



PMSA Child Safeguarding Processes



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Preamble

The processes contained in this document have been developed by the Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association (PMSA) to meet the legislative and procedural requirements for responding and reporting child safeguarding incidents. Compliance with the processes in this document are mandatory for all PMSA staff, volunteers, and contractors.

Effective date

This process is effective from 1 November 2022.

Child Safeguarding Delegations

Pursuant to Section 366B of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (Qld) the PMSA Board has delegated its function under sections 366 and 366A of the Act to the PMSA Chief Executive Officer as an **Appropriate Authority**.

Voice of the Child

The PMSA encourages and empowers children to utilise their voices to become active participants in their safeguarding. Children are to report any concerns they have with the behaviour of any individual to an **Appropriate Person** or the school. This includes behaviour reported to them through their peers, behaviour they witness directly, or behaviour which they feel is inappropriate in any way.

Complaints Process

In compliance with Section 16(5) of the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld), each PMSA school has a procedure for managing complaints arising from non-compliance with child safeguarding practices available on the school website. Parents, students, and community members are able to access this procedure directly through the school's website, with all complaints reported to the school's Principal.

Further Information or Assistance

If staff, volunteers, contractors, parents, or students require further information in relation to any of the processes described in this document or other student safeguarding compliance requirements, advice should be obtained either from the school's Principal or the school's Child Safeguarding Officers (CSO).

The PMSA will ensure:

- This document is readily available on the PMSA website and each school's website.
- Staff, volunteers, contractors, students, parents, and members of the community are made aware of the processes contained in this document.
- Staff, volunteers, and contractors are adequately trained in all child safeguarding processes.

Flowcharts

Contained at the end of this document are flowcharts describing the operational requirements for child safeguarding incidents. PMSA staff, volunteers, contractors, students, and parents are encouraged to refer in the first instance to these charts to provide an overview of the process to assist in their inquiries.

Document Governance

This document is owned and controlled by the PMSA.

Staff, students, parents, and community members are encouraged to provide any feedback or issues with the processes contained within the document to the school or directly to the PMSA by contacting info@pmsa-

schools.edu.au.

The PMSA will review and update this document on a three yearly cycle or in response to legislative changes and communicate any changes to schools for their local implementation.

Introduction

The PMSA is committed to creating and maintaining safe environments for all children and young people. The PMSA has zero tolerance to **harm**. This document operationalises the [PMSA Child Protection Policy](#) (The Policy) and outlines the following:

- processes for how the PMSA will respond to **harm**, or allegations of **harm**, to students.
- a process for reporting by a student to a stated staff member the behaviour of another staff member that the student considers is inappropriate.
- a process for how information reported to the stated staff member must be dealt with by the stated staff member.
- a process for reporting **sexual abuse** or likely **sexual abuse** in compliance with the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (Qld), sections 366 and 366A.
- a process for reporting a **reportable suspicion** under the *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld), section 13E.

Compliance with these processes is mandatory for all PMSA staff, volunteers, and contractors.

Child Safeguarding Process

Every child and young person has the right to feel safe. The safeguarding of children and young people is of paramount importance to the PMSA and its schools, and the PMSA has developed these processes to assist staff, volunteers, contractors, students, parents, and community members to navigate and understand these processes to ensure children and young people remain safe across the organisation.

In general terms, the process for responding to and reporting student safeguarding concerns is as follows:

1. Identify	Identify concerns .
2. Respond	Seek guidance and support - if necessary, confer with the Principal or an appropriate colleague, or use resources such as the Child Protection Guide to establish whether a reasonable suspicion has been formed.
3. Report	Where a reasonable suspicion is formed - report the concerns according to the specific processes outlined in this document.
4. Support	Remain focused on the support needs of the child and liaise with the Principal around any planning or actions that are required.

1. Identify

It is critical that all PMSA staff, volunteers, and contractors are able to identify and recognise a child safeguarding **concern**. A **concern** is information of whatever nature and from whatever source, that leads to a reasonable suspicion of circumstances that may have posed or continues to pose a risk to the physical or psychological safeguarding of a child or young person. This includes, but may not be limited to:

- incidents or allegations of sexual, physical, or other **abuse** or **inappropriate behaviour**
- matters that are recent or historical in nature.

