



## Yarranlea Primary School

### POL520.11\_S Child Protection Policy

<b>Purpose:</b>	<p>The purpose of this policy is to provide written processes about-</p> <p>(a) how Yarranlea Primary School will report suspicion of harm to a child; and</p> <p>(b) providing a child safe environment</p> <p>We aim to implement effective strategies to assist in ensuring the safety and well-being of all children. Our School will act in the best interests of each child, assisting them to develop to their full potential in a secure and child-safe environment.</p>	
<b>Scope:</b>	<p>This policy applies to management, the approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, staff, families, volunteers, visitors (including contractors) and children of Yarranlea Limited.</p>	
<b>Status:</b>	Board Approved	<b>Supersedes:</b> New
<b>Authorised by:</b>	Board	<b>Date of Authorisation:</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2025
<b>Review Cycle:</b>	Annually	<b>Next Review Date:</b> February 2026
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Yarranlea Limited	
<b>Date of Modifications:</b>	February 2025	
<b>Modifications:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separated from OSHC Policy</li> <li>• Adopted ISQ Policy</li> </ul>	
<b>References:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Child Protection Act 1999</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) 2011</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Education and Care Services National Regulations</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">National Quality Standard</a></li> </ul>	

<sup>1</sup> Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) s.174(2)(b)

<sup>1</sup> Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) s.229BC(4)(b)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulations 2021 (Qld)</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld)</u></a></li> <li>• Yarranlea Primary School Child Protection Procedure</li> <li>• Yarranlea Primary School Child Risk Management Strategy</li> </ul>	
<b>Related Policies:</b>	Child Protection Procedure Child Safe Environment Child Risk Management Strategy Policy Code of Conduct Policy Dealing with Complaints Policy Family Communication Policy Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy	Recruitment Policy Respect for Children Policy Responsible Person Policy Staffing Arrangements Policy Student, Volunteer and Visitors Policy Supervision Policy Work Health and Safety Policy OSHC Child Protection Policy

## POLICY STATEMENT

Yarranlea Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children enrolled at the school and will take appropriate action to help ensure the protection of children at risk of harm caused by abuse or neglect.

The principal, teachers and staff will be responsive to current child protection policy and procedures, aware of their legal responsibilities and be able to act when required to protect any child who they become aware is at risk of abuse or neglect<sup>1</sup>.

All employees will respond to their responsibilities as mandatory reporters for physical and sexual abuse as required by the *Child Protection Act 1999*.

All employees at Yarranlea Primary School will ensure their behaviour towards and relationships with children, reflecting proper standards of care for children. Employees will take all reasonable precautions so as not to cause harm to children. Employees will not subject a child to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or excessive in the circumstances. The Yarranlea Limited Employee Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with this Policy.

When the school receives any information alleging harm to a child it will deal with the situation compassionately and fairly to minimise any likely harm to the extent as far as is reasonably

<sup>1</sup> Guide to the National Quality Framework, 3. National Quality Assessment and Rating, Element 2.2.3 Child Protection, p.170

<sup>1</sup> *Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) s.174(2)(b)*

<sup>1</sup> *Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) s.229BC(4)(b)*

possible.

Our School follows the National Model Code and Guidelines for taking images or videos of children released by ACECQA 1 July 2024.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The school will ensure it implements processes relating to the health, safety and wellbeing of its children and the conduct of employees by auditing compliance with the processes annually. The service will ensure on-going risk assessment and management are built into day-to-day operations to ensure a consistently safe environment.

The school will ensure appropriate records suspicions of harm to children are kept, stored and retained according to this Policy and the Yarranlea Primary School Privacy and Record Retention Policies.

The school will ensure appropriate records of complaints or circumstances at the school relating to a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child are kept, stored and retained according to this Policy and the Yarranlea Primary School Privacy, Record Retention and Incident, Injury and Trauma Policies. – Further Processes see Appendix 1

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?**

The World Health Organisation ([WHO], 2006, p. 9) defines child abuse and neglect as:  
*“All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.”*

Child abuse is any action towards a child or young person that harms or puts at risk their physical, psychological, or emotional health or development. Child abuse can be a single incident or can be several different incidents that take place over time. There are different forms of child abuse: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, family violence and neglect.

