



Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

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1 . Statement of Context and Purpose

Sheldon College (the **College**) is committed to protecting its students from all aspects of harm, and has established strategies, practices, policies and procedures to uphold this public commitment.

All policies, protocols, and procedures flow from the College's vision:

'We are a learning community where every student can achieve and experience the 'Extraordinary'; where aspiration and the traditional values of respect and service, combine with progressive thinking to define the way we work and the outcomes we achieve.'

The College takes a zero-tolerance approach to any behaviours that jeopardise child safety and wellbeing (including child abuse) and reportable conduct. The College regards its child safety and wellbeing responsibilities with the utmost importance as it delivers an educational program curriculum that promotes the College's values of Love, Laughter, and Learning.

In addition, the College has a pastoral, moral and legal responsibility to create an inextricable connection between child safety and learning, especially in a personalised learning environment where the College discovers what motivates and inspires its students and focuses on their strengths and ambitions.

This connection will be the foundation of all decisions made, and actions taken by the College when delivering a quality education to its students. At all times, the ongoing safety and wellbeing of its students will be at the forefront of mind, and the College's paramount consideration.

The College treats seriously its reporting obligations in relation to child safety matters, including to Queensland Police, the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety through Child Safety Services Centres, the Queensland Family and Child Commission and the Queensland College of Teachers. The College recognises that whilst reporting obligations may differ depending on a person's position within the College, all staff are required to uphold the ethos of this policy by ensuring that child safety and wellbeing matters are reported internally, and externally where required.

As such, this policy sets out how the College will meet its responsibilities and commitment to child safety and wellbeing and is a child safety and wellbeing policy made in accordance with *the Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)*, *the child safe standards and regulation 16 of the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Colleges) Regulation 2017 (Qld)*.

2 . Application

This policy applies to all Board members, and staff including the Principal, as defined in Schedule 1 of this policy.

This policy extends to any other person who is engaged in student-connected work at the College, or that otherwise has direct and regular contact with the College's students (whether supervised or not).

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3 . Related Documents

Legislation

- *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld)
- *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* (Qld)
- *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (Qld)
- *Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017* (Qld)
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Colleges) Regulation 2017* (Qld)
- *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld)
- *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005* (Qld)
- *Criminal Code Act 1899* (Qld)
- *Public Records Act 2023* (Qld)
- Code of Ethics for Teachers in Queensland

Schedules to this Policy

- Schedule 1: Child Safety and Wellbeing Definitions
- Schedule 2: Child Safety and Wellbeing Responsibilities

Overview of Child Safety and Wellbeing policies and documents

Document	Overview
Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy	This policy sets out the College’s overarching obligations and commitment to ensuring child safety and wellbeing and summarises the College’s strategies for achieving these. The policy also explains how the College’s other child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures interact.
Staff Code of Conduct	This code outlines staff behaviours align with the College’s commitment to child safety and wellbeing, and what behaviours are unacceptable.
Child Safety and Wellbeing - Raising and Responding to Concerns Policy	This policy outlines how members of the College community may raise concerns about child abuse, reportable conduct and other child safety and wellbeing matters. This policy sets out how the College will respond to such concerns (including by complying with the College’s mandatory reporting obligations).
Child Safety and Wellbeing - Recruitment and Employment Policy	This policy outlines the College’s approach to ensuring child safety and wellbeing is a paramount consideration in the College’s recruitment and employment practices.
Child Safe Environment Policy	This policy sets out specific responsibilities, strategies and procedures relevant to the operation of the College’s ELC and should be read in conjunction with the College’s broader Child Safety and Wellbeing Framework.



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Fact sheets

- [Laws targeting sexual offences against children | Queensland Government](#)
- [Child Protection Guide | Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety](#)
- [Reporting and referring concerns | Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety](#)
- [Children and young people in care | Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety](#)
- [Child Protection Guide | Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women](#)
- [Queensland's Reportable Conduct Scheme | Queensland Family and Child Commission](#)

4 . Overarching Values and Principles

The College's approach to child safety and wellbeing is guided by a number of overarching principles and values (which are set out below) that guide the development and regular review of strategies, practices, policies and procedures to uphold our commitment to protect students from all forms of harm:

- All students at the College have a right to be safe and to feel safe.
- The safety and wellbeing of students is the College's paramount consideration.
- The safety and wellbeing of students is dependent upon the existence of a student safe culture.
- Child safety and wellbeing is everyone's responsibility.
- Child safety and wellbeing awareness is embodied, promoted and openly discussed within our College community.
- Families can participate in decisions affecting their child and they, and the College community, are engaged and informed about the College's approach to child safety and wellbeing.
- Staff have regard to a student's diverse circumstances, needs, and vulnerabilities so that they can provide support and respond to those who are vulnerable and to ensure equity is upheld in policy and practice.

