

## CHILD PROTECTION - RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Executive Management Committee

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this strategy is to eliminate and minimise risk to child safety to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students.

### SCOPE

Students and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements.

### RESPONSIBILITY

Executive Management Committee

### POINT OF CONTACT

Principal

#### **Supersedes:**

Version 2015

#### **Authorised by:**

Executive Management Committee

#### **Date of Authorisation:**

2017

#### **Review Date:**

Annually

#### **Next Review Date:**

2018

#### **Policy Owner:**

Discovery Christian College Executive Management Committee

### POLICY STATEMENT

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

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

## Implementation

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

### 1. Code of Conduct

At Discovery Christian College we expect our employees to conduct themselves as follows: College employees are expected to always behave in ways that promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people. They must actively seek to prevent harm to children and young people, and to support those who have been harmed.

#### Specific responsibilities include:

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

This commitment is evidence of Discovery Christian College's fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(b) of the Regulation.

### 2. Recruitment, Selection, Training and Management Procedures

Discovery Christian College is committed to recruiting, selecting, training and managing employees in such a way that limits risks to children.

In particular, Discovery Christian College will:

- Ensure that its recruitment and selection procedures act to reduce the risk of harm to children from employees via:
  - Accurate position descriptions, including whether the successful applicant must be a teacher registered with the Queensland College of Teachers (who has been subject to relevant police and other safety checks), whether a Blue Card is necessary for the successful applicant, the responsibilities and supervision associated with the position, the nature and environment of the service provided to children, and the experience and qualifications required by the successful applicant
  - Advertising the position with a clear statement about the College's commitment to safe and supportive work practices and identifying that candidates will be subject to a teacher registration check or Blue Card screening, a police check, referee checks, identification verification and the requirement to disclose any information relevant to the candidates' eligibility to engage in activities including young people
  - A selection process that includes assessing the application via an interview process and referee and other checks (as identified above) based on the accurate position description
  - A probationary period of employment, which allows the College to further assess the suitability of the new employee and to act as a check on the selection process
- Ensure that its training and management procedures act to reduce the risk of harm to children from employees via:
  - Management processes that are consistent, fair and supportive
  - Performance management processes to help employees to improve their performance in a positive manner
  - Supportive processes for staff when they are experiencing challenges, such as mentoring, mediation, conflict resolution, coaching, additional training, and external support and counselling services

- An induction program which thoroughly addresses the College’s policies and procedures, particularly its expectations regarding child risk management and to assist employees to understand their role in providing a safe and supportive environment for children
- Training new and existing staff on an ongoing basis to enhance skills and knowledge and to reduce exposure to risks, as follows:
  - The college’s policies and procedures
  - Identifying, assessing and minimising risks to children
  - Handling a disclosure or suspicion of harm to a child
- Keeping a record of the training provided to employees
- Exit interviews to assist the college to identify broader issues of concern that may impact on the safety and welling of children at the college.

This commitment is evidence of Discovery Christian College’s fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(c) of the Regulation.

### **3. Handling Disclosures or Suspicions of Harm**

Any of the types of concerns or reports below should be reported and managed under the Discovery Christian College Child Protection Policy and Procedure as follows:

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

In accordance with the Child Protection Act 1999, if a staff member, teaching or non-teaching, is aware or reasonably suspects harm has been caused to a student under 18 years and the harm has not been reported under the Child Protection Policy, the staff member must report the harm to the college’s Principal. The types of harm reported may include emotional or psychological abuse or neglect or sexual exploitation.

If the Principal is aware or reasonably suspects the harm has been caused and that the student is in need of protection, the Principal must report the harm or suspected harm to the Chief Executive of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (or other department administering the Child Protection Act 1999). In assessing whether a student is in need of protection, the Principal will consider the “Significant Harm Test” and the “Parent Willing and Able Test” (see Appendix 3), as well as utilise the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services’ Child Protection Guide resource.

Please refer to Discovery Christian College’s Child Protection Procedure as well as to Independent Schools Queensland’s Child Protection Decision Support Trees for information of the process for reporting all types of harm, including sexual abuse. These can be found in Appendix 4.

To report any type of harm, all staff members should use the Report of Suspected Harm or Sexual Abuse Form in Appendix 2 of this Strategy.

Furthermore, and in accordance with section 76 of the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005, the Principal of Discovery Christian College will report to the Queensland College of Teachers any investigations into allegations of harm caused, or likely to be caused, to a child because of the conduct of a relevant teacher at the College .

This commitment is evidence of Discovery Christian College’s fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(d) of the Regulation.