### **TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

The QLD Government identifies the following types of abuse and neglect:

- physical
- sexual
- emotional
- neglect

There are common physical and behavioural signs that may indicate abuse or neglect. The

<sup>1</sup> Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) s.174(2)(b)

<sup>1</sup> Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) s.229BC(4)(b)

presence of one of these signs does not necessarily mean abuse or neglect. Behavioural or physical signs which assist in recognising harm to children are known as indicators. One indicator on its own may not imply abuse or neglect. However, a single indicator can be as important as the presence of several indicators. Each indicator needs to be deliberated in the perspective of other indicators and the child's circumstances. A child's behaviour is likely to be affected if he/she is under stress. There can be many causes of stress, and it is important to find out specifically what is causing the stress. Abuse and neglect can be single incidents or ongoing and may be intentional or unintentional.

The QLD Government provides definitions and physical indicators: Types of child abuse

**Child:** an individual under 18 years<sup>2</sup>

**Child in need of protection** is a child who —

- a) has suffered significant harm, is suffering significant harm, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm
- b) does not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.<sup>3</sup>

**Child Safety:** is the Department administering the *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld). Currently this is the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women.

**Harm:** defined in the *Child Protection Act 1999* (s9):

- (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—
  - a) physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or
  - b) sexual abuse or exploitation.
- (4) Harm can be caused by—
  - a) a single act, omission or circumstance; or
  - b) a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.<sup>4</sup>

**Parent:** of a child is the child's mother, father or someone else having or exercising parental responsibility for the child. However, a person standing in the place of a parent of a child on a temporary basis is not a parent of the child. A parent of an Aboriginal child includes a person who, under Aboriginal tradition, is regarded as a parent of the child. A parent of a Torres Strait Islander child includes a person who, under Island custom, is regarded as a parent of the child<sup>5</sup>.

### Physical or Sexual Abuse

Under Section 13E (3) of the *Child Protection Act 1999*, if a doctor, registered nurse, teacher or

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<sup>2</sup> *Child Protection Act 1999* s.8

<sup>3</sup> *Child Protection Act 1999* s.10

<sup>4</sup> *Child Protection Act 1999* s.9

<sup>5</sup> *Child Protection Act 1999* s.11

<sup>1</sup> *Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland)* s.174(2)(b)

<sup>1</sup> *Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld)* s.229BC(4)(b)

early childhood education and care professional as defined by the Act forms a 'reportable suspicion' about a child during their engagement in their profession, they will make a written report to the Chief Executive of Child Safety. The professional will provide a copy of their report to Yarranlea Limited.

## **DOCUMENTING A DISCLOSURE**

A disclosure of harm emerges when someone, including a child, tells you about harm that has happened or is likely to happen. When a child discloses that he or she has been abused, it is an opportunity for an adult to provide immediate support and comfort and to assist in protecting the child from abuse. It is also a chance to help the child connect to professional services that can keep them safe, provide support and facilitate their recovery from trauma. Disclosure is about seeking support, and your response can have a great impact on the child or young person's ability to seek further help and recover from the trauma.

## **WHEN RECEIVING A DISCLOSURE OF HARM, THE PERSON RECEIVING THE DISCLOSURE WILL:**

- give the child or young person their full attention
- remain calm and find a private place to talk
- not make promises that can't be kept. For example, never promise that you will not tell anyone else
- Honestly, tell the child or young person what you plan to do next
- tell the child/person they have done the right thing in revealing the information but that they'll need to tell someone who can help keep the child safe
- only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter because probing questions could cause distress, confusion and interfere with any later enquiries
- let the child or young person take his or her time
- let the child or young person use his or her own words
- not attempting to conduct their own investigation or mediate an outcome between the parties involved
- not confront the perpetrator
- document as soon as possible so the details are accurately captured including:
  - time, date and place of the disclosure
  - 'Word for word' what happened and what was said, including anything they (the staff member/educator) said and any actions that have been taken
  - date of report and signature.
- It is best practice for the person receiving the disclosure to provide information regarding the disclosure to the Principal or Nominated Supervisor (provided person is not the offender).

## **MAKING A REPORT**

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

- a) the child's name and sex.
- b) the child's age.
- c) details of how to contact the child.

<sup>1</sup> *Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) s.174(2)(b)*

<sup>1</sup> *Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) s.229BC(4)(b)*

- 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 relates.

### **What to Report**

If, during their employment at Yarranlea Primary School, an employee forms a suspicion about harm to a child, they will immediately report it to Principal.

The harm may be caused by physical, psychological or emotional abuse, neglect or sexual abuse or exploitation. Employees should refer to the full definition of harm provided in the Definitions Section of this Policy.

### **How to Report**

Once an employee has formed a suspicion about harm, they will use a Yarranlea Primary School prescribed form for reporting suspected harm. A 'reportable suspicion' relating to physical or sexual abuse is reported to the chief executive in accordance with the previous section of this policy.

