount College.

Universal Principle, in implementing and complying with the Child Safe Standards, a child safe entity must provide an environment that promotes and upholds the right to cultural safety of children who are Aboriginal persons or Torres Strait Islander persons (the Universal Principle).³

QFFC, Queensland Family and Child Commission

¹ *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD s10*

² *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD s9*

³ *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD s11(2)*

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OBJECTIVES

Rivermount College will implement and comply with the Child Safe Standards and the College may be required to give an authorised officer of the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) information about the school's compliance.

In implementing and complying with the Child Safe Standards, the College will provide an environment that promotes and upholds the right to cultural safety of students who are Aboriginal persons or Torres Strait Islander persons (the Universal Principle). The College will have regard to Guidelines made by the QFCC in implementing and complying with the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle⁴.

As per the Guidelines, this policy outlines the ways in which the College acts on and prioritises the safety and wellbeing of students. Rules and expectations regarding student safe practices are outlined for staff, volunteers and community members with the aim of establishing a student safe environment⁵.

This policy will:

- set out the College's expectations, practices, and approaches in relation to each of the Child Safe Standards, including the Universal Principle;
- be displayed for public access on the College website;
- cover acceptable and unacceptable student to student, and student to adult interactions; and
- describe the College's commitment to equity, inclusion and cultural safety and how the school recognises, responds and respects these factors.

PRINCIPLES

The implementation of, and compliance with, the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle by Rivermount College are to be based on the following fundamental principles:

- (a) Child safe entities, including Rivermount College, are responsible for continuously improving the ways in which, in their operations—
 - (i) the safety of children is promoted; and
 - (ii) child abuse is prevented; and
 - (iii) allegations of child abuse are properly responded to;⁶
- (b) The Child Safe Standards are not a simple checklist. They encourage child safe entities to think about how their day-to-day work protects children's rights and safety.⁷

⁴ *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD s11*

⁵ *Guidelines for implementing the Universal Principle and Child Safe Standards in Queensland, QFCC, p94*

⁶ *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD s14*

⁷ *Guidelines for implementing the Universal Principle and Child Safe Standards in Queensland, QFCC, p4*

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RESPONSIBILITIES

Rivermount College is responsible for developing and implementing this Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy and related policies and procedures to ensure it fulfils its CSS and Universal Principle obligations.

All governing body members, staff and volunteers at the College are responsible for acting in compliance with this policy and related policies and procedures.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

1. Leadership and Culture

Student safety and wellbeing is embedded in our school's leadership, governance and culture.⁸

Statement of Commitment to Student Safety and Wellbeing

Rivermount College is committed to protecting children and young people from harm and ensuring that all those engaged in our school community promote the fundamental right of children and young people to be respected and nurtured in a safe school environment.

- We are committed to taking all reasonable steps to promote the safety, protection, and wellbeing of every student in our care.
- We value student voice and are committed to listening to, taking seriously, and responding to the views, experiences, and concerns of children and young people.
- We affirm that safeguarding children is a shared responsibility and the foundation of an environment where young people can learn, flourish, and participate confidently.
- We are committed to creating inclusive and culturally safe environments for all students, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.
- We uphold a child safe culture in accordance with the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)*, embedding child safety into our governance, leadership, and everyday practices.
- We implement the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle to create a safe, inclusive, and accountable environment.
- We have clear processes for raising concerns and responding to allegations of harm.
- We do not tolerate any form of child abuse, harm, or unsafe conduct.

This commitment reflects our belief that every child is created in God's image and deserves dignity, care, and protection.

Risk Management

The College implements robust risk management processes to prevent, identify, and mitigate risks to students, and is committed to the monitoring of risk to the safety of students on an ongoing basis. The College will utilise various risk management tools including the Risk Management

⁸ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(a)*

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Policy and Framework, Risk Appetite Statement, Risk Registers, Work Health & Safety Policy, emergency management plans and the Critical Incident Policy to assist it in this process and will keep appropriate records of decisions made and actions taken in relation to risks to students.

Code of Conduct

All staff will ensure that their behaviour towards, and relationships with students, reflect proper standards of care for students. Staff, contractors and volunteers must not cause harm to students. The Staff Code of Conduct and the Student Code of Behaviour define acceptable and unacceptable behaviours toward students and are aligned with the Child Safe Standards.

Information Sharing & Recordkeeping

Staff and volunteers understand their obligations in information-sharing and maintaining accurate, secure records about student harm and abuse concerns, disclosures, and responses.

2. Student Voice

Students are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.⁹

We are committed to championing the voices of children and young people, ensuring they have genuine agency in matters that affect them. We listen to students in age-appropriate and culturally appropriate ways and create safe, structured opportunities for them to express their views.

The College uses the curriculum and educational programs to actively promote positive peer relationships and reduce student isolation by embedding learning experiences that strengthen social skills, empathy and respectful behaviours. Through age-appropriate lessons and whole-school wellbeing programs, students are also provided with access to sexual abuse prevention education that builds their understanding of personal safety, protective behaviours and where to seek help. Together, these curriculum-based approaches support safer, more connected and more informed students.

