

Policy and Procedure Register updates

Summary of changes to:

Allegations against workers in the area of child and student protection procedure

1. Reason for new/updated policy or procedure		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Change of policy/procedure requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Audit/review recommendation	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Change to legislation/delegations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Due for review	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<p>The Allegations against workers in the area of child and student protection procedure (previously the Allegations against employees in the area of student protection procedure) has been updated to reflect new requirements of the <i>Child Safe Organisations Act 2024</i> (Qld) (CSO Act). As a Child Safe Organisation, from 1 July 2026 the Department of Education will be covered by the Reportable Conduct Scheme (RCS) for workers, in addition to current student protection requirements for employees.</p>		
2. Summary of changes		
<p>The updated procedure outlines the process for reporting and managing allegations of harm to children and students caused by a worker of the department.</p> <p>The application of the procedure has broadened from <i>employees</i> of the department to <i>workers</i> of the department, which includes employees, volunteers, contractors, subcontractors, consultants, labour-hire workers, trainees, work experience students (including children younger than 18) and religious leaders.</p> <p>Workers are required to report reasonable suspicion of harm to children and students by a worker of the department. Under the CSO Act, reportable conduct is harm caused to any child by a worker, whether in the workplace or in private capacity, and is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a child sexual offence; • sexual misconduct committed in relation to, or in the presence of, a child; • ill-treatment of a child; • significant neglect of a child; • physical violence committed in relation to, or in the presence of, a child; • behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child. <p>These requirements for reportable conduct are in addition to the existing requirements for mandatory reporting of student protection matters for employees.</p> <p>The procedure has been re-structured to provide a step-by-step process for forming and reporting a reasonable suspicion, lodging an allegation in i-Refer, implementing risk management, and managing and finalising the matter.</p> <p>Other sections of the procedure, including the overview, responsibilities and definitions, have been updated and simplified to support schools and regional officers to understand and implement processes.</p>		
3. Impacts to roles and responsibilities		
Does the new/updated content change staff roles/responsibilities <i>in any way</i> ?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

If yes, select the type of change: (select all that apply)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised responsibilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New/additional responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Removed responsibilities
Position title	Summary of change	Page#
Workers	<p>Introducing the term of 'worker' under the <i>CSO Act</i>, broadening the reporting obligations for the department. Requirements under the procedure now apply to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all employees (temporary, permanent, or casual) • volunteers, such as P&C members, parents, family volunteers, or families who host international students • contractors, subcontractors, consultants or sole traders providing services or products to schools or students through school or department purchasing arrangements, which can include requests to quote, government Standing Offer Arrangements or maintenance/building contracts • individuals provided by labour hire services, which can include but is not limited to office support staff, relief teaching and chaplains • trainees or work experience participants, including tertiary students on placement such as preservice teachers • P&C executives and School Council members. 	2
All Managers and Supervisors	Core responsibilities remain unchanged. However, due to the expanded definition of worker, Managers and Supervisors are now required to report reportable conduct involving workers	2
Principals	While existing responsibilities continue, the broadened definition of worker means Principals must now report both reportable conduct allegations and reportable conduct convictions involving workers through iRefer.	2
Regional Directors and School Supervisors	There is no change to overall accountability. With the wider definition of worker, these roles are now responsible for ensuring reportable conduct concerning workers is reported.	3
HR Regional Operations	Responsibilities remain consistent. As a result of the updated definition of worker, HR Regional Operations must now review, assess and refer reportable conduct matters involving workers.	3
Integrity	Responsibilities have not changed but with the broader definition of worker, Integrity will now be required to assess and advise reportable conduct of workers	3
Delegated Decision-Makers	Decision-making authority remains the same. Under the expanded definition of worker, Delegated Decision-Makers are now required to determine matters relating to reportable conduct involving workers.	3

4. Communication and support for implementation

Specific communication about changes to this procedure will occur in Term 3 including:

- Connect ED newsletter
- OnePortal slider and OnePortal news item
- Screensaver – School and Corporate

Updates to this procedure also include information to support implementation of the RCS in the department. This information will be communicated by the RCS implementation team through:

- workforce communications OnePortal, principal information packs and FAQs.
- virtual awareness sessions being held in Term 2 for key cohorts such as principals, business managers, regional and corporate leaders, and HR Regional Operations and Integrity teams.
- a micro-learning module which will supplement 2026 mandatory training, with RCS information being embedded into the 2027 update for mandatory training.

For further assistance, please contact:

- Procedure contact:
Intake Referrals and Partnerships
Integrity and Employee Relations
Phone: 1800 INTAKE (1800 468 253)
Email: intake@ged.qld.gov.au



Procedure

Allegations against workers in the area of child and student protection procedure

Version: 3.0 | Version effective: 01/07/2026

Audience

All workers of the Department of Education (the department) which includes state schools and State Delivered Kindergartens.

Purpose

This procedure outlines the process for reporting and managing allegations of harm or risk of harm, including reportable conduct, to children and students caused by a worker of the department.

Overview

Departmental employees and other workers are required to report reasonable suspicion of harm or risk of harm to children and students by a departmental worker. This procedure covers the types of conduct and matters that must be reported, and how those reports must be made and managed.

Anyone can form a suspicion that a child or student has been harmed or is at risk of harm by a worker and report it using the processes set out in this procedure. For suspicions formed in the course of their work, employees and workers are legally required to report suspicions or take protective action, as required under mandatory reporting and child protection laws, including:

- Under ss.365 and 365A of the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#) a school staff member must immediately give a written report to the principal or principal's supervisor when they become aware of or reasonably suspect, in the course of their employment, the sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student under 18 years. The principal or principal's supervisor must immediately give a copy of the report to the Queensland Police Service (QPS).
- Under s.13E of the [Child Protection Act 1999 \(Qld\)](#) a teacher, registered nurse or early childhood education and care professional must give a written report to the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (Child Safety) when, in the course of their employment, they form 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 and may not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from harm.
- Under s.229BB of the [Criminal Code Act 1899 \(Qld\)](#) workers must take action to protect a child where there is a significant risk that a worker may or will commit a child sexual offence.

- Under s.229BC of the [Criminal Code Act 1899 \(Qld\)](#) an adult must, as soon as reasonably practicable, make a report to the QPS when they gain information that causes them to reasonably believe, or ought reasonably to cause them to believe, a child sexual offence is being or has been committed against a child by another adult.

As a reporting entity under the [Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 \(Qld\)](#) (CSO Act), the department is covered by the Reportable Conduct Scheme. Under this scheme, any suspected or actual harm to a child caused by a worker, whether it occurred while the worker was working or not, must be reported to the department. Workers of the department include employees, volunteers, contractors, sole traders, individuals on work experience and tertiary students on placement (see definitions for more examples).

Types of reportable conduct under the CSO Act are:

- a child sexual offence
- sexual misconduct committed in relation to, or in the presence of, a child
- ill-treatment of a child
- significant neglect of a child
- physical violence committed in relation to, or in the presence of, a child
- behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child.