### **4. Managing Breaches of this Child Risk Management Strategy**

Discovery Christian College is committed to appropriately managing breaches of this Child Risk Management Strategy in accordance with its other relevant policies as appropriate in the circumstances, such as its Child Protection Policy, Employee Code of Conduct, Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedures and this is evidence of fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(e) of the Regulation.

## 5. Implementing and Reviewing the Child Risk Management Strategy

This Strategy in its entirety and its related policies and procedures are evidence of fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(f)(i) of the Regulations relating to implementation.

The introduction to this Child Risk Management Strategy and the “Compliance and Monitoring” section below state Discovery Christian College’s commitment to reviewing the Strategy annually and are evidence of fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(f)(i) of the Regulation relating to review.

## 6. Blue Card Policies and Procedures

Discovery Christian College is committed to acting in accordance with Chapter 8 of the Act relating to the screening of employees in such a way that limits risks to children.

In particular, Discovery Christian College will:

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

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

## 7. High Risk Management Plans

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

This commitment is evidence of Discovery Christian College’s fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1)(g) of the Regulation.

## 8. Strategies of Communication and Support

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

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

## Responsibilities

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

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

## Compliance and Monitoring

Discovery Christian College is committed to the annual review of this Strategy. The College will also record, monitor and report to Executive Management Committee and College Leadership regarding any breaches of the Strategy.

In addition, Discovery Christian College is committed to other various compliance and monitoring arrangements made under relevant policies and procedures.

## Related Documents

- Discovery Christian College Child Protection Policy
- Discovery Christian College Dispute Resolution Policy
- Discovery Christian College Blue Card Register
- Discovery Christian College Risk Management Framework
- Discovery Christian College Child Protection Procedures
- Discovery Christian College Dispute Resolution Procedures
- Discovery Christian College Employee Code of Conduct
- Discovery Christian College Recruitment Policy
- Discovery Christian College Performance Management System

## Helpful Links

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

## References

- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011 (Qld)
- Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)
- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001 (Qld)
- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld)
- Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)
- Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2006 (Qld)
- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth)
- Education (Overseas Students) Regulation 1998 (Qld)
- Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 (Qld)
- Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) Act 2011 (Qld)
- Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011 (Qld)
- Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit

## Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Summary of Reporting Harm
- Appendix 2 – Report of Suspected Harm or Sexual Abuse Form
- Appendix 3 - Useful Definitions

## Summary of Reporting Harm

Who	What abuse	Test	Report to	Legislation	Status
All staff	Sexual	Awareness or a reasonable suspicion Sexually abused or likely to be sexually abused	Principal, through to Police	EGPA, sections 366 and 366A	Unchanged
Teacher	Sexual and physical	Significant harm Parent may not be willing and able	Confer with Principal, report to Child Safety	CPA, sections 13E and 13G	New
All staff	Physical, psychological, emotional, neglect, exploitation	Significant harm Parent may not be willing and able	Principal, through to Child Safety	Accreditation Regulations, section 10	Amended
All staff	Any	Not of a level that is otherwise reportable to Child Safety, refer with consent	Principal, through to Family and Child Connect	CPA, sections 13B and 159M	New
Principal	Any	Not of a level that is otherwise reportable to Child Safety, refer without consent	Family and Child Connect	CPA, sections 13B and 159M	New
Any member of the public	Any	Significant harm Parent may not be willing and able	Child Safety	CPA, section 13A	Unchanged

## Appendix 2 – Report of Suspected Harm or Sexual Abuse Form

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# Private and Confidential

## Report of Suspected Harm or Sexual Abuse

DATE	
COLLEGE	
COLLEGE PHONE	
COLLEGE FAX	

### DETAILS OF STUDENT/ CHILD HARMED OR AT RISK OF HARM OR ABUSE

LEGAL NAME	
DOB:	
YEAR LEVEL	
<input type="checkbox"/> ABORIGINAL <input type="checkbox"/> TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER <input type="checkbox"/> ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER	
DOES THE STUDENT HAVE A DISABILITY VERIFIED UNDER EAP? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	DISABILITY CATEGORY
STUDENT'S RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS	PHONE
	STUDENT'S MOBILE

### FAMILY DETAILS

Parent/caregiver 1:	Relationship to Student:
Address (if different from student):	
Phone: (H):	(M):
(W):	
Parent/caregiver 2:	Relationship to Student:
Address (if different from student):	
Phone: (H):	(M):
(W):	
Is the student in out of home care: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

### PERSON ALLEGED TO HAVE CAUSED THE HARM OR ABUSE

Adult family member     Child family member     Other adult     Student/other child     Unknown

### PROVIDE ALL INFORMATION YOU HAVE WHICH LED TO THE SUSPICION OF HARM OR ABUSE

(Attach extra pages if necessary)

Details of any harm and/or sexual abuse to the student – please include: Time and date of the incident; source of information; details of person alleged to have caused the harm or sexual abuse; physical appearance of any injury; immediate and ongoing safety concerns; any disclosures made by student; any previous incidents of harm; behavioural indicators of harm; presence of any medical needs or developmental delays; and if the information relates to an unborn child, the alleged risk to the unborn child.

