



Student Protection – Reporting Concerns of Harm and Abuse Policy

PUBLISHED: 5 May 2026

REVIEW DATE: 5 May 2027

DOCUMENT NO.
YMCA_POL_YSQ_003

YMCA Queensland

Table of Contents

1. PURPOSE	3
2. GOVERNANCE	3
3. APPLICATION/SCOPE	3
4. POLICY STATEMENT	3
4.1. Health and Safety	3
4.2 Responding to Reports of Harm	4
4.3 Conduct of Staff and Students	4
4.4 Reporting Inappropriate Behaviour	4
4.5 Dealing with Report of Inappropriate Behaviour	4
4.6 Reporting <u>Sexual Abuse</u>	5
4.7 Reporting <u>Likely Sexual Abuse</u>	6
4.8 Reporting <u>Physical and Sexual Abuse</u>	7
4.9 Awareness	7
4.10 Accessibility of Processes	8
4.11 Training	8
4.12 Implementing the Processes	8
4.13 Complaints Procedure	8
5 COMPLIANCE WITH CRIMINAL CODE ACT 1899	8
5.2 Failure to Report	9
5.3 Failure to Protect	9
6. DEFINITIONS	9
7. DISCLAIMER	10
8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	10
9. COMPLIANCE WITH POLICY	11
10. DOCUMENT INFORMATION	11
11. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND FORMS	12
12. VERSION HISTORY	12

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide written processes about –

- (a) how the school will respond to harm, or allegations of harm, to students under 18 years; and
- (b) the appropriate conduct of the school's staff and students to comply with accreditation requirements.

2. GOVERNANCE

At Y Schools Queensland, each school is led by a School Principal who holds authority for the purposes of safeguarding and mandatory reporting. The School Principal is responsible for fulfilling all Principal reporting obligations under relevant legislation and Non-State Schools Accreditation Board requirements. Where a matter involves the School Principal, reports must be made directly to the YMCA Safeguarding Manager or a director/member of the governing body.

The School Principal's reporting responsibilities do not remove or delay any individual staff member's mandatory reporting obligations under legislation.

3. APPLICATION/SCOPE

This policy applies to 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 at Y Schools Queensland and covers information about the reporting of harm and abuse.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The school prioritises a safe environment for students in compliance with relevant national and state legislation.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to harm, abuse, and neglect of students. All staff, volunteers, and contractors have a legal and ethical obligation to act immediately on any concern for student safety.

Our policies detail procedures for addressing reports of harm, inappropriate behaviour, and allegations of abuse, requiring all staff and volunteers to uphold high standards of conduct.

4.1. Health and Safety

The school has written processes in place to enable it to comply with the requirements of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld) and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld).

4.2 Responding to Reports of Harm

When the school receives any information alleging 'harm'¹ to a student (other than harm arising from physical or sexual abuse) it will deal with the situation compassionately and fairly so as to minimise any likely harm to the extent it reasonably can. Y Schools Queensland staff must immediately report and record any reports of harm (including psychological/emotional, neglect, grooming and exposure to domestic/family violence) using the internal Protecht incident report form and follow reporting procedures to any necessary external bodies such as Child Safety and Police. This is set out in the school's Child Risk Management Strategy. The strategy is comprised of documents including the National Safeguarding Policy, Safeguarding Children and Young People Procedures Manual and the Safeguarding Code of Conduct Information relating to physical or sexual abuse is handled under obligations to report set out in this policy².

4.3 Conduct of Staff and Students

All staff, contractors and volunteers must ensure that their behaviour towards and relationships with students reflect proper standards of care for students. Staff, contractors and volunteers must not cause harm to students³.

4.4 Reporting Inappropriate Behaviour

If a student considers the behaviour of a staff member to be inappropriate, the student should report the behaviour to:

- the School Principal; or
- if the allegation involves the School Principal, directly to the YMCA Safeguarding Manager or a member of the governing body.

4.5 Dealing with Report of Inappropriate Behaviour

A staff member who receives a report of inappropriate behaviour must immediately report it to the School Principal and Safeguarding.

Where School Principal is the subject of the report, the staff member must report directly to the YMCA Safeguarding Manager or a member of the governing body. Reports may be submitted via safeguarding@ymcaqueensland.org.au or HR@ymcaqueensland.org.au.

Staff will do this by recording details using the internal Protecht incident report form and following reporting procedures. Reports will be dealt with under the school's Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy.

This process does not replace mandatory reporting obligations under legislation.