By complying with this procedure, departmental employees and other workers will meet the mandatory reporting obligations for where a child or student has been harmed or is at risk of harm by a worker. The procedure should be read in conjunction with the [Guidelines for allegations against workers](#).

Suspensions of harm formed:

- where the harm is caused by someone who is not an employee or worker of the department will be managed under the [Student protection procedure](#).
- while not working for the department should be reported to the Queensland Police Service (QPS) in the first instance.

Responsibilities

Workers

- Report all suspicions of harm or risk of harm, including reportable conduct, without delay
- Not inform the worker who is the subject of the allegation unless directed or approved
- Maintain confidentiality and avoid discussing the matter with others
- Continue to report any new or emerging suspicions

All managers and supervisors

- Support staff and workers to understand and comply with requirements, including by providing induction and ensuring completion of mandatory training

- Monitor compliance with risk management and provide relevant support as required during the management or progression of the allegation
- Escalate concerns promptly where risks change

Principals

- Receive and record reports relating to harm or reportable conduct
- Consult with HR Regional Operations or Integrity before taking formal risk management action
- Submit reports without unreasonable delay using the correct Student Protection (SP) category
- Decide, implement, and monitor risk management strategies
- Escalate matters to HR Regional Operations, Regional Director, School Supervisors or Integrity where required
- Manage retained matters with procedural fairness and confidentiality
- Record incidents against the relevant student record securely, ensuring strict confidentiality
- Consider human rights when taking risk management action and make decisions that are compatible with the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld)

Regional Directors and School Supervisors

- Receive allegations or reports where a principal is the subject
- Manage these allegations as per principal responsibilities above
- Oversee regional management of retained SP1 and SP2 matters

HR Regional Operations

- Receive and assess SP1 and SP2 matters, and refer to Integrity when escalation is required
- Provide advice on and implement appropriate management pathways for retained matters
- Maintain accurate records in departmental systems
- Maintain confidentiality and procedural fairness
- Consider human rights when taking risk management action and make decisions that are compatible with the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld)

Integrity

- Receive and assess referred SP1 and SP2 matters and all SP3 referrals
- Make referrals or notifications to external agencies within required timeframes
- Conduct investigations in accordance with legislative and procedural requirements
- Provide direction on risk management and worker contact throughout the management of the matter
- Record all actions and decisions in the case management system
- Provide timely advice to delegated decision-makers, including recommendations relating to suspension and discipline
- Maintain confidentiality and procedural fairness

- Consider human rights when taking risk management action and make decisions that are compatible with the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld)

Delegated Decision-Makers

- Make formal risk management decisions under sections 101–102 of the *PS Act 2022 (Qld)* (*PS Act*)
- Determine suspensions, transfers or alternative duties and make decisions relating to discipline.
- Ensure decisions are lawful, proportionate, and documented
- Provide procedural fairness to the worker who is the subject of the allegation
- Notify workers in writing of risk management decisions and reviews
- Consider human rights when taking risk management action and make decisions that are compatible with the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld)

Process

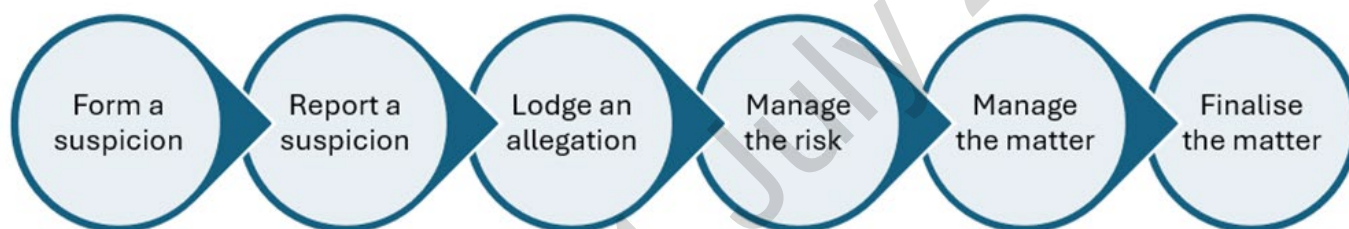


Image 1: Procedure process flow

Forming a reasonable suspicion

Anyone can form a reasonable suspicion that a child or student has been harmed or is at risk of harm by a departmental worker.

A reasonable suspicion:

- may be formed when a person believes that behaviour or other information indicates a genuine possibility of harm to a child or student by a worker. Proof, certainty, or confirmation is not required to form this suspicion.
- may be based on one or more of the following:
 - direct observations of conduct, conversations, or interactions
 - contextual or circumstantial information
 - repeated patterns of concerning behaviour towards a child or student
 - additionally, for employees, a reasonable suspicion may also be informed by:
 - professional judgement based on their role, responsibilities, or experience
 - complaints or statements from witnesses.
- may include consideration of factors such as the child's age and disability.

Workers must prioritise child safety and apply a low threshold when identifying potential risks of child harm. In identifying potential risks of child harm, workers should consider risk factors, including disability. They can seek advice from Integrity (intake@qed.qld.gov.au or 1800 468 253) or [HR Regional Operations](#) about reporting thresholds, particularly for allegations involving suspected sexual abuse or grooming-type behaviour. More information for employees on student protection concepts and indicators of abuse can be found in the department's [student protection guidelines](#).

Reporting a reasonable suspicion

Reasonable suspicions that a child or student has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed by a departmental worker:

- can be reported by members of the public to:
 - the principal, where the conduct relates to a worker at a school
 - Integrity, for all other concerns by:
 - emailing intake@qed.qld.gov.au
 - calling 1800 INTAKE (1800 468 253).
- must be reported by workers soon as practicable, as follows:
 - School employees must provide a written report to the principal, or the school supervisor or regional director if the suspicion involves the principal.
 - Other workers must report to:
 - the principal, where the conduct relates to a worker at a school
 - the regional director or school supervisor, where the conduct relates to the principal
 - their manager or supervisor, where a non-school based worker is making an allegation about the conduct of another non-school based worker.

The person making the report must:

- remove the child or student from any immediate risk of harm if appropriate to do so, seeking support from the principal if required
- provide accurate, factual information and any relevant notes or documents to support their suspicion
- not tell the reported worker about the suspicion or report
- maintain confidentiality and avoid discussing the matter with others beyond what is necessary to meet procedural requirements
- report any new or emerging concerns as they arise.

Lodging an allegation

Note: following the lodgement of an SP3 in iRefer will automatically send matters under the mandatory reporting obligations to the QPS. If a principal believes that the matter should also go to Child Safety, they should make a report as per the [Student protection procedure](#).

As soon as practicable after receiving an allegation about a worker, the principal, regional director, school supervisor, manager or supervisor must determine the correct student protection (SP) referral type (see table below) and lodge the allegation through iRefer. If iRefer is unavailable, allegations can be lodged with Integrity by:

- emailing intake@ged.qld.gov.au
- calling 1800 INTAKE (1800 468 253).