The College recognises and upholds the Universal Principle that the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children must be respected and promoted. The College actively supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights.

5 . Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing

Set out below, is the College's publicly available statement of commitment to child safety and wellbeing:

Sheldon College is unwavering in its commitment to providing a safe, supportive and empowering environment for every child and young person entrusted to our care.

The safety, wellbeing and dignity of children are our highest priorities. We have zero tolerance for child abuse, harm, neglect or exploitation in any form. Every decision, action and interaction within our College is guided by our responsibility to protect children and promote their physical, emotional, social, spiritual and cultural wellbeing.

We are committed to:

- Actively preventing child abuse and harm through strong leadership, governance and accountability.
- Embedding the Queensland Child-Safe Standards across all aspects of our operations.
- Listening to, respecting and empowering children, ensuring their voices are heard, taken seriously and influence decisions that affect them.
- Providing accessible and child-friendly ways for children to raise concerns and seek support.

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- Ensuring that all staff, volunteers and contractors uphold the highest standards of professional conduct and child-safe behaviour.
- Maintaining robust recruitment, training and supervision practices to ensure suitability and capability of those who work with children.
- Creating physical and online environments that minimise risk and promote safety and wellbeing.
- Responding promptly, transparently and appropriately to concerns, disclosures and complaints.

Sheldon College recognises and upholds the Universal Principle of cultural safety. We are committed to providing an environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children feel culturally safe, welcomed, valued, respected and included. We acknowledge that cultural safety is fundamental to child safety, and we actively seek feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities to strengthen our practice.

We extend this commitment to all members of our College community. Sheldon College fosters a culture of inclusion where every child, regardless of their cultural background, identity, ability, gender, language, faith, or life experience, feels safe, seen, and supported to achieve the extraordinary. We recognise and celebrate diversity as a strength and are committed to embedding inclusive practices that respond to the varied needs of all learners.

Our approach is underpinned by respect, equity, and a deep understanding that inclusion requires intentional action. We promote student voice, partner with families, and ensure that our policies, practices, and learning environments are responsive, accessible, and culturally informed. Through this, we create a community where every child experiences a genuine sense of belonging, connection, and wellbeing.

We respect the rights of children as articulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children at Sheldon College have the right to feel safe, to be heard, to participate in decisions affecting them and to receive support without discrimination.

Child safety at Sheldon College is a shared responsibility embedded in our culture. Every member of our community plays a vital role in upholding this commitment.

We will continuously review and strengthen our policies, procedures and practices to ensure we remain a child-safe organisation and a place where every child can achieve the extraordinary in a secure and respectful environment.

6 . A Child Safety and Wellbeing Culture

Creating and maintaining a child safety and wellbeing culture requires input from the entire College community. Our aim is to provide an inclusive, respectful, and safe learning environment that aligns with the College's mission and values of Love, Laughter, and Learning,

To achieve this, we promote a progressive education model that motivates, nurtures and prepares each generation for the demands of its time.

Through our processes and practices, we also ensure that a child safety and wellbeing culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the College, from the top down to the bottom up. Accordingly, child safety and wellbeing are embedded in our College leadership, governance and culture.

We do this by setting clear expectations regarding child safety and wellbeing to our College community (including staff and students), and ensuring that at all times, our governance arrangements facilitate the implementation of this policy (including by making child safety and wellbeing a standing agenda item and reviewing the College's child safety and wellbeing processes across all levels).



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Behavioural Expectations

The College requires that all staff, volunteers, contractors and other authorised persons maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students at all times. Conduct that is abusive, grooming in nature, sexually inappropriate, discriminatory, intimidating, neglectful or otherwise harmful to a child is strictly prohibited.

Expected standards of behaviour are further detailed in the College's Staff Code of Conduct, which outlines examples of acceptable and unacceptable interactions with students.

7. Support and Engagement of All Students

The College also appreciates that a child safety and wellbeing environment looks different for every student, and in delivering this, supports and respects the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as students with a disability or who are otherwise vulnerable (including students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and those with challenging home situations).

The College also appreciates that a student safe environment is contingent on a culturally safe environment, which requires proactive and ongoing efforts to maintain.

