



Fact Sheet 14

October, 2007

Toowoomba Catholic Education school staff student protection responsibilities

This fact sheet outlines Toowoomba Catholic Education schools staff roles and responsibilities to ensure efficient processes are in place to deliver an appropriate response to student harm/abuse and neglect.

Toowoomba Catholic Education staff must be aware of the four categories of harm to students listed below:

1. **Harm to students by employees/volunteers**
2. **Harm to students by someone outside Toowoomba Catholic Education schools**
3. **Harm to students by other students**
4. **Student self-harm**

Individual school staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of Toowoomba Catholic Education's student protection policy and reporting processes
- Reporting immediately any reasonable suspicion that a current school employee has sexually abused a current student by making a written report to the school Principal or the Director of Toowoomba Catholic Education Office (or delegate). (Sexual Abuse Mandatory reporting requirement – *Education (General Provisions)* Act 1989 s. 146B.)
- Reporting any reasonable suspicion that a school employee has harmed a student or is at risk of harming a student to the school principal or the Director of Toowoomba Catholic Education Office (or delegate)
- Reporting any reasonable suspicion that an employee has acted inappropriately towards a student or is at risk of acting inappropriately towards a student to the school principal or the Director of

Toowoomba Catholic Education Office
(or delegate)

- Reporting any reasonable suspicion of harm or risk of harm to students from anyone outside the school to the principal or School Student Protection Contact
- Reporting any reasonable suspicion of harm or risk of harm to students by other students to the school principal or School Student Protection Contact
- Reporting any reasonable suspicions of student self-harm or risk of self-harm to the school principal to School Student Protection Contact
- Keeping appropriate records in relation to suspicions of harm or risk of harm to students
- Ensuring confidentiality

Principals are responsible for:

Upon receiving an allegation of harm or suspected harm to a student from any source, or inappropriate behaviour to a student by an employee, the principal will determine as quickly as possible the category of response required and the appropriate procedure to be followed.

The principal will:

- Report immediately to the police if the allegation is of suspected sexual abuse or sexual abuse or other harm of a student by an employee
- Co-ordinate locally and send in a completed Mandatory Reporting Form to the Senior Education Office when assessment and intervention is completed

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- Report to the Director Catholic Education Office Toowoomba (or delegate) in cases of suspected inappropriate behaviour to students by an employee
- Report to the relevant state authority in cases of suspected harm or risk of harm to a child/students (Send copy of form into the Senior Education Officer after reporting harm to relevant state authority)
- Keep appropriate records in relation to suspicions of harm or risk of harm to students
- Ensure that any staff member involved in a student protection case is provided with opportunities for support and debriefing
- Ensure students are appropriately supported
- Ensure confidentiality

(Note: If unsure harm has occurred to a student or is at risk of occurring contact the Student Protection Officer for assistance with further assessment)

- Demonstrate how school staff are aware of Toowoomba Catholic Education Office's reporting processes by ensuring all staff have received student protection in-service
- Ensure that student protection reporting processes are readily accessible by staff and students
- Ensure that the student reporting process (Feeling Safe Strategy posters) are

displayed prominently throughout the school

- Ensure that students are made aware of these reporting processes and be able to demonstrate how they know them
- Be able to demonstrate how reporting processes have been followed (eg incident reports, forms completed)

School Student Protection Contacts are responsible for:

- Receiving allegations/complaints of harm or suspected harm to students either from other staff or students
- Informing the principal of allegation/complaint received
- Reporting to a relevant state authority if appropriate
- Keeping appropriate records in relation to suspicions of harm to students or risk of harm to students
- Ensuring confidentiality

Further information:

CEO Student Protection Officers 4637 1400