



GLENVALE
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Information for Parents

The purpose of the policy is provide official advice about how the school will respond to harm, or allegations of harm, to students under 18 years old, and the appropriate conduct of the school's staff and students, to comply with accreditation requirements.

Child Protection at Glenvale Christian School

Glenvale Christian School recognises that protecting students from harm and the risk of harm is fundamental to maximising their personal and academic potential. For this reason the welfare and best interests of the children within our School will always be a primary consideration.

We expect our students to show respect to our staff and volunteers and to comply with safe practices. We also expect all employees to ensure that their behaviour towards and relationships with students reflect proper standards of care for students, and are not unlawful. The School will respond diligently to a report of suspected or actual harm, or risk of harm to a student.

What does the School mean by harm?

“**HARM**”, caused to a student under 18 years, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the student's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.

- (1) It is immaterial how the harm is caused.
- (2) Harm can be caused by—
 - (a) physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or
 - (b) sexual abuse or exploitation
- (3) Harm can be caused by—
 - (a) a single act, omission or circumstance; or
 - (b) a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.

A “**CHILD IN NEED OF PROTECTION**” is a student who—

- (1) has suffered significant harm, is suffering significant harm, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm; and
- (2) does not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.

How does the School protect students from harm?

The School has a comprehensive Child Protection Risk Management Policy, which covers the actions to be taken if a member of staff or a parent of the School becomes aware or reasonably suspects that harm has been done to a student of the School by other staff, people outside the School or by other students. If you become aware, or reasonably suspect that harm has been caused to a student of the School by a

member of staff, someone outside of the School or by other students, you should report your concerns in the first instance to the Principal, Mr Brett Munro, or Senior Teacher, Mrs Sue O'Keefe, or to any other member of School staff.

What will happen next?

If you report your concerns to a member of staff other than the Principal, the member of staff will report it to the Principal immediately. If the subject of the complaint is the Principal then the staff member will report to the Chairman of the School Board.

What will the Principal or the Chairman of the Board do?

If the Principal or Chairman of the Board receives a report of harm or suspected harm to a student of the school, and he/she becomes aware of the harm having been caused or reasonably suspects the harm to have been caused then it will be reported to police immediately if the harm relates to sexual abuse; or to the Department of Families if appropriate; or it may be dealt with internally if the matter does not require mandatory reporting to an outside body.

What happens about confidentiality?

Your report will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Principal and those directly involved. The Chairman of the School Board may also need to be informed. It is the School's policy that confidentiality between the School and parents will be respected as much as possible and any concerns raised by parents will not rebound adversely on their children.

Each person who has access to information regarding suspected or disclosed harm has an obligation to observe appropriate confidentiality. However, the School is unable to promise absolute confidentiality since the steps of the Policy will require disclosing, internally and externally, certain details in responding to the report. State authorities can compel people to give evidence about actions under the Policy and to produce documents. You would be fully informed if information you provided were to be passed on to a third party.

Any action, which needed to be taken under staff disciplinary procedures as a result of an allegation not requiring police intervention, would be handled confidentially within the School.

How will the School help my child?

The Principal will ensure that the following steps are taken to reduce the chance of harm occurring:

- Ensure that each staff member understands and fulfills their obligations under the Child Protection Risk Management Policy.
- Ensure that there is an acceptable reference and screening for each staff member engaged since the commencement of this protocol, from his or her previous employer.
- Ensure that each staff member and volunteer who has contact with students has a current positive notice ("blue card") issued by the *Commissioner for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000* or that they are registered teachers.

If the Principal receives a report of harm to your child, he will support the child by:

- Responding rapidly and diligently to the report.
- Reassuring the student; protecting the child's confidentiality as much as possible.
- Offering continuous support, and providing counseling if requested.

What should I do if I require more information?

The School's complete Child Protection and Risk Management Policies are available from School administration. Parents and students may have access to this policy at any time. You may also make an appointment to discuss the policy with the Principal if you wish to clarify any matters.

Sexual Harassment

Glenvale Christian School is committed to providing the whole school community with a working environment free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is unacceptable and will not be tolerated under any circumstance. The whole school community is required to honour and support this commitment.

Staff have a duty of care to ensure that any sexual harassment or victimisation brought to their attention or witnessed by them is dealt with in accordance with the procedures as outlined in the GCS Sexual Harassment Policy.