Our primary focus in delivering personalised education and through decision-making, is that all students are safe, feel safe, and are able to create and develop a range of strategies and skills, which can be used flexibly to flourish in all aspects of their lives. As such, we support and encourage students to talk openly and share their views, particularly about matters that directly impact them.

The College will aim to ensure students (and their parents) are provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and maintain a student's own personal safety and wellbeing, including:

- (a) Understanding, identifying, discussing and reporting child safety and wellbeing matters.
- (b) Standards of behaviour for students attending the College.
- (c) Healthy and respectful relationships (including those relating to gender and sexuality).
- (d) Resilience.

The College will aim to ensure that staff are provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and maintain a child and culturally safe environment, including through:

- (a) Actively supporting and encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families to:
 - (i) Express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights.
 - (ii) Facilitate participation and inclusion in all aspects of College life.
- (b) Implementing and embedding strategies within the College community that acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait culture and understand its importance to the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait children and students.
- (c) Cultural training to improve understanding and respect (particularly with regard to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture), appreciation of culturally sensitive issues, including using appropriate language



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when referring to individuals or communities, and to equip staff to build culturally safe environments for children and young people.

- (d) Identifying, confronting and addressing incidences of racism seriously (noting it will not be tolerated), with the appropriate consequences and where appropriate with the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and their families.
- (e) Ensuring that the College's strategies, practices, policies and procedures create a culturally safe and inclusive environment which values and respects the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and students, (including their families), as well as others from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- (f) Providing particular attention to the needs of students with a disability (or otherwise, additional needs), students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students who identify as LGBTIQ+ (or who are otherwise gender diverse), and those students who are unable to live at home.
- (g) Providing particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to promote and provide a culturally safe environment for them.

The College will promote its child safety and wellbeing practices to students in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand and user-friendly, including by:

- (a) The appointment of Child Safety Officers and a senior Child Safety Officer who champion child safety and wellbeing (see below).
- (b) Training staff to recognise the indicators of harm to students, including harm caused by not only adults but also other children and young people, and harm in an online environment.
- (c) Collaborating with parents to ensure that they are provided with the information necessary to maintain consistent messaging about child abuse and reportable conduct.
- (d) Encouraging students to identify safe and unsafe environments and situations (including in an online environment).
- (e) Setting clear child safety and wellbeing standards so that staff, students and the College community are aware of the standards that are expected, and those which fall short of the College's expectations.
- (f) Clearly communicating where students can access support, make a report about safety or wellbeing concerns, or otherwise obtain information.
- (g) Ensuring that students have identified safety and wellbeing, and support networks to overcome any barriers that may prevent disclosure of safety or wellbeing concerns.
 - o Ensuring that students have identified safety and wellbeing, and support, networks to overcome any barriers that may prevent disclosure of safety or wellbeing concerns.
 - o Ensuring staff are trained and supported to effectively implement this policy.



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8. Raising and Responding to Child Safety and Wellbeing Concerns

The College takes all allegations or disclosures of suspected child abuse and reportable conduct seriously and responds to such allegations and disclosures promptly and thoroughly.

All instances of suspected child abuse or reportable conduct, allegations of child abuse or reportable conduct or child safety and wellbeing concerns and complaints, must be reported to the Principal, a member of the College Executive Team, or a Child safety Officer, and will be treated very seriously and consistently according to the College's and individual staff member's internal and external reporting procedures and obligations.

The College has a *Child Protection Policy and Child Safety and Wellbeing – Raising and Responding to Concerns Policy*, available on the College's website, which set out:

- How concerns about actual and suspected child abuse and reportable conduct may be raised with the College.
- Who such concerns can be raised with at first instance (including the Principal, the College Executive Team and the College's Child safety Officers).
- How such concerns will be dealt with by the College (including by complying with any legislative reporting obligations, and the College's expectations of staff regarding information sharing and record keeping).
- How the College will support or assist children (and their families) who disclose such concerns, or who are otherwise linked to such concerns.
- The College's procedure for addressing concerns raised by staff or members of the college community about non-compliance with the College's child safety and wellbeing processes. This includes how such concerns may be raised and with whom, and how they will be addressed, in accordance with section 16(5) of the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017* (Qld).

The College will ensure that the procedures contained in the *Child Protection Policy and Child Safety and Wellbeing – Raising and Responding to Concerns Policy* is child-focused, and can be easily understood by the College community, in particular students.

If you believe a student is at immediate risk of child abuse, they must phone 000.