**Please indicate the identity of anyone else who may have information about the harm or abuse**

**Additional information provided as an attachment    Yes  No**

Name of staff member making report to the Statutory Agency if not the Principal	Signature
Position	Date
Principal	Signature
Principal's email address:	
Response requested by College <b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	

**ACTION TAKEN**

Form was faxed or emailed to (please tick which agencies the form was sent to):	<input type="checkbox"/>	Queensland Police Services (QPS)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Department of Communities (Child Safety Services)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family and Child Connect

(Adapted from EQ SP-4 Report of Suspected Harm or Risk of Harm)

**Confirm receipt of faxed or emailed form and ensure original is stored in a secure location along with any other documentation collected for the purpose of this report.**

## Appendix 3 - Useful Definitions

### What is a reportable suspicion?

In a school [or College] situation, as mandatory reporters, teachers must report to Child Safety a “reportable suspicion” about a student, formed in the course of their employment. A reportable suspicion is one where a teacher has a reasonable suspicion that a student has suffered, is suffering, or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse; and may not have a parent able and willing to protect the student from harm.

The key tests when forming a “reportable suspicion” are as follows:

1. The student must have suffered, is suffering, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm caused by the physical or sexual abuse (known at the “Significant Harm Test”); and
2. The student may not have a parent able and willing to protect them from the harm (known as the “Parent Willing and Able Test”).

### Who is a mandatory reporter?

A mandatory reporter is an approved teacher [as defined by the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005] and currently working at a school [or College].

### What is harm?

Harm is defined in section 9 of the Child Protection Act 1999 (“the Act”) as: Harm, to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child’s physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused.

### Harm can be caused by

- a) A single act, omission or circumstance; or
- b) A series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.

Harm means damage or injury caused by abuse to a child’s body, to a child’s emotional state or to a child’s psychological state. Abuse may be physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect. Harm is the effect or impact on the child of the abuse. Abuse can be defined as an action such as: hitting; punching; fondling; and exposure to domestic violence or scapegoating; or it can be inaction such as failure to provide medical care; or failure to provide appropriate stimulation.

### The “Significant Harm Test”

When considering the significance of harm under mandatory reporting obligations, the Act provides guidance under section 13C.

The matters that the person may consider include:

- a) Whether there are detrimental effects on the child’s body or the child’s psychological or emotional state
  - I. That are evident to the person; or
  - II. That the person considers are likely to become evident in the future
- b) In relation to any detrimental effects to the child the reporter may consider:
  - I. Their nature and severity; and
  - II. The likelihood that they will continue, and
- c) The child’s age.

The person’s consideration may be informed by an observation of the child, other knowledge about the child or any other relevant knowledge, training or experience that the person may have. This recognises that a College staff member may detect an impact of harm for a child that the ordinary person may not identify.

### The “Parent Willing and Able Test”

A parent may be willing to protect a child, but not have capacity to do so and therefore they are not considered “able”. This includes situations such as where the parent’s inability is due to factors such as intellectual impairment or ill health. Alternatively, a parent may have the capacity to protect a child (able), but may choose not to do so (not willing).

This might include situations where parents choose an ongoing relationship with a person who is abusing their child and are thus “unwilling” to protect the child. If there is considered to be at least one parent “able” and “willing” to protect the child, the child is considered to not be in “need of protection”.

### **What is sexual abuse?**

Under the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 s364, sexual abuse includes sexual behaviour involving the child and another person in the following circumstances—

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

### **What is physical abuse?**

According to Child Safety, physical abuse occurs when a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, non-accidental physical trauma or injury.

Physical abuse can include:

- Hitting;
- Shaking;
- Throwing;
- Burning;
- Biting;
- Poisoning.

Physical abuse is not determined by how bad the mark or injury is, but rather by the act itself that causes injury or trauma to the child.

### **What is psychological emotional abuse?**

According to Child Safety, psychological or emotional abuse occurs when a child’s social, emotional, cognitive or intellectual development is impaired or threatened.