The following table supports the decision-making process to determine the appropriate referral type.

Referral type	Situation	Referred to and managed by
SP1	<p>Isolated incidents causing slight emotional or physical discomfort.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • yelling or coarse language • inappropriate tone or language • minor inappropriate physical contact • minor scratching or bruising • sharing personal information with students without an educational purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Regional Operations (in consultation with principals, managers, supervisors and regional directors) • HR regional operations may refer a matter to Integrity or recategorise it as an SP2 if they identify repetitious behaviour or conduct
SP2	<p>Where the conduct or incident is more serious than an SP1.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inappropriate physical contact that is not sexualised • physical violence resulting in injury • repetition of SP1 type conduct • pattern of intimidating or belligerent behaviour • reportable conduct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Regional Operations (in consultation with school principals, managers, supervisors and regional directors) • HR Regional Operations will refer a matter to Integrity when it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ involves significant harm ○ involves escalation or patterns of behaviour that raise child safety concerns ○ is, or may be, a type of reportable conduct
SP3	<p>Where there is, or is suspected to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sexual abuse • grooming-type conduct • behaviours consistent with recognised grooming indicators • reportable conduct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity • Queensland Police Service (QPS) (SP3 submissions through iRefer trigger automatic notification to QPS)

Allegations submitted via iRefer will go straight to the responsible party for management. Allegations submitted by phone or email will first go to Integrity, which will then forward them to the responsible party as outlined above.

Managing risk

Risk management strategies must be implemented from the time an allegation is initially reported through to the finalisation and closure of the matter. Risk management strategies can be both formal and informal. Formal risk management strategies, as outlined under the [PS Act 2022 \(Qld\)](#), can only be applied to employees.

Before implementing any ongoing risk management actions, the principal, manager, supervisor or regional director must seek approval from the team managing the matter (typically HR Regional Operations for SP1 and SP2 matters, and Integrity for SP3 matters). This ensures that the response will not compromise any departmental or QPS investigations.

Informal risk management strategies

Informal risk management strategies are assessed and implemented by the principal, manager, supervisor, or regional director to ensure the immediate safety of children or students. These strategies may include:

- moving students within classrooms or away from harm
- providing additional supervision and oversight (e.g., placing a second employee in the classroom)
- removing additional duties, such as co-curricular responsibilities
- issuing lawful and reasonable direction letters
- providing additional training to staff.

Formal risk management strategies

Formal risk management strategies may be required for employees and include:

- suspension from duties
- placement on alternative duties
- temporary transfers
- application of a notice of further consideration.

For workers who are non-employees, the principal may consider directing a person to leave or not enter the school premises as per the [Managing inappropriate and hostile conduct procedure](#).

Integrity will:

- assess any local risk management actions already in place and determine whether additional formal risk management strategies are necessary
- progress recommendations for formal risk management action to an authorised delegate under the HR Delegations Manual for consideration.

The delegated decision-maker will:

- consider any formal risk management recommendations

- determine whether to implement suspension, transfer, or alternative duties for an employee
- notify the employee in writing about any formal risk management action.

Implement risk management strategies

Any decision to implement risk management strategies (formal or informal) requires the decision-maker to assess the impact on human rights and document their considerations by addressing the following questions:

- Are any human rights engaged or impacted by the risk management decision or action taken?
- If so, did the decision or action place any limits on those human rights?
- If so, was the limitation lawful, justified, and reasonable in the circumstances?

The decision-maker's assessment of human rights considerations must also be documented and saved in the department's records management system.

Monitor risk management strategies

Principals, managers, supervisors and regional directors will monitor the effectiveness of applied risk management strategies and escalate any concerns to Integrity.

The delegated-decision maker must review suspensions as required under the Suspension Directive (06/23).

Integrity will:

- reassess the appropriateness of risk management strategies where further information is received regarding an ongoing matter
- where required, progress a recommendation to the delegated decision maker for consideration of a change in risk management strategies.

Managing SP matters

Taking care not to disclose any information that may compromise an investigation or breach privacy requirements:

- principals must notify the student's parents of any incident of student harm and record contact with the parent in OneSchool.
- principals, managers, supervisors and regional directors must make any other disclosures necessary based on the worker's role. These may include notifying:
 - the university if the worker is a preservice teacher
 - the company if the worker is a contractor
 - the school or institution if the worker is a work experience student.

For matters retained by HR Regional Operations

HR Regional operations will:

- review and assess matters to determine if allegations require escalation to Integrity
- as soon as practicable, notify the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT) of any matters involving registered teachers.

HR Regional Operations in conjunction with principals, managers, school supervisors and regional directors, will:

- collaboratively manage SP matters through local management action aligned to the positive performance management principles under the [PS Act 2022 \(Qld\)](#) and [Positive performance management directive 02/24](#)
- maintain confidentiality and avoid discussing the matter with others beyond what is necessary for child/student safety and meeting legislative and procedural requirement
- record any actions and decisions in the appropriate document management system, in line with the department's [Information asset and recordkeeping procedure](#)
- Consider human rights when taking risk management action and make decisions that are compatible with the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld).

For matters referred to Integrity

Integrity will:

- review and assess matters to determine if allegations meet the criteria for mandatory notification under relevant legislation/s
- notify the appropriate external agencies within the required legislative timeframes, including:
 - QPS for criminal matters (this notification is automatic for SP3 matters lodged through iRefer)
 - Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) for reportable conduct matters
 - Crime and Corruption Committee (CCC) for allegations of corrupt conduct
 - QCT for matters involving registered teachers
 - Office of the Health Ombudsman (OHO) and/or Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (APHRA) for matters involving registered health professionals.
- provide all necessary reports and supporting documentation to accompany notifications, and interim reports as required by external agencies
- determine if an investigation is required based on the nature and severity of the matter, and may devolve some matters back to HR Regional operations for local management
- refer matters internally or externally for investigation, as required
- conduct investigations in accordance with legislative and procedural requirements
- progress matters for consideration of disciplinary action, if required
- Consider human rights when taking risk management action and make decisions that are compatible with the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld).

Finalising SP matters

At the conclusion of the matter, Integrity will:

- finalise any management action outcomes
- for employees:
 - progress to the delegated-decision maker for consideration of any recommendations:

- for disciplinary action
- to continue or lift a notice of further consideration
- cease any formal risk management actions (suspension, alternative duties or transfer) that have been applied.
- consider any systemic or preventative actions and report to relevant strategic committee for continuous improvement.

For employees, the delegated decision maker will:

- consider and determine any disciplinary actions and notice of further consideration outcomes
- consider human rights and document their assessment of whether the allegation and outcome engage or limits any human rights by examining the following:
 - Are any human rights engaged or impacted by the decision or action complained about?
 - If so, will the decision or action in question place any limits on those human rights?
 - If so, was the limitation lawful, justified and reasonable in the circumstances?
- ensure procedural fairness to the worker who is the subject of the allegation
- notify the employee in writing about the:
 - removal of formal risk management actions
 - application of any disciplinary outcomes
 - status of any notice of further consideration
 - available options for review.