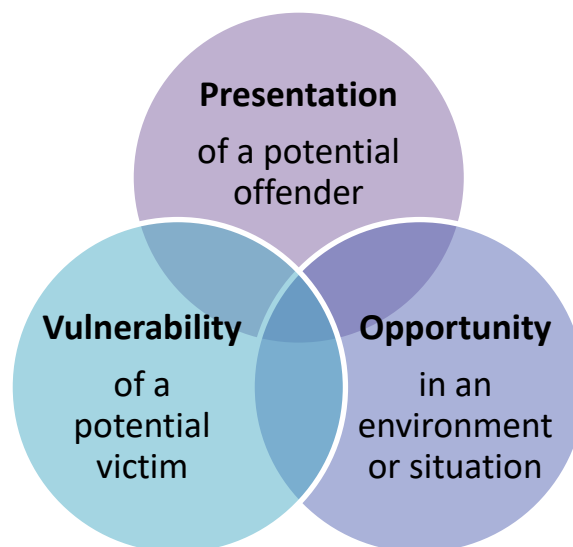
Identification of a **concern** can occur through a number of different avenues that PMSA staff, volunteers, and contractors are to be aware of.

1.1 Signs of Abuse

Key Documentation
Recognising Signs of Abuse

Children and young people experiencing **abuse** often experience more than one type of **abuse** over a period of time and may be afraid to tell anybody about the **abuse**. They may struggle with feelings of guilt, shame or confusion. Many of the signs of **abuse** are the same regardless of the type of **abuse**.

Abuse occurs when the following three criteria connect:



It can be very hard for children and young people to speak out about **abuse**. Often, they fear there may be negative consequences if they tell anyone what's happening to them. Some may delay telling someone about **abuse** for a long time, while others never tell anyone, even if they want to. It's vital that children and young people are informed and feel safe enough to raise any worries or **concerns**, that they can speak out and that whoever they tell takes them seriously and takes appropriate action regarding what they've been told.

Abuse happens when a person **harms** a child. It can be physical, sexual, or emotional, and can involve neglect. Children and young people can be abused by anyone. Children and young people who have been abused may want to tell someone, but not have the exact words to do so. They may attempt to disclose **abuse** by giving adults clues, through their actions and by using indirect words.

Children and young people experiencing **abuse** often experience more than one type of **abuse** over a period of time

and may be afraid to tell anybody about the **abuse**. They may struggle with feelings of guilt, shame, or confusion. Many of the signs of **abuse** are the same regardless of the type of **abuse**. Anyone working with children or young people need to be able to recognise the signs. These include but are not limited to the following:

- being afraid of particular places or making excuses to avoid particular people.
- knowing about or being involved in 'adult issues' which are inappropriate for their age or stage of development, for example alcohol, drugs and/or sexual behaviour.
- having angry outbursts or behaving aggressively towards others.
- becoming withdrawn or appearing anxious, clingy, or depressed.
- self-harming or having thoughts about suicide.
- showing changes in eating habits or developing eating disorders.
- regularly experiencing nightmares or sleep problems.
- regularly wetting the bed or soiling their clothes.
- running away or regularly going missing from home or care.
- not receiving adequate medical attention after injuries.

These signs do not necessarily mean that a child is being abused. There may well be other reasons for changes in a child's behaviour such as a bereavement or relationship problems between parents – however they are enough to raise **concerns** with an **Appropriate Person**. For further information on the signs of **abuse**, the Queensland Governments' [Recognising Signs of Abuse](#) will provide further information for staff, volunteers, and contractors.

Waiting for a child to be ready to speak about their experiences could mean that the **abuse** carries on and they, or another child, are put at further risk of significant **harm**. Not taking appropriate action quickly can also affect the child's mental health and wellbeing. This may discourage them from seeking help in the future and make them distrust adults. Raising a **concern** does not require a direct disclosure.

1.2 Disclosures

Disclosure is the process by which children and young people start to share their experiences of **abuse** with others, often taking place over a long period of time. Children may disclose directly or indirectly and sometimes they may start sharing details of **abuse** before they are ready to put their thoughts and feelings in order.