It can include emotional deprivation due to persistent:

- Rejection;
- Hostility;
- Teasing/bullying;
- Yelling; Criticism;
- Exposure of a child to domestic and family violence.

### **What is neglect?**

According to Child Safety, neglect occurs when a child’s basic necessities of life are not met, and their health and development are affected.

Basic needs include:

- Food;
- Housing;
- Health care;
- Adequate clothing;
- Personal hygiene;
- Hygienic living conditions;
- Timely provision of medical treatment;
- Adequate supervision.

### **Who is a parent?**

The parent of a child generally means the child’s birth mother or father, or adoptive parents. Under the Act:

1. A parent of a child is the child’s mother, father or someone else having or exercising parental responsibility for the child.
2. However, a person standing in the place of a parent of a child on a temporary basis is not a parent of the child.

3. A parent of an Aboriginal child includes a person who, under Aboriginal tradition, is regarded as a parent of the child.
4. A parent of a Torres Strait Islander child includes a person who, under Island custom, is regarded as a parent of the child.

**What is Family and Child Connect?**

Family and Child Connect (FCC) is a service which provides an identifiable and easily accessible central referral point for families and professionals to access family services.

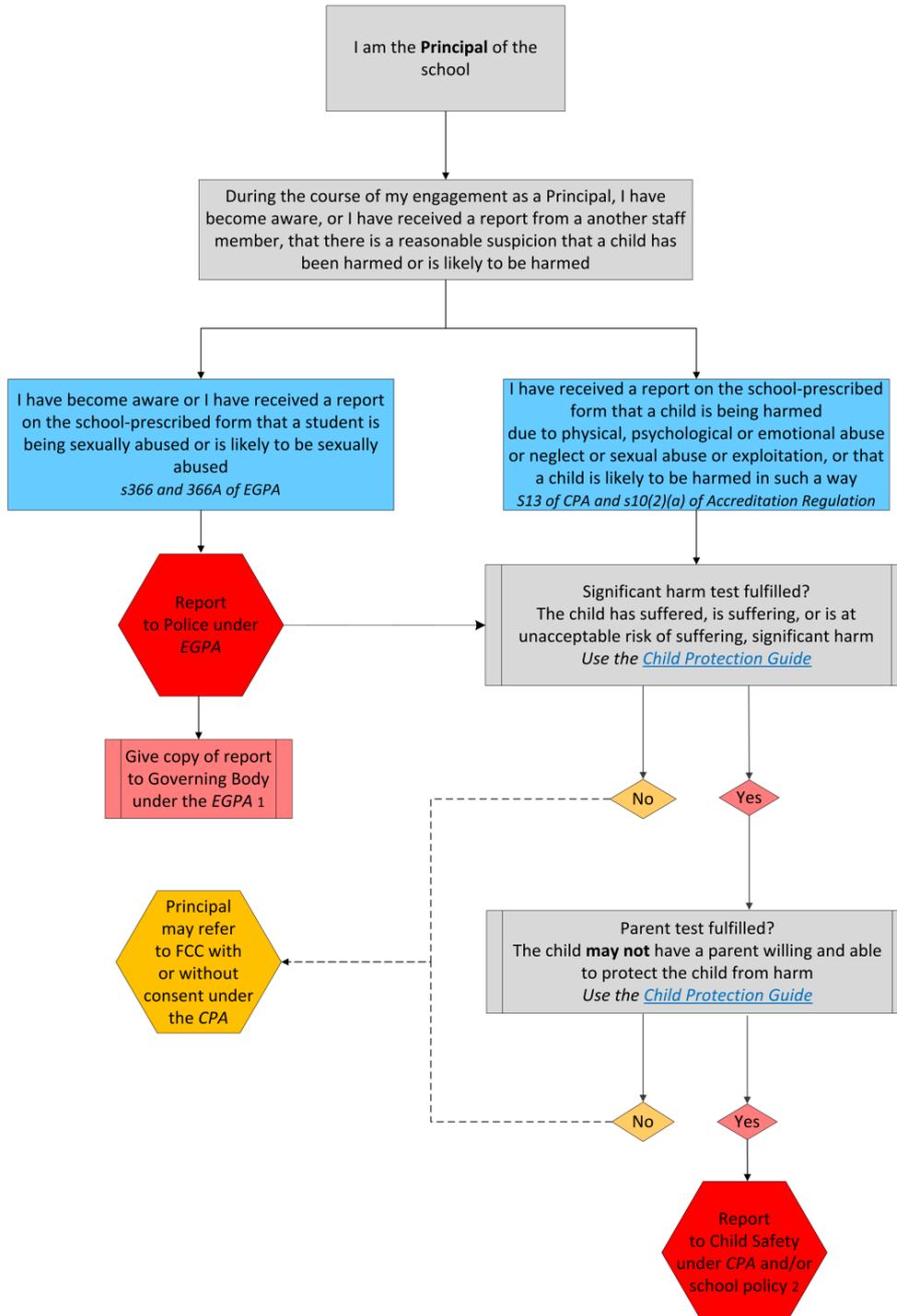
**What is a referrer?**

A referrer is anyone who contacts FCC to refer a child or family for support and assistance. For schools and colleges, this person will most commonly be the Principal.