Integrity will:

- communicate the outcomes to all relevant parties, including to the reported worker, the reporting worker and any external bodies required to meet mandatory reporting obligations
- record all relevant information and outcomes related to the matter in the department's complaints management system (Resolve), to ensure accurate and complete records are maintained in line with the [Information asset and recordkeeping procedure](#).

Definitions

Term	Definition
Adult	A person who is 18 years or older.
Child/children	A person under 18 years of age.
Child sexual offence	Is any sexual act committed by an adult against a child. This includes offences outlined in chapter 22 or 32 of the <i>Criminal Code Act 1899</i> (Qld).

Term	Definition
Grooming	<p>Grooming is when an adult deliberately builds an emotional connection with a child to lower their defences and gain their trust. This is often done to prepare the child for inappropriate behaviour, either in the future or when an opportunity arises. Signs of grooming by a worker may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • giving special treatment or privileges to a specific child • engaging in unnecessary physical contact, such as frequent touching or caressing • providing gifts, treats, or money to the child without a legitimate reason. <p>Refer to the Student protection guidelines (accessible to DoE employees only) for more information.</p>
Harm	<p>Under section 9 of the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> (Qld), harm refers to any significant negative effect on a child’s physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing. It doesn’t matter how the harm happens—it can result from physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Harm may be caused by a single event or a series of actions, inactions, or situations.</p>
Immediately	<p>The EGPA requires school staff members to immediately submit a written report regarding sexual abuse to the principal, and for the principal to immediately forward reports regarding sexual abuse to the QPS. In this context, ‘immediately’ means the report must be progressed without unreasonable delay, once a reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse has been formed.</p>
Integrity	<p>A departmental business unit that works in conjunction with HR Regional Operations to receive, assess and manage allegations related to performance, conduct and behaviour including misconduct, corrupt conduct, reportable conduct and criminal conduct.</p>
Misconduct	<p>As defined in section 91(5)(a)(b) of the <i>PS Act 2022</i> (Qld), misconduct refers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inappropriate or improper conduct in an official capacity; or • inappropriate or improper conduct in a private capacity that seriously and negatively impacts on the public sector entity where the employee works.
Principal/Manager/Supervisor	<p>Refers to the principal, manager or supervisor working in a state educational institution or a business unit in the department.</p>

Term	Definition
Reasonable suspicion	<p>A reasonable suspicion is one formed on grounds that are appropriate in the circumstances. Under section 13C of the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> (Qld):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • factors to consider when forming a reasonable suspicion include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ whether the child is experiencing, or is likely to experience, detrimental effects on their body, psychological state, or emotional state ○ the nature and severity of these effects and the likelihood they will continue ○ the child's age. • a reasonable suspicion may be informed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ observations of the child ○ other knowledge of the child ○ relevant knowledge, training, or experience of the person forming the suspicion. <p>For the purposes of clarity for the <i>Criminal Code 1899</i> and <i>Child Safe Organisations Act 2024</i>, this also includes 'reasonable belief'.</p>
Registered teacher	<p>Registered teacher, for the purposes of this procedure, is 'relevant teacher' under sections 76 and 77 of the <i>Queensland (College of Teachers) Act 2005</i>.</p> <p>These sections require that a notification is made to the Queensland College of Teachers when an allegation meets the criteria for mandatory notification. Notifications would therefore be made for a registered teacher, a person with Permission to Teach (PTT), former approved teachers, and teachers with deemed registration.</p>
Reportable conduct	<p>Under section 26 of the <i>Child Safe Organisations Act 2024</i> (Qld), reportable conduct is harm caused to any child by a worker, whether in the workplace or in private capacity.</p> <p>Types of reportable conduct include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a child sexual offence • sexual misconduct involving or in the presence of a child • ill-treatment of a child • significant neglect of a child • physical violence involving or in the presence of a child • behaviour causing significant emotional or psychological harm to a child.

Term	Definition
	Thresholds for categories of reportable conduct are determined by Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) refer to Guide to Queensland's Reportable Conduct Scheme .
Risk management action	Actions taken to prevent or minimise risk to students during the assessment or investigation of an allegation, which may include alternative duties, temporary transfer, suspension, increased supervision, removing a child from a classroom for a period of time, or other suitable working arrangements.
Sexual abuse	<p>For the purposes of this procedure, sexual abuse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • means sexual behaviour involving a student or child and another person in the following circumstances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the other person bribes, coerces, exploits, threatens or is violent toward the student or child; ○ the student or child has less power than the other person; or ○ there is a significant difference in intellectual capacity or maturity between the student or child and the other person; and • includes a child sexual offence.
State educational institution	<p>Under Chapter 2 of the EGPA, a state educational institution includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schools where the State provides primary, secondary, or special education and State Delivered Kindergartens (s.13). • centres offering additional educational programs for state school students, such as environmental or outdoor education centres (s.14). • facilities supporting teachers and departmental staff, as well as student hostels or residential colleges (s.15).
State school	For the purposes of this procedure, means a state educational institution.
Student	Any person who is enrolled at or attends a state school and for the purposes of this procedure, includes a kindergarten age child registered in a State Delivered Kindergarten.
Worker	<p>Extending the definition under section 8 of the <i>Child Safe Organisations Act 2024</i>, a worker includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all employees (temporary, permanent or casual) • volunteers, such as P&C members, parents, family volunteers, or families who host international students • contractors, subcontractors, consultants or sole traders providing services or products to schools or students through school or

Term	Definition
	<p>department purchasing arrangements, which can include requests to quote, government Standing Offer Arrangements or maintenance/building contracts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individuals provided by labour hire services, which can include but is not limited to office support staff, relief teaching and chaplains • trainees or work experience participants, including tertiary students on placement such as preservice teachers • P&C executives and School Council members.

Legislation

- [Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Child Protection Act 1999 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Criminal Code Act 1899 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Education \(Queensland College of Teachers\) Act 2005 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Human Rights Act 2019 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Act 2024 \(Qld\) Chapter 3, parts 3-4](#)

Delegations/Authorisations

- [Human Resources Delegations Manual 01/2025](#) (DoE employees only)

Policies and procedures in this group

- [Child and student protection policy](#)
- [Disclosing personal information to law enforcement agencies procedure](#)
- [Information sharing under the Child Protection Act 1999 \(Qld\) procedure](#)
- [Student protection procedure](#)
- [Working with children \(blue card\) procedure](#)

Supporting information for this procedure

- [Allegations against workers in the area of child and student protection – guidelines](#)

Other resources

- [Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service](#)

- [Standard of Practice](#)
- [Student protection fact sheet](#) (DoE employees only)
- [Charter of Victims' Rights](#)
- [Guideline: Charter of Victims' Rights Complaints](#) (DoE employees only).
- [QFCC Reportable Conduct Scheme Guidelines](#)
- [QCT Guidelines](#)

Contact

For further information, please contact:

Intake Referrals and Partnerships
Integrity and Employee Relations
Phone: 1800 INTAKE (1800 468 253)
Email: intake@qed.qld.gov.au

Review date

1/07/2029

Superseded versions

Previous seven years shown. Minor version updates not included.