¹ *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(7)*: the definition of 'harm' for this regulation is the same as in section 9 of the *Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)*

² *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(1)*

³ *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(1)*

4.6 Reporting Sexual Abuse⁴

Where a staff member forms a reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse, likely sexual abuse, or reportable harm, they must immediately make the required report to the relevant external authority (Queensland Police Service or the Department responsible for Child Safety) in accordance with legislation. Internal reporting processes, including Protecht, must not delay external reporting obligations.

Section 366 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* states that if a staff member becomes aware, or reasonably suspects, in the course of their employment at the school, that any of the following has been sexually abused by another person:

- a) a student under 18 years attending the school;
- b) a kindergarten aged child registered in a kindergarten learning program at the school;
- c) a person with a disability who:
 - i. under section 420(2) of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* is being provided with special education at the school; and
 - ii. is not enrolled in the preparatory year at the school.

then the staff member must give a written report about the abuse or suspected abuse to the School Principal or to a director of the school's governing body immediately. Staff will do this by recording details using the internal Protecht incident report form and following reporting procedures.

The School Principal or the director must immediately give a copy of the report to police.

Additionally, the School Principal must notify safeguarding@ymcaqueensland.org.au and ensure that the reporting procedures have been followed.

If the first person who becomes aware or reasonably suspects sexual abuse is the School Principal, School Principal must give a written report about the abuse, or suspected abuse to a police officer immediately and must also give a copy of the report to a director of the school's governing body immediately. Staff will do this by recording details using the internal Protecht incident report form and following reporting procedures.

Additionally, the School Principal must notify safeguarding@ymcaqueensland.org.au and ensure that the reporting procedures have been followed.

A report under this section must include the following particulars:

- a) the name of the person giving the report (the **first person**);
- b) the student's name and sex;
- c) details of the basis for the first person becoming aware, or reasonably suspecting, that the student has been sexually abused by another person;
- d) details of the abuse or suspected abuse;
- e) any of the following information of which the first person is aware:
 - i. the student's age;
 - ii. the identity of the person who has abused, or is suspected to have abused, the student;
 - iii. the identity of anyone else who may have information about the abuse or suspected abuse⁵.

⁴ *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(2)(c)*

⁵ *Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.68*

4.7 Reporting Likely Sexual Abuse ⁶

Where a staff member forms a reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse, likely sexual abuse, or reportable harm, they must immediately make the required report to the relevant external authority (Queensland Police Service or the Department responsible for Child Safety) in accordance with legislation. Internal reporting processes, including Protecht, must not delay external reporting obligations.

Section 366A of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* states that if a staff member reasonably suspects in the course of their employment at the school, that any of the following is likely to be sexually abused by another person:

- a) a student under 18 years attending the school;
- b) a kindergarten aged child registered in a kindergarten learning program at the school;
- c) a person with a disability who:
 - i. under section 420(2) of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* is being provided with special education at the school; and
 - ii. is not enrolled in the preparatory year at the school.

then the staff member must give a written report about the suspicion to the School Principal or to a director of the school's governing body immediately. Staff will do this by recording details using the internal Protecht incident report form and following reporting procedures.

The School Principal or the director must immediately give a copy of the report to a police officer. Additionally, the School Principal must notify safeguarding@ymcaqueensland.org.au and ensure that the reporting procedures have been followed.

If the first person who reasonably suspects likely sexual abuse is the School Principal, School Principal must give a written report about the suspicion to a police officer immediately and must also give a copy of the report to a director of the school's governing body immediately. Additionally, the School Principal must notify safeguarding@ymcaqueensland.org.au and ensure that the reporting procedures have been followed.

A report under this section must include the following particulars:

- a) the name of the person giving the report (the **first person**);
- b) the student's name and sex;
- c) details of the basis for the first person reasonably suspecting that the student is likely to be sexually abused by another person;
- d) any of the following information of which the first person is aware:
 - i. the student's age;
 - ii. the identity of the person who is suspected to be likely to sexually abuse the student;
 - iii. the identity of anyone else who may have information about suspected likelihood of abuse⁷.

⁶ *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(2)(c)*

⁷ *Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.69*

4.8 Reporting Physical and Sexual Abuse ⁸

Where a staff member forms a reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse, likely sexual abuse, or reportable harm, they must immediately make the required report to the relevant external authority (Queensland Police Service or the Department responsible for Child Safety) in accordance with legislation. Internal reporting processes, including Protecht, must not delay external reporting obligations.

Under Section 13E (3) of the *Child Protection Act 1999*, if a doctor, a registered nurse, a teacher or an early childhood education and care professional forms a 'reportable suspicion' about a child "in the course of their engagement in their profession", they must make a written report.