Other concerns may be raised by members of the College community in accordance with the College Complaints & Grievances Policy.

9. Reporting a Sexual Offence: Failure to Protect Offence

Failure by a person in authority to protect a child under the age of 16 from sexual abuse is also an offence under section 229BB of the *Criminal Code Act 1899* (Qld).

This applies where there is significant risk that a child under the care, supervision or control of the College (including a student at a school) will become a victim of a sexual offence by an adult associated with the College.

The person in a position of authority may be guilty of an offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but wilfully or negligently fail to do so.

The offence requires an associated person to reduce or remove a 'significant' risk. It is not a criminal offence to fail to eliminate every possible risk that a sexual offence may be committed against a child. However, there are a number of factors to assist associated persons in identifying risks which amount to 'significant' risks. These include:



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- The likelihood or probability that the child will become the victim of a sexual offence.
- The nature of the relationships between a child and the adult who may pose a risk to the child.
- The background of the adult who may pose a risk to the child, including any past or alleged misconduct.
- Any vulnerabilities particular to a child, which may increase the likelihood that they may become the victim of a sexual offence.
- Any other relevant fact which may indicate a significant risk of a sexual offence being committed against a child.

10. Child Safety and Wellbeing Employment Practices

The College believes that the safety and wellbeing of students is dependent on the existence of a student safe culture. Establishing that culture requires effective staff recruitment, supervision and management practices.

All positions at the College that involve student-connected work will have a position description, which clearly sets out:

- The position's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety and wellbeing.
- The applicant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to education and child safety and wellbeing.
- The College's values and commitment in respect of child safety and wellbeing.
- How the College will support those who make disclosures.

Child safety and wellbeing is a paramount consideration during the recruitment process. All staff working with children and young people must be suitable and reflect the College's values and commitment to child safety and wellbeing in practice.

The College assesses the suitability of staff to undertake student-connected work through screening (including identity checks), qualification verifications, values-based interviews, work history checks and referee checks.

All prospective staff will be informed about the College's child safety and wellbeing practices (including but not limited to this policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, the College's and individual staff member's record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations), and be subject to child safety and wellbeing screening in accordance with the College's obligations under legislation.

A successful applicant cannot commence at the College until written clearance in respect of child safety and wellbeing screening is obtained. A current QCT registration or **Blue Card** (or equivalent) must be sighted and verified by the College and appropriately recorded before staff can engage in student-connected work.

Appropriate and mandatory induction regarding the College's child safety and wellbeing practices (including policies and procedures) will follow any successful appointment or engagement.

The College requires that staff act professionally, and in a way that embodies the College's public commitment to child safety and wellbeing throughout their time at the College. The College has a Staff Code of Conduct, available on the College's website, which provides guidelines for staff on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities, and sets out examples of appropriate and inappropriate behaviours. The College will take

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appropriate disciplinary action where a staff member is found to have acted contrary to that Code, or the College's other policies and procedures regarding appropriate standards of behaviour.

At least annually, the College will ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to relevant staff (including the Board) engaged in student-connected work about:

- Individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for identifying and managing the risk of child abuse and reportable conduct.
- Child abuse and reportable conduct risks in the College environment (including the online environment).
- The College's current child safety and wellbeing standards and practices.
- The Quality Risk and Compliance Officer is responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure all staff complete the College's mandatory child safety and wellbeing training modules and briefings.

The College will ensure that privacy and employment law obligations are met when responding to student concerns and complaints.

Staff will otherwise be subject to regular supervision, training and periodic child safety and wellbeing checks, including to ensure their ongoing suitability for student-connected work.

1 1 . Child Safety Officers

The College has appointed Child Safety Officers (CSOs) as a first point of contact to provide advice and support to students, parents, and staff regarding the safety and wellbeing of students at the College.

The following Child Safety Officers may be contacted to provide advice and support:

Name	Position	Contact details
Kate Mortimer	Principal	k.mortimer@sheldoncollege.com
Lissa Gyte	Deputy Principal	l.gyte@sheldoncollege.com
Mardi Bolton	Director of Primary	m.bolton@sheldoncollege.com
Alex Sullivan	Director of Wellbeing	a.sullivan@sheldoncollege.com
Oliver McKillop	Assistant Director of Wellbeing Primary	o.mckillop@sheldoncollege.com
Shelley Conrad	College Psychologist	s.conrad@sheldoncollege.com
Child Safety Officers can also be contacted via Student Services on (07) 3206 5555		



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Child Safety Officers are able to act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of child safety and wellbeing and liaise with the Principal and the College Executive Team to maintain the visibility of child safety and wellbeing.