Where a disclosure is made, or a person has a reasonable suspicion that a child is being subjected to **abuse** or **harm**, the steps and processes outlined in section 2 and 3 must be followed. All disclosures should be taken seriously. It takes extraordinary courage for a child to go through the journey of disclosing **abuse** and it's vital that anyone who works with children and young people undertaking this journey can provide them with the support they need.

Children and young people may disclose **abuse** in a variety of ways, including:

- **Directly**: making specific verbal statements about what's happened to them.
- **Indirectly**: making ambiguous verbal statements which suggest something is wrong.
- **Behaviourally**: displaying behaviour that signals something is wrong.
- **Non-verbally**: writing letters, drawing pictures, or trying to communicate in other ways.

Children and young people may not always be aware that they are disclosing **abuse** through their actions and behaviour. Sometimes children and young people make partial disclosures of **abuse**. This means they give some details about what they've experienced, but not the whole picture. They may withhold some information because they:

- are afraid they will get in trouble with or upset their family.
- want to deflect blame in case of family difficulties as a result of the disclosure.
- feel ashamed and/or guilty.
- need to protect themselves from having to relive traumatic events.

1.3 Unhealthy Relationships

Abuse usually occurs in the context of an unhealthy relationship. Being in an unhealthy relationship negatively affects a person’s wellbeing and places them at risk of **harm**.

Children and young people may not always understand that a relationship is unhealthy. If they have been groomed for example, they may believe they are in a healthy relationship. If they are in an unhealthy or abusive family relationship, they may never have known any different. This means children and young people may not always speak out about unhealthy relationships.

If any person is worried:

- about a child or young person’s relationship with another person, or
- another person’s behaviour is encouraging an unhealthy relationship to develop

it is important to raise **concerns** with either the CSO or the school Principal.

1.4 Inappropriate Behaviour

Inappropriate behaviour includes any behaviour towards a child or young person that is contrary to the PMSA Code of Conduct and PMSA Child Safe Code of Conduct.

Inappropriate behaviour by a staff member, volunteer, or contractor towards a student can be described in terms of violations of professional boundaries. These boundaries can be described as follows:

Physical Boundaries

Physical boundaries define appropriate physical contact with children in appropriate circumstances whilst respecting and responding to the physical needs of students.

Emotional Boundaries

Emotional boundaries determine the nature of appropriate professional relationships between PMSA staff and children in the context of respecting the emotional needs and wellbeing of students.

Behavioural Boundaries

Behavioural boundaries determine the appropriate behaviours expected towards students.

2. Respond

Key Documentation
Child Protection Guide CSYW

Engaging in appropriate conferral processes is an important element of responding to **concerns** around the safeguarding and well-being of students to ensure any decision-making process is fully informed.

PMSA staff, volunteers, and contractors may confer with colleagues (for example an **Appropriate Person** as outlined in 2.1 below) to establish whether the information at hand may constitute a reasonable suspicion of **abuse, harm, or inappropriate behaviour**. This process is encouraged as a means of ensuring the best possible response to a **concern** and also assists the staff member, volunteer, or contractor to gain insight through the provision of additional information about a student or their family that is not known which may include:

- greater context to the **concerns** identified.
- changes to the seriousness of the **concerns**, particularly as to whether **harm** to a student is “significant”.
- greater clarity around whether there is a parent able and willing to protect the student.

In addition to conferring with colleagues, a number of practical tools and resources exist to support staff members, volunteers, and contractors in their decision making, including the [Child Protection Guide CSYW](#) – an online decision support guide that has been developed to assist professionals to appropriately report or refer families to the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women (Child Safety) or other service providers in a timely manner.

2.1 Raising Concerns

A **concern** is information that leads to a reasonable suspicion of circumstances that may have posed, or continues to pose, a risk to the physical or psychological safeguarding of a child or young person. This includes, but may not be limited to:

- incidents or allegations of sexual, physical, other **abuse** or **inappropriate behaviour**
- matters that are recent or historical in nature.