A **reportable suspicion** about a child is a reasonable suspicion that the child:

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

The doctor, nurse, teacher or early childhood education and care professional must give a written report to the Chief Executive of the Department responsible for Child Safety (or another department administering the *Child Protection Act 1999*). The doctor, nurse, teacher or early childhood education and care professional should give a copy of the report to the School Principal.

The School Principal must notify safeguarding@ymcaqueensland.org.au and ensure that the reporting procedures have been followed.

A report under this section must include the following particulars:

- a) the basis on which the person has formed the reportable suspicion⁹;
- b) the child's name, age and sex descriptor;
- c) details of how to contact the child;
- d) details of the harm to which the reportable suspicion relates;
- e) particulars of the identity of the person suspected of causing the child to have suffered, suffer, or be at risk of suffering, the harm to which the reportable suspicion relates;
- f) particulars of the identity of any other person who may be able to give information about the harm to which the reportable suspicion relates¹⁰.

Child Safety Regional Intake Service for Brisbane can be contacted on 1300 682 254, from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. Outside of these hours, you can contact the Child Safety After Hours Service Centre on phone (freecall) 1800 177 135 (Queensland only).

4.9 Awareness

The school will inform staff, students and parents of its processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students in communications to them and it will publish these processes on its website¹¹.

⁸ *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16 (2)(d)*

⁹ *Child Protection Act 1999 s.13G (2)(a)*

¹⁰ See *Child Protection Regulation 2023 (Qld) s.4 "Information to be included in reports"*

¹¹ *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(4)(a)*

4.10 Accessibility of Processes

Processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students are accessible on the school website and will be available on request from the school administration¹².

Processes will be accessible and responsive to students with disability, including the provision of reasonable adjustments to ensure equitable access to reporting and support mechanisms in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth).

4.11 Training

The school will train its staff in processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students on induction and will refresh training annually. Training will include legal obligations, recognising indicators of harm, and responding appropriately to disclosures. The school will train its staff in processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students on their induction and will refresh training annually¹³.

4.12 Implementing the Processes

The school will ensure it is implementing processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students by auditing compliance with the processes annually¹⁴.

4.13 Complaints Procedure

Suggestions of non-compliance with the school's processes may be submitted as complaints under the Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy¹⁵.

Note: Reporting under this policy fulfils the obligations for reporting a child sexual offence that is being or has been committed against a child by an adult under the Criminal Code Act 1899 s.229BC¹⁶.

5 COMPLIANCE WITH CRIMINAL CODE ACT 1899

The Criminal Code Act 1899 includes two offences that pertain to the failure to report a child sexual offence and the failure to protect a child against a child sexual offence. A child sexual offence is an offence of a sexual nature by an adult against a child under 16 years or a person with an impairment of the mind.

¹² Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(4)(b)

¹³ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(4)(c)

¹⁴ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(4)(d)

¹⁵ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(5) and s.16(6)

¹⁶ Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) s.229BC(4)(b)

5.2 Failure to Report¹⁷

Under section 229BC of the Code, all adults must report sexual offences against a child by another adult to police as soon as reasonably practicable after the belief is, or ought reasonably to have been, formed. Failure to make a report, without a reasonable excuse, is a criminal offence. This offence applies to all adults inclusive of students 18 years or older, as well as parents/guardians and volunteers at the school. A reasonable excuse not to make a report under the *Criminal Code Act 1899* includes that a report has already been made under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (reporting sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse) and the *Child Protection Act 1999* (reporting significant harm or risk of significant harm) as per this policy.

5.3 Failure to Protect¹⁸

Under section 229BB of the Code, all adults in positions of power or responsibility within institutions to reduce or remove the risk of child sexual offences being committed must take reasonable steps to protect children in their care from a child sexual offence. A failure to protect is an offence.

6. DEFINITIONS

The *Child Protection Act 1999*¹⁹ provides the following definitions:

Term	Meaning
“Child”	A child under section 8 is: an individual under 18 years.
“Harm”	Harm under section 9 is: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Harm, to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child’s physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. (2) It is immaterial how the harm is caused. (3) Harm can be caused by— <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or (b) sexual abuse or exploitation. (4) Harm can be caused by— <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a single act, omission or circumstance; or (b) a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.
“Child in need of protection”	A child in need of protection under section 10 is: a child who— <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) has suffered significant harm, is suffering significant harm, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm; and b) does not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.