The College ensures that all staff and volunteers are consistently attuned to indicators of harm and abuse and are equipped to recognise when a student may need support. Age-appropriate and trauma-informed processes are in place to help students communicate their concerns safely and confidently, and staff actively respond to these disclosures with care and professionalism in accordance with the Reporting Concerns of Harm and Abuse Policy.

3. Family and Community

Families and the community are informed and involved in promoting student safety and wellbeing.¹⁰

⁹ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(b)*

¹⁰ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(c)*

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Rivermount College recognises the vital role families and communities play in the safety, wellbeing, and education of students. We value strong, respectful, and collaborative partnerships with families and the broader school community.

We intentionally build inclusive relationships, particularly with First Nations families, local community members, and Elders. We honour Country and embed an Acknowledgement of Country in our practices to ensure students understand the importance of knowing and respecting the land on which we learn.

The College provides various opportunities for parents and carers to contribute to the College community including the Family and Friends Association, volunteering, College surveys and information evenings, among others.

Regular communication through emails, parent portal, parent-teacher sessions and open days, ensures parents, carers and the community are informed about the College's operations and governance.

Rivermount College is dedicated to the work of reconciliation and actions this commitment through our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

4. Equity and Diversity

Equity is upheld, and the diverse needs of students are respected in policy and in practice.¹¹

We are committed to creating an inclusive, equitable environment where all students feel safe, respected, and supported. We actively work to remove barriers to participation and ensure our practices reflect cultural safety for all students.

This commitment is actioned through the following:

- Students with Disability Policy
- Anti-Discrimination Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Management Guidelines

5. People

People working with students are suitable and supported to reflect student safety and wellbeing values in practice.¹²

The Staff Code of Conduct, Employment Practices Policy, new employee onboarding and induction training, and the Enterprise Agreement are evidence of fulfilment of the requirements.

¹¹ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(d)*

¹² *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(e)*

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6. Complaints

Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.¹³

The College is committed to maintaining a student-focused approach to receiving and responding to complaints. The Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure outlines how concerns can be raised, the roles and responsibilities of staff, and the processes used to respond to different types of matters. We ensure that all complaints are taken seriously, addressed promptly and thoroughly, and managed in line with our reporting, privacy and employment law obligations.

Any concerns, disclosures or allegations relating to harm or abuse of a student are managed under the Reporting Concerns of Harm or Abuse Policy, which sets out our mandatory obligations to act protectively and report to the appropriate authorities.

7. Skills and Knowledge

Staff and volunteers of the school are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep students safe through ongoing education and training.¹⁴

The College will train its staff in processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students on their induction and will refresh training annually.¹⁵

The College will:

- Ensure all relevant staff receive induction training in trauma-informed practice, supported by annual refresher training to embed consistent, evidence-based approaches across the school.
- Develop and implement a communications strategy that identifies key stakeholders and delivers regular, relevant information on the prevention of student harm and abuse, as well as best practice in Student Safety and Wellbeing.

8. Physical and Online Environments

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for students to be harmed.¹⁶

Rivermount College proactively identifies and mitigates risks within both the physical and online environments, ensuring that safety measures do not compromise students' privacy or healthy development. Staff and students use online platforms in line with the College's *Code of Conduct* and related policies, supporting a safe, respectful and well-managed digital learning environment.

For further details about how the College manages risk see 1. Leadership and Governance above.

¹³ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(f)*

¹⁴ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(g)*

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

¹⁶ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(h)*

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9. Continuous Improvement

Implementation of the child safe standards is regularly reviewed and improved.¹⁷

Rivermount College is committed to fostering a culture of continuous improvement in student safety, wellbeing and cultural respect. We recognise that embedding the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle is a continuing journey that requires ongoing commitment, regular review and continual strengthening of our practices.

The College will:

- Review policies, procedures and practices regularly to ensure they remain effective, responsive and appropriate for the College community. This includes undertaking periodic audits, self-assessments and reflective practice to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- Analyse available data including complaints and concerns to identify causes and systemic issues and use these insights to inform continuous improvement of policies, procedures and practices.

10. Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures document how the College is safe for children.¹⁸

Rivermount College has embedded its Statement of Commitment to Student Safety and Wellbeing in all relevant policies and procedures.

The College has made all relevant policies and procedures publicly available on its website, intranet, parent portal and copies are available on request from the College office. Staff and volunteers are trained in implementing relevant policies and procedures regularly.

The College provides student-friendly versions of key policies using clear language, visual supports and formats that reflect the diverse communication needs of our students.

The College regularly reviews these materials with student input to ensure they remain relevant, inclusive and effective in supporting students to understand their rights, know how to seek help, and participate confidently in matters affecting their safety and wellbeing.

Rivermount College is committed to ensuring its policies and procedures uphold cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and communities. Where possible, the school will actively engage local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, community representatives and cultural advisors in the review, development and implementation of relevant policies and procedures.

¹⁷ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(i)*

¹⁸ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(j)*

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Related policies:

- Acceptable Use of ICT Policy
- Cybersafety and Acceptable ICT Use Agreement*
- Blue Card Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure*
- Enrolment Policy*
- Parent and Community Code of Conduct*
- Employment Practices Policy*
- Reporting Concerns of Harm and Abuse Policy*
- Restricted Person Declaration Form
- Risk Management Framework
- Statement of Commitment to Student Safety and Wellbeing*
- Student Code of Behaviour*
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

*publicly available on the College website.

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