Children, young people, and their families are *encouraged*, and staff, volunteers, contractors, and visitors must, as soon as practicable, discuss **concerns**:

- for a child or young person associated with a PMSA school; or
- about the conduct or behaviour of another person who has, or had, an association with children or young people through a PMSA school,

with an **Appropriate Person** associated with the PMSA school, as detailed in the following table.

Person with concern	Appropriate persons to share information with
<i>Children and young people</i>	<p>Children and young people are asked to raise any concerns (impacting either themselves and/or their peers) with an adult they trust, so that the adult can help.</p> <p>CSOs are particularly available to help.</p> <p>Without minimising the responsibility of adults to respond to the care and protective needs of children and young people, it is also recognised that friendship and support from peers is important to help children and young people feel safe and less isolated.</p>

<i>Visitors, including parents and carers</i>	A CSO or the Principal.
<i>Staff, Volunteers, and contractors (Staff are also to refer to relevant sections regarding statutory reporting obligations)</i>	A CSO or the Principal. Where required to guide the application of the PMSA Child Protection Policy, staff, volunteers and contractors are also able to share information with staff from the PMSA. A person with Appropriate Authority (PMSA CEO).

2.2 Responding to harm or allegations of harm to students

In accordance with section 16(1) of the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld), a school must have written processes to respond to **harm** or allegations of **harm** to a student. Therefore, in addition to the requirements outlined above, staff, volunteers, and contractors must respond to any reasonable suspicion in accordance with the required processes that a child has suffered, is suffering or is at unacceptable risk of suffering, significant **harm** caused by emotional **abuse**, neglect, self-harm, or **harm** caused by others - for example, by other students or by other persons in the community.

Harm or risk of harm to a student caused by self-harm

Where a staff member, volunteer, or contractor forms a reasonable suspicion that a student has self-harmed or is at risk of self-harm, the first priority is the immediate safeguarding of the student and determining whether the self-injury or risk of self-injury is significant, for example an injury requiring medical attention. The priority in cases of significant self-harm is therefore meeting the immediate medical and psychological needs of the student, which may require the administration of first aid and/or immediate contact with emergency services or mental health services.

The staff member, volunteer, or contractor then raises the **concern** of self-harm with the Principal, and contact should be made with the student's parent/care-provider, unless doing so places the student at further risk of **harm**.

Where the staff member, volunteer, contractor forms a reasonable suspicion that a student has suffered, is suffering or is at unacceptable risk of significant **harm**, as a result of self-harming behaviour AND may not have a parent able and willing to protect the student from **harm**, (for example refusing to support the student in accessing medical or psychological care), then a written report must be made in accordance with the reporting processes outlined in Section 3 - Report.

Harm or risk of harm to a student caused by another student

Where a staff member, volunteer, or contractor forms a reasonable suspicion that a student has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed by another student, the first priority is the immediate safeguarding of the student, which will include determining whether the effect on the student is significant, for example, an injury requiring medical attention.

Where there is a significant injury or immediate risk of significant injury to a student, the priority is meeting the medical and safeguarding needs of the student, which may require the administration of first aid, immediate contact with emergency services and contacting the student's parent(s) or care-provider(s).

In cases where criminal offences have been alleged, for example the serious assault of a student by another student over the age of 10 years, parents and care-providers should be made aware of the option to pursue action through the Queensland Police Service. Allegations of bullying behaviours, including online behaviours, are managed in accordance with PMSA bullying policies and procedures.

Where a staff member, volunteer, or contractor forms a reasonable suspicion that a student has suffered, is suffering or is at unacceptable risk of significant **harm**, as a result of student-to-student behaviours AND may not have a parent able and willing to protect the student from **harm**, (for example an inability to provide supervision for the student), then a written report must be made in accordance with the mandatory reporting processes detailed

above.

Responding to student sexual behaviour

Sexual behaviours of various kinds may be evident in children and young people, particularly in the early years. Some forms of sexual behaviour may be considered developmentally appropriate for the child's age and stage of development. Other behaviours may indicate that the child could have been exposed to inappropriate material or experiences (for example, reports of very young children knowing about and experimenting with oral sex). Resources such as those published by the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women can assist in identifying age-inappropriate sexual behaviour.