**Mandatory reporters** must report to Child Safety a reasonable suspicion that a child has suffered, is suffering or is at unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse and may not have a parent able and willing to protect them from the harm. Mandatory reporters should still report to Child Safety a reasonable suspicion that a child may need protection where the harm or risk of harm relates to any other type of abuse or neglect.

All staff should refer to the [Child Protection Guide](#) to decide whether to refer a family for help or to make a report to Child Safety.

A completed form must be immediately provided to the Yarranlea Primary School Principal. The principal will then confer with the reporter, manage and report the suspicion as appropriate, in accordance with this Policy.

In assessing whether a student is in need of protection, employees may utilise Child Safety's [Child Protection Guide resource](#).

Employees will refer to the Yarranlea Primary School Child Protection Procedure and may utilise Independent Schools Queensland's Child Protection Decision Support Tree for guidance on the process for reporting harm.

In the case of an emergency, the principal or employees will notify the Police.

If an employee believes that the Principal or employees is in any way complicit in the harm, they must immediately report it to Child Safety themselves. For more information on reporting to Child Safety, see the section on the Policy below.

<sup>1</sup> *Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) s.174(2)(b)*

<sup>1</sup> *Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) s.229BC(4)(b)*

When making a report to Child Safety, all employees will utilise the information in Yarranlea Primary School's prescribed report of suspected harm form. To report a concern to Child Safety, all staff are to complete an online report form on the appropriate website - [Child Safety Services' Regional Intake Service](#).

**When a report is made**, ensure you provide the following information:

- The name, age and address of the child or young person
- The reasons you suspect the child or young person may have experienced or is at risk of experiencing harm
- The immediate risk to the child or young person
- contact details. You may remain anonymous; however, it is preferable to provide these details so that the officer can call you if further information is needed.

### **Other Appropriate Action**

If the Principal or an employee forms the view that that suspected harm does not meet the threshold for reporting to Child Safety, another action may be appropriate to minimise any likely harm, to the extent possible.

The principal will consider options including, but not limited to:

- Discuss with the family a referral, with consent, to Family and Child Connect
- Discuss with the family ways in which the school may be able to directly support them
- Monitor the child and keep appropriate records.

### **Awareness**

The school will inform employees and parents/carers of its processes relating to health, safety and wellbeing of its children and the conduct of employees, in communications to them and it will publish these processes on its website.

Yarranlea Limited will ensure that all employees who work with children are advised of-

- (a) The existence and application of the current child protection law; and
- (b) Any obligations that they may have under that law.<sup>6</sup>

### **Accessibility of Processes**

Copies of this policy and any related procedures are readily accessible and available for inspection by the principal, employees and families.

Parents of children enrolled at the school will be notified at least 14 days before the school makes any change to a policy or procedure that may have a significant impact on the school's provision of education and care for any child enrolled at the school, or the family's ability to utilise the school.

### **Complaints Procedure**

Suggestions of non-compliance with the school's processes may be submitted as complaints under Yarranlea Primary School's Complaints Handling Policy.

Complaints alleging that a serious incident has occurred or is occurring while a child was or is

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<sup>6</sup> Education and Care Services National Regulation reg.84

<sup>1</sup> *Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) s.174(2)(b)*

<sup>1</sup> *Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) s.229BC(4)(b)*

being educated and cared for at school or that the National Law has been contravened, will be reported to the regulatory authority within the specified time frame.<sup>7</sup>

**Note:** Reporting under this policy fulfills 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.229BC<sup>8</sup>.Appendix 1

**Staff members for disclosure:**

Principal: Jess Chesterfield

If the claim of abuse is against this staff member, please report to Adrienne Innes Board Chair on [a.innes@yarranlea.qld.edu.au](mailto:a.innes@yarranlea.qld.edu.au)

**RESOURCES FOR INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT:**

- Child Safe Organisations <https://childdsafe.humanrights.gov.au>
- NAPCAN- Prevent Child Abuse & Neglect <https://www.napcan.org.au/napcan-brochures/>
- Queensland Government. Child abuse and neglect education modules. Responsibility, recognising and reporting (2013) [https://www.health.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0024/150693/childabuse-module.pdf](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0024/150693/childabuse-module.pdf)
- Queensland Government [Queensland Child Protection Guide procedures manual](#)

**CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION:**

Our *Child Protection Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators and management.

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<sup>7</sup> *Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland)* s.174(2)(b)

<sup>8</sup> *Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld)* s.229BC(4)(b)

<sup>1</sup> *Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland)* s.174(2)(b)

<sup>1</sup> *Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld)* s.229BC(4)(b)