Staff are encouraged to speak with one of the Child Safety Officers should they hold any concerns relating to child safety and wellbeing.

Staff, students and parents can contact the Child Safety Officer for further information regarding child safety and wellbeing, and for any questions or concerns or reports of suspected or alleged child abuse or reportable conduct.

1 2 . Risk Management

The College will develop and implement risk management strategies regarding child safety and wellbeing, both online and in the physical College environment without compromising a student's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.

In identifying and assessing risks, the College will specifically consider risks arising in online environments, including inappropriate digital communication, online grooming, image-based abuse, misuse of social media, and unauthorised recording or distribution of images.

The College will implement preventative and protective controls to manage these risks, including clear digital communication boundaries for staff and students, appropriate supervision of online platforms used for College purposes, and ongoing education and training regarding online safety and respectful digital conduct.

These strategies will identify, control, remove and otherwise focus on preventing and reducing, the risk(s) of child abuse, reportable conduct and otherwise, risks to child safety and wellbeing by taking into account the nature of the environment, the activities expected to be conducted in that environment (including the provision of services by contractors or outside organisations), and the characteristics and needs of all students expected to be present in that environment.

In addition, these strategies will place a positive responsibility on ensuring that child safety and wellbeing is actively promoted at College.

Where the College identifies risks of actual or suspected child abuse or reportable conduct occurring in the online or physical College environment, it will make a written record of those risks and determine the action(s) it will take to remove or otherwise reduce the risks (risk controls and risk treatments).

The College will monitor, review and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls and risk treatments annually, and update these where required.

The College will ensure it creates, maintains and disposes of any records about child safety and wellbeing in line with applicable recordkeeping requirements, including minimum retention periods regarding these obligations. In addition, the College will detail its information sharing and record-keeping processes and ensure all staff (including volunteers) understand their relevant obligations.



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1 3 . Student Participation and Empowerment

The College recognises that a child safe culture is also contingent upon the participation and empowerment of students themselves.

Consistent with this understanding, the College will ensure:

- That students are informed about all their rights, including to safety, information and participation (for example, those in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child).
- That the importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged to help students feel safe and be less isolated.
- Where relevant, that children are offered access to child abuse (including sexual abuse) and reportable conduct prevention programs and other relevant information in an age-appropriate way.
- Staff are attuned to the signs of harm (including that caused by child abuse and reportable conduct) and facilitate child-friendly ways for students to express their views, participate in decision making and raise their concerns.
- The College has strategies and curriculum planning documents in place to develop a culture that facilitates participation and is responsive to the input of students.
- The College provides opportunities for students to participate and are responsive to their contributions, thereby strengthening confidence and engagement.

1 4 . Reflection and Continuous Improvement

The College is committed to continual improvement that is responsive to emerging thinking, evidence and practice, so as to eliminate (where practicable) the possibility of child safety risks occurring in the first place. Where the College can improve, it will strive to do so. The College will report on the outcomes of any relevant review to the College community.

1 5 . Child Safety and Wellbeing Responsibilities

Society as a whole shares responsibility for promoting the safety and protection of students from child abuse reportable conduct. In the College context, all members of the College community have a role to play.

However, specific responsibilities in respect of child safety and wellbeing are assigned to:

- The College Board.
- The Principal.
- The College Executive Team.
- Child Safety Officers.
- Staff.
- Students and parents/guardians



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16 . Breach of this Policy

The College emphasises the need for staff to fully comply with the requirements of this policy.

Staff found to be in breach of the requirements of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or engagement (as the case may be). Breaches may also result in notifications to appropriate authorities and/or the Police.

17 . Communication and Implementation

Communication

The College Board is responsible for ensuring:

- the College's staff and students, and students' parents and guardians, are made aware of the College's child safety and wellbeing policies and practices; and
- the processes are readily accessible by staff, students, parents and guardians.

The College complies with these obligations by:

- Making this policy publicly available on the College's website.
- Making this policy available to staff as part of the College's and the Board's internal policies and procedures. Aspects of (and updates to) the College's child safety and wellbeing framework, including this policy will be addressed in the College's professional development updates, training programs, bulletins and newsletters.

Implementation

The College Board is responsible for ensuring:

- staff are trained annually in implementing the College's child safety and wellbeing policies and practices; and
- the College is implementing the processes.