2.0 Allegations against employees in the area of student protection procedure

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Allegations against workers in the area of child and student protection guidelines

All children have the right to be free from harm. The Department of Education (department) is committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments, preventing incidents of harm to children, and acting quickly where there is a reasonable suspicion of harm or risk of harm. The department requires its workers to model and encourage behaviour that upholds the welfare and best interests of children in the workplace or outside the workplace.

These guiding scenarios are to assist in reporting harm to children and applying the [Allegations against workers in the area of child and student protection procedure](#).

Identifying conduct that causes harm

Conduct that may cause harm to children can fall into three broad categories:

- **Sexualised conduct/Sexual abuse** – by way of sexual abuse, grooming or other sexualised conduct (aligning to reportable conduct categories of child sexual offence or sexual misconduct)
- **Inappropriate physical conduct** – by way of contact, intervention or restraint (directly or indirectly) or neglect of a child's physical needs (aligning to reportable conduct categories of ill treatment, significant neglect or physical violence)
- **Conduct causing psychological harm** – by way of inappropriate verbal, emotional, unauthorised communication or behaviour, including inappropriate use of restrictive practices (aligning to reportable conduct categories of ill treatment or behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm).

It is important to note that all allegations will be assessed having regard to context, severity, frequency and any known patterns of behaviour.

1. Sexualised conduct/Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is defined under sections 365 and 365A of the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#) (EGPA) including sexual behaviour involving the relevant person and another person in the following circumstances:

- The other person bribes, coerces, exploits, threatens or is violent toward the relevant person;
- The relevant person has less power than the other person;
- There is significant disparity in intellectual capacity or maturity between the relevant person and the other person.

Criminal offences apply under:

- **s.229BB Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld)** – failure to protect a child from a child sexual offence
- **s.229BC Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld)** – failure to report belief of a child sexual offence

Any sexualised conduct between a worker and a student is reportable, regardless of consent. Grooming, sexual misconduct and sexual harassment may constitute sexual abuse for the purpose of reporting obligations.

For reportable conduct the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)* (CSO Act) s26 (5) defines a child sexual offence to mean the following:

- a) a child sexual offence under the Criminal Code, section 207A;

- b) an offence of a sexual nature committed in the presence of a child;
- c) an act or omission committed outside Queensland that would be an offence mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b) if it were committed in Queensland.

The CSO Act also defines sexual misconduct as inappropriate touching, voyeurism and use of sexual language without a legitimate reason. These matters are to be reported where you have a reasonable belief that they have been committed against a child or in the presence of a child.

If a suspicion of sexualised conduct is raised about a worker, immediately submit an SP3 referral through [iRefer](#). If a suspicion is about another person causing the sexualised conduct to a student, complete a Student Protection Report in OneSchool.

2. Inappropriate physical conduct

There are circumstances where physical contact between a worker and a student may be appropriate, such as:

- offering comfort or reassurance
- providing guidance or support
- preventing immediate harm.

If a reasonable person would consider the contact necessary and proportionate to meet the child's emotional or safety needs, the contact may be considered appropriate. In situations where restrictive practices are used to prevent immediate harm, refer to the [Restrictive practices procedure](#) for guidance on what is permitted under the circumstances. Physical contact may raise concerns where it appears:

- punitive or excessive
- to be used as a behaviour management technique, for convenience, as retaliation, or to discipline or punish a student
- inconsistent with the [Restrictive practices procedure](#) (eg is not discontinued when risk abates)
- repeated or part of a pattern
- not necessary for the wellbeing of the student, or safety or educational purposes.

Workers should actively discourage children/students from initiating unnecessary physical contact with workers.

The CSO Act s26 (5) defines reportable conduct categories that reflect inappropriate physical conduct as:

- ill-treatment of a child, as conduct towards the child that is unreasonable and seriously inappropriate, improper, inhumane or cruel, such as:
 - making excessive or degrading demands
 - a pattern of hostile or degrading comments or behaviour
 - using inappropriate forms of behaviour management.
- neglect of a child, as a failure to meet the basic needs of the child that is deliberate or reckless. Basic needs could include:
 - failure to protect a child from risk of harm
 - not providing adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision or medical care.
- physical violence, as the following:
 - the intentional or reckless application of physical force to a person without lawful justification or excuse; or

- an act that intentionally or recklessly causes a person to anticipate immediate and unlawful violence to the person.

However, does not include the application of trivial, negligible or insignificant physical force.

All suspicions of physical abuse must be reported immediately by submitting a referral through [iRefer](#) for workers or a OneSchool referral where harm is perpetrated by someone other than a worker.

When submitting an allegation about inappropriate physical conduct by a worker through [iRefer](#), apply the following categories:

SP1 – Isolated low level incidents involving students

Matters that are categorised as low-level type incidents that are not considered to be repetitious on the part of the workers are to be reported to HR Regional Operations for assessment and review. An SP1 notification is to be completed also in situations where a worker has interacted with a student resulting in low-level emotional or psychological harm. This can be a result of yelling or verbal abuse by the worker, or physical contact of a student. It is acknowledged that SP1 Incidents may give rise to an event of slight physical injury or discomfort to a student (i.e. minor scratching/bruising).

SP2 – More serious or repeated conduct affecting students

An SP2 notification is required in instances where the worker conduct, or incident is considered more significant than that of an SP1 type matter. Reportable incidents in this category would range from more significant emotional, psychological harm and/or contact and/or physical assault resulting in some injury to a student. SP2 type matters may also include a repetition of SP1 type matters, if known by the referrer, and other instances of repetitious use of belligerent language towards or discussions with students for no apparent justifiable or educational purpose.

SP3 – Suspected sexual abuse or grooming indicators

Where there is suspicion relates to sexual abuse; grooming-type conduct; behaviours consistent with recognised grooming indicators or reportable conduct. An SP3 notification is required when a complaint or report relates to suspected sexual abuse or, based on the information available, it is likely that a student could be sexually abused by a worker. This type of notification would include proper consideration of worker behaviours and/or conduct as it relates to grooming indicators.

3. Conduct causing emotional or psychological harm – inappropriate verbal or unauthorised communication

Workers are expected to communicate with students in a respectful and professional manner appropriate to the circumstances.

Conduct causing emotional or psychological harm may arise from:

- demeaning, intimidating or threatening language or demeanour
- homophobic, transphobic, racist, ableist, sexist or otherwise discriminatory language
- inappropriate tone, verbal aggression or humiliation
- exposing a child/student to sexualised, adult or otherwise age-inappropriate themes
- unauthorised electronic, personal or out-of-hours communication
- communication or behaviour that is inconsistent with professional boundaries
- use of restrictive practices that are not lawful, reasonable or proportionate.