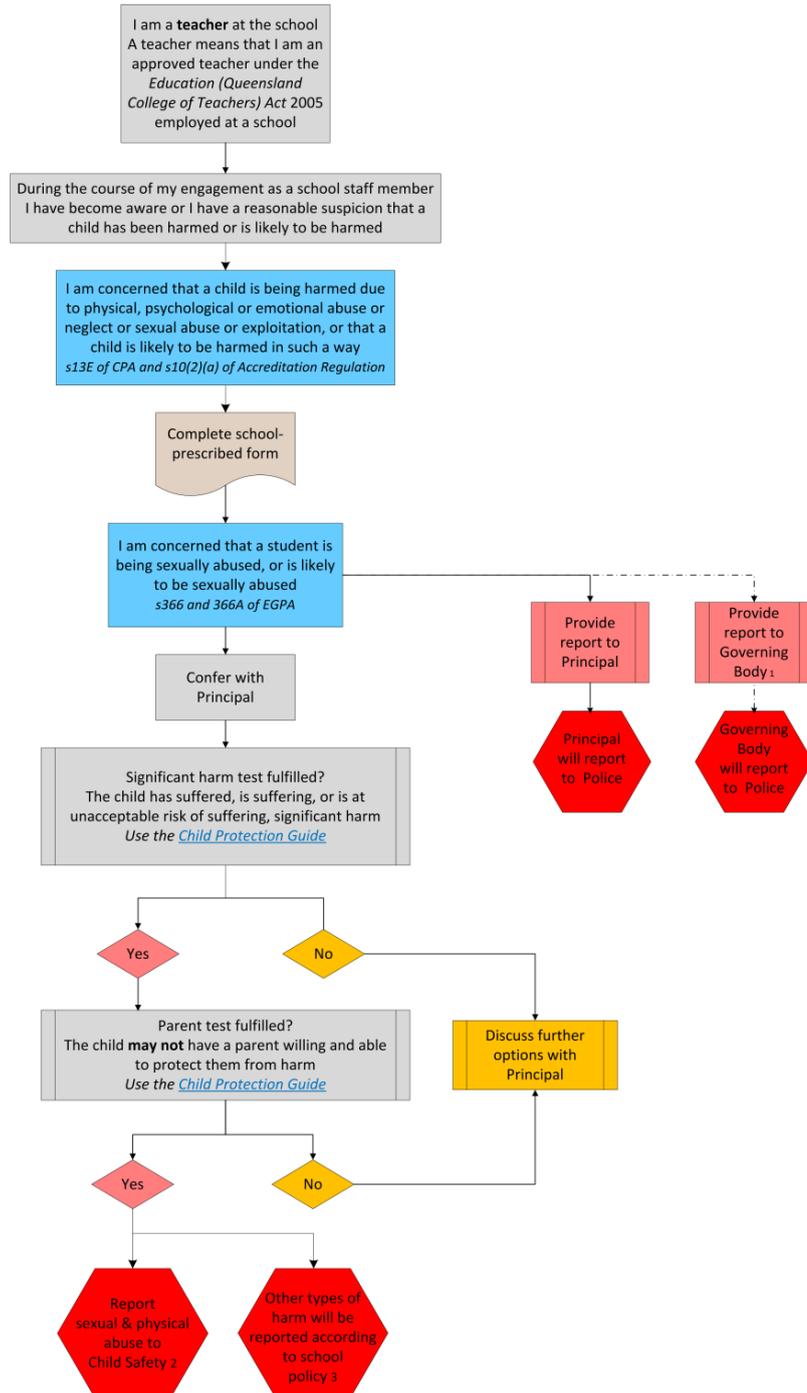
## Appendix 4 – Independent Schools Queensland - Child Protection Decision Support Trees

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## Child Protection Decision Support Tree for Principals



## Child Protection Decision Support Tree for Teachers



## Child Protection Decision Support Tree for Non-Teaching Staff