To comply with these obligations:

- The Board and Principal will review this policy and the College's child safety and wellbeing practices at least every two years (or more frequently, including in response to legislative amendments, an incident, changes to the College's internal procedures or practices, or otherwise as requested by the Principal) and implement improvements where applicable.
- Families and the college community will be afforded the opportunity to contribute to the review and development of the College's child safety and wellbeing policies and practices (including this policy).
- Annual training and refresher sessions on this policy are provided to all staff.
- The Principal is responsible for monitoring staff compliance with this policy.
- All staff must ensure that they abide by this policy and assist the College implementing this policy.



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SCHEDULE 1: CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING DEFINITIONS

1 Introduction

This Schedule sets out the key definitions used in the College's *Child Safety and Wellbeing* policies.

2 Definitions

Behaviour that causes **emotional or psychological harm to a child** includes sexual offences, sexual misconduct, physical violence and significant neglect. However, other types of behaviours can also cause emotional or psychological harm including, for example, severe or sustained instances of verbal abuse; coercive or manipulative behaviour; hostility towards, or rejection of, a child; and humiliation, belittling or scapegoating.

Blue Card means a mandatory child-related employment screening (Working with Children Check) in Queensland.

Child means a child under the age of 18 years, except in the case of certain mandatory reporting obligations which may define a child to be under a different age.

Child abuse means all forms of child abuse and includes:

- Any act committed against a child involving a sexual offence or grooming.
- The infliction on a child, of physical violence or serious emotional or psychological harm
- Serious neglect of a child.

Child in need of protection means a child who has suffered significant harm, is suffering significant harm, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm; and does not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.

CP Act means the *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld), as amended from time to time.

CSO Act means the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld), as amended from time to time.

Grooming is defined in the *Criminal Code Act 1899* (Qld) and refers to conduct in relation to a child, or a person who has care of a child, with intent to facilitate the procurement of the child to engage in a sexual act, or expose, without legitimate reason, the child to any indecent matter. Grooming may be identified by attempts being made at establishing an intimate relationship with befriending or influencing a child (or, in some circumstances, members of the child's family). In this respect, grooming involves psychological manipulation that is usually very subtle, drawn out, calculated, controlling and premeditated).

Harm means any detrimental effect of a significant nature on a child's physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing. Harm may arise in any manner, regardless of the cause.

It is immaterial how the harm is caused.

It may result from physical, psychological, or emotional abuse or neglect, or sexual abuse or exploitation. Harm may occur as a single incident or through a series or combination of acts, omissions, or circumstances.



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Mandatory reporter has the meaning given to it by section 13E of the CP Act. It includes but is not limited to registered teachers (including early childhood teachers), staff with post-secondary qualifications employed in the care, education or minding of children, College principals, registered nurses, students in training to become teachers (who have been granted permission to teach under relevant legislation), registered psychologists, out of home care workers, early childhood workers and any other person referred to in section 13F of the CP Act.

Neglect refers to an individual's failure to meet their obligations and responsibilities to keep a child safe and well, and can include:

- Supervisory neglect, which is the absence or inattention of a staff member which places the child at risk of physical harm or injury, sexual abuse or allows other criminal behaviour to occur.
- Physical neglect, which is the failure to provide basic physical necessities for a child, such as adequate food, clothing, housing or medical attention.

Parent includes a guardian or carer, and 'parents' has a corresponding meaning.

Physical violence includes an act that causes physical injury or pain. Examples of physical violence can include:

- Hitting, kicking and punching.
- Pushing, shoving, grabbing, throwing and shaking.
- Using an object to hit or strike.
- Using inappropriate restraint/excessive force.

Physical violence does not include lawful behaviour. For example:

- Reasonable steps taken to protect a child from immediate harm, such as taking their arm to stop them from going into oncoming traffic.
- Medical treatment given in good faith by an appropriately qualified staff member, such as a senior first aid officer administering first aid.

Threats of physical violence that do not cause physical injury or pain may still amount to behaviour that causes emotional or psychological harm.

QCT means the Queensland College of Teachers.

QFCC means the Queensland Family and Child Commission

Reasonable belief means a belief that would lead a reasonable person in the same position as you, and with the same information as you to form a belief that child abuse (including sexual abuse) or reportable conduct is occurring or may occur. There must be some objective basis for the belief. However, it is not necessary to have proof to form a reasonable belief, nor do you need to make a judgement about the truth of an allegation. However, a reasonable belief is more than suspicion, mere rumour or speculation.