Workers may occasionally need to raise their voice to gain attention of students. This must be proportionate, appropriate and not demeaning or overbearing, and should not have detriment to the emotional or psychological wellbeing or development of a child/student.

Where contact occurs outside school hours or via electronic means, workers must maintain professional boundaries, be able to demonstrate a legitimate educational purpose, have appropriate approvals for the contact and ensure transparency. For further information refer to [professional boundaries and behaviour](#) (DoE employees only).

For this category the CSO Act defines reportable conduct as behaviour that causes detriment to the emotional or psychological wellbeing or development of a child.

When submitting an allegation about conduct causing emotional or psychological harm by a worker through iRefer, apply the following categories:

SP1 – isolated inappropriate behaviour:

Inappropriate verbal or unauthorised communication is isolated, no significant impact on the student's wellbeing is evident, and there is no known adverse history

SP2 – significant or repeated psychological impact:

Behaviour is serious or repeated, involves inappropriate material or occurs via electronic media, and has caused or poses a risk of causing serious emotional or psychological impact.

SP3 – sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse

Inappropriate verbal or unauthorised communication is sexual in nature, constitutes grooming behaviour, or creates a reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse. This includes displaying pornography to a student, sending pornographic material, sexualised messaging, or requesting sexual images or acts.

Reporting or receiving information or allegations

Workers who have concerns about another worker's interactions with a child/student must report the matter as soon as practicable to:

- the principal or manager; or
- the regional director or school supervisor where the principal is the subject of the allegation.

Workers may seek advice from HR Regional Operations or Integrity; however, advice does not replace reporting obligations.

Managing disclosures

A student or child may voluntarily disclose information about concerning behaviours or a situation involving their safety or wellbeing. How you respond is important and may influence whether they feel comfortable sharing further information.

When a student makes a disclosure, workers must:

- listen attentively and without judgement
- record the student's exact words or communication as accurately as possible
- avoid leading questions
- prioritise student safety

- report as soon as practicable.

Refer to the [Student protection guidelines](#) for more information.

Confidentiality and legal obligations

All information relating to allegations affecting a student's safety or wellbeing must be handled confidentially.

Workers must maintain confidentiality; however, confidentiality does not override mandatory reporting obligations.

Workers must handle information in accordance with:

- [The Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service](#)
- [The department's Standard of Practice](#)
- Privacy legislation.

Under the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001 (Qld)*, employees, as public officials, must report information that may constitute corrupt conduct, regardless of confidentiality considerations.

Mandatory reporting requirements under the *Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)* and the *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 (Qld)* extend beyond public officials to include 'any person' and 'relevant person'.

Privacy and confidentiality considerations must be applied in every reporting circumstance limiting disclosure to those authorised persons with a legitimate business requirement to know.

Breaches of confidentiality may result in disciplinary action and escalation to HR Regional Operations or Integrity.

Record keeping

Workers should maintain accurate and timely records, including:

- dates and times of observations
- factual descriptions of behaviour
- the exact words used by students.

The department's [Information asset and recordkeeping procedure](#) outlines the requirements for creating and managing full and accurate records. Further information about recordkeeping and disposal can be found on the department's [Recordkeeping](#) site on OnePortal (DoE employees only).

School-based workers should record information in OneSchool where appropriate, with record access being limited to those who need to be aware of the conduct (i.e. – not accessible by the person the concerns are about).

If there is a concern about recording in OneSchool, or it is not accessible, discuss with the principal, HR Regional Operations or Integrity.

Support and protection for employees and other workers

The department recognises that reporting suspected harm caused by a worker can be difficult, particularly in small remote communities.

Where applicable, reports may attract protections under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 (Qld)*. Risk management actions may include alternative duties, temporary transfer or suspension under sections 101–102 of the *Public Sector Act 2022 (Qld)*. Decisions are made by authorised delegates and must be lawful, proportionate, documented and compatible with the *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)*.

Workers who are the subject of allegations have access to publicly available counselling services and for employees, access to the [Employee Assistance Program](#). All workers are entitled to procedural fairness.

Support for children (limited to students)

Supporting a student is an ongoing responsibility and may include:

- treating the student with respect and dignity
- being sensitive to their needs and concerns
- monitoring their wellbeing
- coordinating support with guidance officers, counsellors, or other services.

Information shared with other workers must be limited to what is necessary to protect the student.

Examples of appropriate and inappropriate actions or responses

The following examples are typical of the types of conduct that may impact a student's safety or wellbeing. These examples are provided to assist employees and management to maintain appropriate professional standards in their relationships with students and to respond appropriately to instances where a student's safety or wellbeing may be at risk by an employee.

Physical contact

Example 1: Appropriate touching

A six year old student falls over in the playground, skins his knees and starts to cry. A groundsman working nearby helps the student off the ground and comforts him until he stops crying. He then walks with him, holding his hand, to a first-aid station.

Example 2: Appropriate touching

To instruct a student in the proper use of an implement, an employee places her hands over a student's hand while the student is using a mallet and chisel. The contact ceases after the demonstration is completed.

Example 3: Inappropriate touching

An employee walks around the playground with one arm around the waist of a secondary school student. In all such circumstances, this type of prolonged contact is inappropriate.

Example 4: Inappropriate touching

An employee strokes the hair of a 14 year old female student, remarking what pretty hair she has.

Example 5: Inappropriate touching

An employee at an athletics meeting moves to congratulate a student who has successfully completed an event. While walking alongside the student, the employee places their arm around the student's back area, at the same time pulling the student towards them to make body contact.

Example 6: Inappropriate physical /restraint, physical assault

A fourteen year old student is threatening to hit others with a ruler and has ignored repeated directions to desist. The employee holds the student's arm to try and remove the ruler from the student's grasp. The student drops the ruler and calms down, but the employee continues to grip the student's arm without a

Uncontrolled copy. Refer to the Department of Education Policy and Procedure Register at <https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/allegations-against-workers-in-the-area-of-child-and-student-protection-procedure> to ensure you have the most current version of this document.

good reason. This could be considered unreasonable and inappropriate and may be dealt with as a minor incident.

Example 7: Inappropriate physical /restraint, physical assault

A student is standing up displaying disruptive, but non-violent behaviour, defiant of instructions. The employee walks up to the student, grabs their right arm and twists it behind the student's back and with their left hand the teacher places pressure on the student's left shoulder and pushes the student down on the chair.

Example 8: Inappropriate physical restraint, physical assault

The class is sitting on the floor listening to story time. A student continually interrupts and is causing a distraction to other students despite repeated requests from the teacher to stop. The teacher stands up and drags the students to a corner of the room with the student receiving minor injuries.

Example 9: Physical assault

A student is taunting another student in class and refuses to stop. The employee grabs the student's ear, twists and lifts the student so the student rises from their seat.

Example 10: Physical assault

A student chases a cricket ball onto a newly prepared garden bed. An employee firmly pushes the student on the shoulder causing the student to fall over, while shouting at the student to stay off the garden.

