Child Protection Policy

Custodian	Principal	Last Review	May 2025
Ratified by Custodian	May 2025	Next Review	May 2027

1 DEFINITIONS

Authorised Person	The person in the School with approval to share information with third parties. These are Senior Executive and Wellbeing Supervisors.
Bar Status	Applicants with a bar status will not be provided with a child-related worker's number and are restricted from engaging in child-related work and not able to apply for another clearance for five years. Employers are notified by the Office of the Children's Guardian and instructed to remove such persons from child-related work.
Complaint	Refers to any suggestion of abuse or harm that is disclosed, witnessed or demonstrated by a student.
Concerning Conduct	Refers to any behaviour or pattern of behaviour that may pose a risk to the safety of students. This may also include ambiguous behaviours that are potentially inappropriate for students to be exposed to but are not necessarily indicators of abuse.
Criminal Conduct	Refers to conduct that, if proven would constitute a criminal offence and would trigger a mandatory report to the Police.
Disqualified person	A person who has been convicted, or against whom proceedings have commenced, for a disqualifying offence outlined in Schedule 2 of Working With Children Act. A disqualified person cannot be granted a working with children check clearance and is therefore restricted from engaging in child related work
Employees	Paid members of staff, whether full-time, part-time or casual.
External Workers	Student teachers, work experience students, church ministry workers, consultants, contractors (including specialist teachers), sub-contractors, self-employed persons, ministers of religion and members of religious organisations.
Grooming Behaviour	Behaviours that manipulate and control a child, their family and other support networks, or institutions with the intent of gaining access to the child, obtaining the child's compliance, maintaining the child's silence, and avoiding discovery of sexual abuse. Grooming may take place in person and online, and is often difficult to identify and define. This is because the behaviours involved are not necessarily explicitly sexual, directly abusive or criminal in themselves, and may only be recognised in hindsight. Some grooming behaviours are consistent with behaviours or activities in non-abusive relationships, and can even include desirable social behaviours, with the only difference being motivation. Perpetrators may groom children, other people in children's lives, and institutions.
Head of Relative Entity	Refers to the School Principal, or their delegate.
HR Administrator	Refers to the Principal Personal Assistant
Investigator	The Principal or their appointed qualified investigator/s
Misconduct	Refers to behaviours that may not meet the threshold of reportable conduct, but which constitute a breach of the Staff Code of Conduct.
Natural Justice	A minimum standard of fairness.
Principal	Refers to the School Principal or their delegate.
Procedural Fairness	A means of achieving natural justice when resolving a matter through an open and fair process of investigation and decision making that is free of bias and observes people's right to a fair hearing.
PSOA	Person Subject of the Allegation
Reportable Allegation	Refers to any allegation against an employee that on a *prima facie* basis meets the threshold of reportable conduct, triggering a mandatory report to the Office of the Children's Guardian.
Reportable Conduct	Behaviour of the following kind by an employee: • any sexual offence, or sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including a child pornography offence), or • any assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child, or

	• an offence under s 43B (failure to protect) or s 316A (failure to report) of the Crimes Act 1900; and • any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child, with or without the consent of the child.
Rights of Children	Children have the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child).
Risk Management	The process of identifying the potential for incident or accident, and taking steps to reduce the likelihood or severity of its occurrence.
Risk of Significant Harm	A student is at risk of significant harm if the circumstance may be reasonably expected to produce a substantial and demonstrably adverse impact on the student's safety, welfare or wellbeing. Such risk can result from a single act or omission, or an accumulation of these.
School Community	Includes employees, volunteers and all students and families of the school.
Student	Any person who is enrolled in the School, whether a child (under the age of 16 years) or a young person (between the ages of 16 and 18), or a person over the age of 18 years.
Volunteers	Any person engaged by the School to act on the School's behalf on an unpaid basis.
Vulnerable Student	Refers to any student who may be exposed to greater risk of harm due to their experience, ability, location or background.
Wellbeing Supervisor	Refers to the Heads of Schools; Junior and Senior

2 CONTEXT

The School considers all people precious as they are made in God's image and must be treated with honour and respect. It is committed to fulfilling its legal obligations and responsibilities relating to Child Protection and to being a Child Safe Institution. The Principal strives to create a Child Safe culture by adopting effective strategies and procedures for monitoring, communicating and managing matters relating to Child Protection.