For example, a 'reasonable belief' about a sexual offence might be formed when:



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- A student states that they have been sexually abused.
- A student states that they know someone who has been sexually abused (because sometimes the student may be talking about themselves).
- Someone who knows a student states that the student has been sexually abused.
- Professional observations of the student's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the student has been sexually abused.
- Signs of sexual abuse lead to a belief that the student has been sexually abused.

It is permissible to ask a person raising a concern with you, sufficient questions to establish a reasonable belief. However, care should be taken not to ask the person any suggestive or leading questions.

Staff who are not sure whether they have a reasonable belief must consult with a SSO or a member of the College Executive Team.

Reportable allegation means an allegation or other information that leads a person to form a reasonable belief that a staff member has committed:

- reportable conduct; or
- misconduct that may involve reportable conduct.

For this definition, it is irrelevant whether the conduct or misconduct is alleged to have occurred in the course of the worker performing work for the College.

Reportable conduct means:

- 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.

Reportable conviction means a conviction for an offence committed by a staff member against a law of a State or the Commonwealth that may involve reportable conduct.

A conviction includes:

- A finding of guilt, and the acceptance of a plea of guilty, by a court, whether or not a conviction is recorded.
- A spent conviction, or a conviction that has become spent under a law of another State or the Commonwealth.

Reportable suspicion (for the mandatory reporting regime) means a suspicion formed on reasonable grounds that a child:



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- Has suffered, is suffering, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse.
- May not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.

College means Sheldon College.

College community means all those who are directly and indirectly involved with the Sheldon College, including students, parents, carers and alumni, as well as businesses, charitable organisations and locals that are affiliated with the College.

College Executive Team refers to the Principal, Deputy Principal, Director of Primary, Director of Wellbeing, Director of Teaching and Learning, Director of Early Learning Centre, Director of Business and Finance, Director of Human Resources, Director of Marketing and Communications, Director of ICT, Director of Community Engagement, Director of The Arts, and Director of Sport.

Sexual misconduct means conduct that is sexual in nature, other than conduct that constitutes a child sexual offence. Examples of conduct that may be sexual misconduct includes behaviour, physical contact or speech or other communication of a sexual nature (including inappropriate touching, grooming behaviour and voyeurism).

Other examples of sexual misconduct include:

- Developing an intimate relationship with a student, for example, through regular contact with the student without the knowledge or approval of the College;
- Inappropriately discussing sex and sexuality with a student; or
- Other overtly sexual acts that could lead to the College taking disciplinary or other action.

Sexual offence means:

(a) a child sexual offence under section 207A of the *Criminal Code Act 1899* (Qld);

(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 (a) or (b) if it were committed in Queensland.

Sexual offences include sexual assault (including rape and attempted rape), indecent acts, possession of child abuse material, exposure to pornography, and grooming.

Significant, in relation to harm or neglect, means that the harm is more than trivial or insignificant, but need not be as high as serious and need not have a lasting permanent effect.

Staff and **staff members** include Board members, the Principal, employees, volunteers, contractors, and other authorised personnel required to perform functions on the College's premises, or at College-organised activities and events.

Student means a child under 18 years of age, and any student at the College over 18 years of age, and 'students' has a corresponding meaning.

Student-connected work means work authorised by the College and performed by an adult in a College environment while children or young people are present or reasonably expected to be present.



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Victimisation means treating a person unfairly or unreasonably because they, or someone associated with them, has made, or intends to raise a concern about child safety or student wellbeing, or who is otherwise involved or participates in the College's, or an external body's investigation of the concern.



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SCHEDULE 2: CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING RESPONSIBILITIES

1 Introduction

This Schedule is part of the College's child safety and wellbeing framework and sets out how the College allocates responsibility for meeting its public commitment to child safety and wellbeing.

2 Responsibilities

2.1 The Board

The Board is the governing body for the legal entity which operates the College, and as such is ultimately responsible for ensuring that child safety and wellbeing (and in particular the care, safety and welfare of children and young people) is the College's paramount consideration.