Example 11: Physical assault

During class, a student throws a small piece of wood that strikes another student. The employee responds by twisting the student's arm behind the student's back and pushes the student from the classroom. The force of the contact results in some physical injury.

Example 12: Physical assault

Without any prospect of physical contact with others, a student swears at a physical education teacher who responds by grabbing the student's arm very firmly, leaving distinct fingernail marks.

Verbal communication/intervention

Example 13: Appropriate verbal communication

A year 6 student is teasing another student by removing his pens from the desk, putting them out of sight and refusing to give them back. An employee approaches the offending student, makes eye contact, and says in a firm and controlled voice, "[Name] please give [other student's name] pens back now."

Example 14: Appropriate verbal intervention

Two students are chatting noisily at the rear of a classroom and have ignored several requests to stop. More students are becoming distracted by and involved in the disruptive behaviour. An employee moves towards the students and uses a raised voice and a clear statement to attract attention but reverts to a normal tone once their attention is gained.

Example 15: Inappropriate verbal communication

A student is struggling to understand a maths problem. An employee orders the student to the front of the class, stands very close to the student and shouts at the student using words such as, "What's the matter with you? Why don't you understand?"

Example 16: Inappropriate verbal intervention

A twelve year old student has exhausted his allocated time on a computer and is refusing to allow the next student to access it. After repeated instructions, the employee in a raised voice yells from a distance to, "Get off the computer!" The student continues to ignore the employee who screams at the student, "Didn't you hear me you ignorant pig? Do as you are told!"

Non-physical contact/behaviour

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Example 17: Appropriate non-physical behaviour

An employee is driving home and sees a student caught in a sudden downpour. The employee stops the car, and the student accepts a lift home. It may be appropriate, especially in a small community for the employee to accompany the student to the door and explain the circumstances to the parent or carer and report to the principal the next day what occurred.

Example 18: Appropriate non-physical behaviour

A 17 year old female student advises her male teacher that she is having problems at home with her alcohol dependent father and would like some advice. The teacher advises the student of the range of assistance available and invites the student to speak to him again if needed. The teacher discusses the issue with the principal and guidance officer before making a referral for the student to relevant assistance providers.

Example 19: Inappropriate non-physical behaviour

An employee is aware that a student has advanced computer skills and invites the student to their house on the weekend to help load some software. The employee regularly invites the student to their home whenever they have a computing problem. This private arrangement may exceed the boundaries of a professional employee/student relationship.

Example 20: Inappropriate non-physical behaviour

A physical education teacher accompanying students to a sporting carnival in a neighbouring town suggests sharing a motel room with several of the students to reduce expenses. While the employee's motivation may be entirely honourable, the risks associated with the conduct could be too high. Consequently, such an arrangement could be considered inappropriate.

Example 21: Inappropriate online engagement with a student

An employee communicates with a student through a personal social media account or private messaging platform that is not an approved departmental communication channel. The communication occurs outside school-related purposes and may include frequent messaging, personal conversations, or attempts to move communication to private or encrypted platforms. This type of conduct may blur professional boundaries and may be considered inappropriate engagement with a student.

Sexual abuse and or sexual misconduct**Example 22: Appropriate response**

A male employee is walking down a narrow corridor. Groups of students are talking animatedly and a 15 year old female student steps back suddenly and turns, apparently to attract the attention of a friend in another group and not being aware that the male employee is approaching. The employee's upper arm comes in contact with the girl's breasts. The teacher stops and apologises for bumping into the student.

Example 23: Sexual misconduct

An employee shows sexually explicit material to a student or leaves the material in a place where a student would be likely to access it. Such conduct could be regarded as sexual misconduct by the employee and may even represent a criminal offence.

Example 24: Sexual misconduct

After a school play, an employee approaches one of the student actors, saying, "I didn't realise how grown up you were until I saw you in that outfit. The play went over really well. After we tidy up here, maybe you and I can get together to celebrate."

Example 25: Sexual misconduct

An employee stands behind a 13 year old female student while she is playing the clarinet. The employee clasps her hands around the student's ribs and diaphragm area to demonstrate proper breathing technique. The employee's hands intentionally come in contact with the student's breasts.

Example 26: Sexual misconduct

An employee engages in a sexual relationship with a student from a different state educational institution than where they are employed knowing the student is 17 years old. This could be a breach of the department's Standard of Practice and could amount to a report of sexual abuse under s.365 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*.

Example 27: Sexual abuse

An employee makes suggestive gestures to a student such as blowing kisses, rubbing hands over their own body, or unzipping or unbuttoning items of their own clothing. Such flirtatious behaviour could exceed the boundaries of a professional relationship between an employee and a student, may be inappropriate and could be considered sexual harassment. If the employee exposed their genitalia to the student, such behaviour could be regarded as sexual abuse and a criminal offence.

Example 28: Sexual abuse

During quiet individual study time in class, an employee moves close to a student who is seated at a desk. The employee places their hand between the student's legs and deliberately touches the student's upper inner thigh and genital area saying, "I've always thought you were very attractive."

Failure to protect or report**Example 29: Failure to protect and report**

Allegations of sexual abuse of a child have been made against an employee. The employee resigns from their employment, and the principal does not report the allegations to the Queensland Police Service and/or Integrity. Failure to act on the allegations in this instance would allow the employee to seek employment either with the department or in other child related employment and continue to sexually abuse children.

Example 30: Failure to protect and failure to report

An employee in Human Resources discloses to their manager that they are going through a marriage breakdown and that they have engaged in a sexual relationship with their friend's child, who is a student. The employee says that the sexual relationship has now ceased. The manager does not report the employee as they feel sorry for them and do not want to cause personal or financial strain which may come with reporting the allegation.

Example 31: Failure to report

A student discloses to their teacher that they have been sexually abused by another adult. The teacher does not provide a written report to their principal until one week after the disclosure.

Example 32: Failure to report

An employee in IT is completing a job on another employee's departmental device and locates a folder containing sexualised images of children (i.e. child exploitation material). The IT employee does not report the employee to any other person within the department (i.e. their manager, the other employee's manager or Integrity) or to the Queensland Police Service.

Example 33: Failure to report

An employee is at a barbecue with family members and friends. Their 14-year-old niece discloses that earlier in the afternoon an 18-year-old, who is not an employee, at the party took her into a bedroom and got her to pose for a nude photograph. The employee does not report the allegation to the Queensland Police Service.

**Note: as this circumstance is in a private capacity and does not involve allegations against a worker, the department would only become involved if police charged the employee with the Failure to report offence. The subsequent court process would be monitored to determine if further action were required by the department.*

Example 34: Failure to report and protect

A principal is notified by a teacher that a student has been sexually abused by a volunteer at the school. The student is known to the principal as someone who "makes up stories for attention or to get out of

trouble". The principal does not report the allegation to Queensland Police Service or HR Regional Operations.

Example 35 Appropriate reporting

During class a teacher overhears students discussing a teacher being in a relationship with a 15 year old student. The teacher intervenes in the discussion and asks the students not to discuss the matter any further. The teacher at the end of the class provides a written report to their principal.