¹⁷ *Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) s.229BC*

¹⁸ *Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) s.229BB*

¹⁹ *The Child Protection Act 1999*

<p>“Reportable suspicion”</p>	<p>A reportable suspicion under section 13E(2) is: a reasonable suspicion that the child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) has suffered, is suffering, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse; and b) may not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.
<p>“Sexual abuse”</p>	<p>Section 364 of the <i>Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)</i>²⁰ defines this as, sexual abuse, in relation to a relevant person, includes sexual behaviour involving the relevant person and another person in the following circumstances—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the other person bribes, coerces, exploits, threatens or is violent toward the relevant person; (b) the relevant person has less power than the other person; (c) there is a significant disparity between the relevant person and the other person in intellectual capacity or maturity.

Operational Definitions

<p>“School Principal”</p>	<p>For operational purposes at Y Schools Queensland, the School Principal is the person who holds Principal authority and is responsible for fulfilling Principal reporting obligations under relevant legislation.</p>
----------------------------------	---

7. DISCLAIMER

This policy may be revised at any time without prior notice. All revisions supersede prior policy and are effective immediately upon approval. Printed versions of this document are considered uncontrolled. Please refer to the YMCA website for the latest version.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibility
<p>All YMCA staff, including all Y Schools Queensland staff, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements at Y Schools Queensland</p>	<p>Always comply with this policy and all mandatory responsibilities.</p>
<p>School Principal</p>	<p>Receives reports made under this policy where required; fulfils Principal reporting obligations</p>

²⁰ *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)*

	under the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld); ensures required reports are made to Queensland Police Service and/or the Department responsible for Child Safety; notifies Safeguarding; ensures internal records are completed; and monitors implementation of this policy.
Safeguarding Manager	Provides safeguarding advice, oversight and support, but does not replace or delay any mandatory external reporting obligation.
Director / Member of Governing Body	Receives reports where the School Principal is the subject of the allegation or where legislation allows reporting to a director; ensures required external reporting occurs

9. COMPLIANCE WITH POLICY

Failure to comply with this procedure by a member of the YMCA staff may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the YMCA Discipline and Performance Management Policy [YMCA_POL_HRM_005], and the resultant disciplinary action documented in the individual’s personal file.

Failure to comply with this procedure by a member of the YMCA staff may also constitute a breach of individual responsibilities under the Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld), and further enforcement may occur if appropriate.

10. DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Approval Date	5 May 2026
Effective Date	5 May 2026
Next Review Date	5 May 2027
Document Owner	Business Services Manager / Executive Principal
Approver	Chief Operations Officer and Safeguarding Manager

11. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND FORMS

Document Name:	Type:	Location:
Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)	Act	Queensland Government Website
Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)	Act	Queensland Government Website
Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (Qld)	Regulation	Queensland Government Website
Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld)	Act	Queensland Government Website
Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld)	Regulation	Queensland Government Website
Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)	Act	Queensland Government Website
Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2020 (Qld)	Regulation	Queensland Government Website
Criminal Code Act 1899 (sections 229BB and 229BC)	Act	Queensland Government Website
Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy	Policy	YMCA Website
Safeguarding Children and Young People Procedures Manual	Procedure	YMCA Website
Protect Incident Report Form (for Staff)	Form	YMCA Website
Protect Incident Report Form (for External)	Form	YMCA Website
Y Schools Queensland Student Information System – Edumate	Application	Internal YMCA Intranet
YMCA_POL_HRM_005 Discipline and Performance Management Policy	Policy	Internal YMCA Intranet

12. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Date	Description of change	Author
2	Principal	09/01/2024	Content review	Jana Hadlow
3	Angela Waugh	27/11/2024	Document format update	Jana Hadlow
4	Kirsty Kranz	12/12/2024	Content review	Jana Hadlow
5	Kirsty Kranz	30/05/2025	Links on p11 and reference to the Department responsible for Child	Jana Hadlow

Printed versions of this document are considered uncontrolled. Please refer to the YMCA Intranet for the latest version.

			Safety updated	
6	Kirsty Kranz	23/06/25	Clarification of documents that comprise the child risk management strategy	Jana Hadlow
7	Kirsty Kranz	10/09/25	Addition of definition of a child	Jana Hadlow
8	Kirsty Kranz	26/02/26	Policy name change from Student Protection Policy to Student Protection – Reporting Concerns of Harm and Abuse Policy	Jana Hadlow
9	Will Sambrook	15/04/26	Role titles and legislation updated	Angela Waugh and Jana Hadlow
10	Will Sambrook	05/05/26	Definitions and procedure update	Angela Waugh and Jana Hadlow