3 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy and the accompanying Guidelines is to provide a framework and rationale for Child Protection practices within the School. The accompanying Guidelines specify preventative and responsive actions and practices that the School adopts to help children, parents, volunteers and employees recognise unacceptable behaviours and respond appropriately in the event that they become aware of, or suspect, a violation of the rights of a child.

4 POLICY STATEMENTS

The School:

4.1 complies with all current Child Protection legislation;

4.2 places the utmost importance on the safety and wellbeing of both students and employees and therefore considers it the responsibility of all members of the School community;

4.3 recognises that families have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their child and therefore it affords them the right to participate in decisions affecting their child;

4.4 seeks to provide a Child Safe culture that evaluates, manages and reduces the risk of harm to children;

4.5 seeks to promote a culture that, in all circumstances, meets the cultural, linguistic and emotional needs of all members of its community without undermining procedural fairness;

4.6 maintains procedures for monitoring, communicating and managing Child Protection matters.

4.7 will only employ persons with a valid Working With Children's Check clearance.

4.8 undertakes to educate and equip employees, parents, volunteers and students regarding their rights and responsibilities with regards Child Protection.

4.9 will treat all Child Protection related complaints very seriously.

4.10 will undertake Child Protection investigations without undue delay, using evidence-based practices.

4.11 complies with confidentiality and privacy requirements; and

4.12 securely maintains records relevant to this policy in perpetuity.

5 GUIDELINES

More detailed guidelines for the internal management of Child Protection related matters are itemised in a separate statement for staff. Other members of the School community should be guided by staff at relevant times.

5.1 Members of the School community must treat any Child Protection concern with strict confidentiality and report the matter to the relevant authority as soon as practicable. If the concern is in relation to:

5.1.1 a student at 'risk of significant harm,' report to the relevant Head of School;

5.1.2 an employee involved in inappropriate behaviour or 'reportable conduct,' report to the Principal;

5.1.3 an employee who is the subject of any reportable allegation or conviction,' report to the Principal.

5.2 If the concern is in relation to the Principal, inform the Chair of the School Board of Directors in writing via the School's postal address.

6 POLICY ADMINISTRATION

6.1 Origins

6.1.1 Requirements – This policy meets the requirements of the following legislation and regulations

- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act and Regulation 1998 (NSW) (as amended)
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act and Regulation 2013 (NSW) (as amended)
- Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 (NSW)
- Children's Guardian Act 2019 (NSW)
- Crimes Act 1990 (NSW)
- Education Act 1990 (NSW)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 [and National Regulations 168(2)(h)]

6.1.2 Consultation – The authors undertook consultation of the BMGS executive in formulating this policy.

6.1.3 Acknowledgements – AIS Sample Child Protection Policy, Penrith Christian School Child Protection Policy and Arndell Anglican School Child Protection Policy.

6.2 Related Documents

- Child Protection Guidelines
- Codes of Conduct
- Complaints and Appeals Policy

6.3 Accessibility

This policy will be made available to the School Community via the School's website, to its staff via Shabang. The Guidelines will be made available to staff via Shabang and a summary will be made available to volunteers in their induction training/manual.

6.4 Implementation

The Principal will implement this policy and ensure the associated guidelines are embedded and maintained in practice.

6.5 Training

Specific training in various practices contained in the Guidelines will be provided to staff periodically and to volunteers in their induction training/manual

6.6 Communication

Relevant content will be communicated to:

Students	regularly
Parents	annually
Volunteers	at induction
Staff	annually.

6.7 Compliance

Those staff with specific Wellbeing Roles will ensure the compliance of their staff and the practices of their teams with this policy.

6.8 Review and Evaluation

The Principal is responsible for monitoring legislation, regulations and industry best-practice and for regularly evaluating this policy and its guidelines in the light of them. The Principal will coordinate a review as necessary or at the date specified.