Example 36: Appropriate reporting

A teacher aide supporting a student with a disability sees a text message on the child's phone that the child is meeting with another person for sex. The teacher aide immediately provides a written report through OneSchool Student Protection Reporting module to the principal.

Example 37: Acting protectively

Allegations of sexual abuse have been made against an employee. The employee resigns from their employment, and the principal refers the allegations to the Queensland Police Service and Integrity. The matter is fully investigated by either the Queensland Police Service or the department, and if found to be substantiated the department undertakes a post-separation discipline process against the employee.

Effective 1 July 2022

Appendix 1 Definitions

Term	Definition
Adult	A person who is 18 years or older.
Child/children	A person under 18 years of age.
Child sexual offence	Is any sexual act committed by an adult against a child. This includes offences outlined in chapter 22 or 32 of the <i>Criminal Code Act 1899</i> (Qld).
Grooming	<p>Grooming is when an adult deliberately builds an emotional connection with a child to lower their defences and gain their trust. This is often done to prepare the child for inappropriate behaviour, either in the future or when an opportunity arises. Signs of grooming by a worker may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • giving special treatment or privileges to a specific child • engaging in unnecessary physical contact, such as frequent touching or caressing • providing gifts, treats, or money to the child without a legitimate reason. <p>Refer to the Student protection guidelines (accessible to DoE employees only) for more information.</p>
Harm	Under section 9 of the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> (Qld), harm refers to any significant negative effect on a child's physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing. It doesn't matter how the harm happens—it can result from physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Harm may be caused by a single event or a series of actions, inactions, or situations.
Immediately	The EGPA requires school staff members to immediately submit a written report regarding sexual abuse to the principal, and for the principal to immediately forward reports regarding sexual abuse to the Queensland Police Service. In this context, 'immediately' means the report must be progressed without unreasonable delay, once a reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse has been formed.
Integrity	A departmental business unit that works in conjunction with HR Regional Operations to receive, assess and manage allegations related to performance, conduct and behaviour including misconduct, corrupt conduct, reportable conduct and criminal conduct.
Misconduct	<p>As defined in section 91(5)(a)(b) of the <i>PS Act 2022</i> (Qld), misconduct refers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inappropriate or improper conduct in an official capacity; or • inappropriate or improper conduct in a private capacity that seriously and negatively impacts on the public sector entity where the employee works.

Principal/Manager/Supervisor	Refers to the principal, manager or supervisor working in a state educational institution or a business unit in the department.
Reasonable suspicion	<p>A reasonable suspicion is one formed on grounds that are appropriate in the circumstances. Under section 13C of the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> (Qld):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • factors to consider when forming a reasonable suspicion include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ whether the child is experiencing, or is likely to experience, detrimental effects on their body, psychological state, or emotional state ○ the nature and severity of these effects and the likelihood they will continue ○ the child's age. • a reasonable suspicion may be informed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ observations of the child. ○ other knowledge of the child. ○ relevant knowledge, training, or experience of the person forming the suspicion. <p>For the purposes of clarity for the <i>Criminal Code 1899</i> and <i>Child Safe Organisations Act 2024</i>, this also includes 'reasonable belief'.</p>
Reportable conduct	<p>Under section 26 of the <i>Child Safe Organisations Act 2024</i> (Qld), reportable conduct is harm caused to any child by a worker, whether in the workplace or in private capacity.</p> <p>Types of reportable conduct include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a child sexual offence • sexual misconduct involving or in the presence of a child • ill-treatment of a child • significant neglect of a child • physical violence involving or in the presence of a child • behaviour causing significant emotional or psychological harm to a child. <p>The thresholds for reportable conduct categories are determined by the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) QFCC Reportable Conduct Scheme Guidelines</p>
Risk management action	Actions taken to prevent or minimise risk to students during the assessment or investigation of an allegation, which may include alternative duties, temporary transfer, suspension, increased supervision, removing a child from a classroom for a period of time, or other suitable working arrangements.
Sexual abuse	For the purposes of this procedure, sexual abuse:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • means sexual behaviour involving a student or child and another person in the following circumstances: • the other person bribes, coerces, exploits, threatens or is violent toward the student or child; • the student or child has less power than the other person; or • there is a significant difference in intellectual capacity or maturity between the student or child and the other person; and • includes a child sexual offence.
<p>Sexual harassment</p>	<p>Happens if a person:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) subjects another person to an unsolicited act of physical intimacy. For example: physical contact such as patting, pinching or touching in a sexual way, or unnecessary familiarity such as deliberately brushing against a person b) makes an unsolicited demand or request (whether directly or by implication) for sexual favours from the other person. For example: sexual propositions c) makes a remark with sexual connotations relating to the other person. For example: unwelcome and uncalled for remarks or insinuations about a person's sex or private life, or suggestive comments about a person's appearance or body d) engages in any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature in relation to the other person. For example: offensive telephone calls, or indecent exposure e) and the person engaging in the conduct described in paragraphs above does so: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) with the intention of offending, humiliating, or intimidating the other person, or (ii) in circumstances where a reasonable person would have anticipated the possibility that the other person would be offended, humiliated, or intimidated by the conduct. <p>The circumstances that are relevant in determining whether a reasonable person would have anticipated the possibility that the other person would be offended, humiliated or intimidated by the conduct include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the sex, age or race of the other person; and b) the age of the other person; and c) the race of the other person; and d) any impairment that the other person has; and e) the relationship between the other person and the person engaging in the conduct; and f) any other circumstance of the other person.

	Sexual harassment and related conduct can be directed at a person or group of people and be carried out by one or more persons.
Sexual misconduct	Section 26(5) of the CSO Act defines sexual misconduct, committed in relation to, or in the presence of, a child to mean conduct that is sexual in nature, other than conduct that constitutes a child sexual offence. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inappropriate touching • voyeurism • use of sexual language without a legitimate reason.
State educational institution	Under Chapter 2 of the EGPA, a state educational institution includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schools where the State provides primary, secondary, or special education and State Delivered Kindergartens (s.13). • centres offering additional educational programs for state school students, such as environmental or outdoor education centres (s.14). • facilities supporting teachers and departmental staff, as well as student hostels or residential colleges (s.15).
State school	For the purposes of this procedure, means a state educational institution.
Student	Any person who is enrolled at or attends a state school and for the purposes of this procedure, includes a kindergarten age child registered in a State Delivered Kindergarten.
Worker	Under section 8 of the <i>Child Safe Organisations Act 2024</i> , a worker includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all employees (temporary, permanent, or casual) • volunteers, such as P&C members, parents, family volunteers, or families who host international students • contractors, subcontractors, consultants or sole traders providing services or products to schools or students through school or department purchasing arrangements, which can include requests to quote, government Standing Offer Arrangements or maintenance/building contracts • individuals provided by labour hire services, which can include but is not limited to office support staff, relief teaching and chaplains • trainees or work experience participants, including tertiary students on placement such as preservice teachers • P&C executives and School Council members.