Without limiting that responsibility, the Board:

- Acquires guidance and information on child safety and wellbeing matters and keeps up-to-date with its child safety and wellbeing obligations through engaging in professional development.
- Satisfies itself that the College has strategies (reflected through policies, procedures, words and actions) to embed a culture of child safety and wellbeing in the governance, operations and culture of the College.
- Delegates roles and responsibilities to the Principal, for achieving the College's child safety and wellbeing strategies.
- Satisfies itself that the Principal has allocated appropriate roles and responsibilities to the College Executive Team, and to staff, for achieving the College's child safety and wellbeing strategies.
- Satisfies itself that the College community is engaged and informed about the College's child safety and wellbeing strategies, and allocation of roles and responsibilities.
- Ensures that the College, and in particular the Principal, has adequate resources and support to achieve the College's child safety and wellbeing strategies.
- Keeps the Principal and, via the Principal keeps, all staff accountable for achieving the College's child safety and wellbeing strategies, sharing relevant information and ensuring adequate recordkeeping in accordance with applicable recordkeeping requirements.
- Periodically reviews the effectiveness of the College's child safety and wellbeing strategies in practice (including by, if considered appropriate, revising those strategies).
- Ensures that child safety and wellbeing remain a regular Board agenda item for review, reflection and discussion as well as ensuring that the College reports on the outcomes of any relevant review to the College community.
- Ensures that privacy and employment law obligations are met when responding to student concerns and complaints.



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2.2 The Principal

In accordance with good governance, the Board delegates responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the College – and in particular the care, safety, wellbeing and welfare of students – to the Principal.

The Principal is therefore responsible at a day-to-day level, and accountable to the Board, for taking all practical measures to ensure that:

- The College has a child safety and cultural safety culture (including in the online environment), and that this is promoted within the College environment – such as at assemblies and on posters in visible locations.
- The College's child safety and wellbeing strategies are achieved, both in policy and in practice.
- The College's child safety and wellbeing policies are communicated to parents, students and families, and that input is sought from them regarding policy development and review, and that the processes contained within are understood and culturally safe.
- Staff are enabled, prepared and supported when managing child safety and wellbeing complaints, including in their support of the student(s) involved (and, where appropriate, their families).
- Staff are educated, and complying with, their professional and statutory responsibilities regarding child safety and wellbeing.
- Staff are enabled, prepared and supported in identifying the risks to child safety and wellbeing, noting that indicators of harm may vary depending on the differences and needs of the student.
- Staff are enabled, prepared and supported to create, maintain and dispose of records about child safety and wellbeing in line with applicable recordkeeping requirements.
- Staff champion and model compliance with child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures.
- Concerns about child safety and wellbeing are dealt with seriously, promptly and thoroughly, and in accordance with the College's policies and procedures, and any statutory obligations and that the College co-operate with law enforcement agencies and relevant authorities as required.
- The Board receives timely reports regarding student child and wellbeing concerns and risks, or any developments regarding the College's child safety and wellbeing obligations.

2.3 The College Executive Team

The College Executive Team is committed to 'leading from the front' and engaging in a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety and wellbeing issues.

Where appropriate, the College Executive Team will assist the Principal with discharging the child safety and wellbeing responsibilities outlined in this document, and as otherwise required by legislation and good practice.

2.4 Child Safety Officers

Key responsibilities for the College's CSOs include:



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- Having a good working knowledge and appreciation of the College's child safety and wellbeing framework.
- Without replacing any legal reporting obligations any person may have, supporting the Principal in promptly managing the College's response to an allegation of actual or suspected child abuse or reportable conduct, and ensuring that the allegation is taken seriously and responded to appropriately and thoroughly.
- Ensuring the College's child safety and wellbeing strategies are clearly and regularly communicated to staff, students and other members of the College community.
- Ensuring the College's child safety and wellbeing strategies are being implemented effectively and are strengthened where required.
- Ensuring a strong and sustainable child safety and wellbeing culture is embedded within the College.

2.5 Staff

All staff are required to comply with the College's child safety and wellbeing framework (including in particular this policy, *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*), as well as their legal and professional obligations with respect to the prevention and reporting of actual or suspected child abuse and reportable conduct,

It is each such staff member's individual responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse or reportable conduct, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have with one of the Principal, the College Executive Team, the College's SSOs (and/or with external agencies, where required). In this regard, staff are encouraged to voice their concerns, no matter how minor, trivial or insignificant.

All contractors and volunteers involved in student-connected work are required to adhere to this policy and the *Staff Code of Conduct* and are responsible for contributing to the safety and wellbeing of students in the College environment. They too have obligations with respect to the reporting of actual or suspected child abuse or reportable conduct.

Again, it is the College's expectation that contractors, and volunteers are attuned to their individual responsibilities and act in accordance with their internal and external reporting obligations, and the College's policies and procedures.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Revision	Issue Date	Summary of Changes
1.0	Oct 2025	Initial Release
2.0	Jun 2026	Reviewed in line and updated in line with Reportable Conduct legislation