Harm or risk of harm to a student caused by a person not associated with the school or family

There may be some circumstances where a staff member, volunteer, or contractor becomes aware of a **concern** that a student has been harmed, or is at risk of **harm**, by a person not associated with the school or family. As with the broader responses to **harm**, consideration must first be given to whether the **harm** or risk of **harm** is significant and whether there is a parent able and willing to protect the student from **harm**.

In circumstances where there is a parent able and willing to protect the student from **harm**, then the parents must be notified of the **concerns** as soon as possible. Where there is not a parent able and willing to protect the student and there is a reasonable suspicion of significant **harm** or risk of **harm**, then the mandatory reporting process in Section 3 - Report must be followed.

Where the risk is immediate, for example the abduction of a student walking to school, then the Queensland Police Service must be contacted immediately.

3. Report

When a **concern** is identified and appropriate conferral has been undertaken, staff, volunteers, and contractors are required to follow the following processes in reporting **abuse** in the correct manner.

3.1 Reporting to Child Safety

Key Documentation
Child Safety’s online reporting form Child Protection Guide CSYW Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1)

Mandatory Reporting Process

The following relevant persons are to make a written report to Child Safety when, during the course of the person’s engagement as a relevant person, they form a **reportable suspicion** that a child is in need of protection due to physical or **sexual abuse**:

- Teachers.
- Registered nurses and doctors.
- Education and care professionals.

Approved teachers have a mandatory reporting obligation under section 13E of the *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld) to make a report to the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women when a teacher forms a ‘**reportable suspicion**’ about a child. A **reportable suspicion** about a child is a reasonable suspicion that the 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 the child from the **harm**.

Notes:

- A report is not required if the person knows a report has already been made.
- If unsure about whether a report is to be made, then make the report.

This report must include information known about:

- the basis on which the person has formed the **reportable suspicion**.
- the child’s name, sex, and age.
- details of how to contact the child (e.g. the address at which the child usually lives, or the name and address of the school the child attends).
- details of the **harm** to which the **reportable suspicion** relates.
- 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.
- particulars of the identity of any other person who may be able to give **information** about the **harm** to which the **reportable suspicion** relates.

Key Personnel	Actions
Mandatory reporter	If a mandatory reporter has, based on information available, a reasonable suspicion that a child is in need of protection from physical or sexual abuse , the following actions are required: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. if there is an immediate danger, call ‘000’ (section 9).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. discuss concerns with a CSO or the school's Principal. c. consider any additional information available to inform the decision and content of the report. d. if the matter relates to sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse towards a child, immediately refer to section 3.3 to meet obligations relevant to the matter being reported to the Police. e. where it is reasonable to suspect a child is in need of protection from physical or sexual abuse, immediately report to Child Safety using Child Safety's online reporting form, or, when there are multiple notifiers of the same matter within the school, sign a copy of the report made. f. refer to other sections of these Processes for further information and required actions. g. If a relevant person forms a reportable suspicion about a child, the person must immediately give a written report to the PMSA CEO unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) giving the report might tend to incriminate the person; or (ii) the person knows, or reasonably supposes, that the PMSA CEO is aware of the matter.
<p>Child Safeguarding Officer or the Principal</p>	<p>Appropriate Persons from schools are required to:</p> <p>Engage with the mandatory reporter to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. provide support and assistance in meeting their responsibilities. b. gather and share relevant information available (section 6) to inform mandatory reporter's reporting decision. c. consider the use of additional supports to guide decision making and management of the matter, such as the Child Protection Guide. d. consider the need to support a timely response by contacting Child Safety by telephone. e. ensure a written report is made to Child Safety (using Child Safety's online reporting form). f. ensure that all persons who have contributed concerns to the report are recorded as 'notifiers' (only one report is required per incident or matter). g. ensure all staff who have contributed concerns are informed of, and all mandatory reporters have the opportunity to sign the report made to Child Safety. h. complete the Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1). i. ensure all actions taken and decisions made are appropriately documented. j. ensure copies of both the report to Child Safety and the Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1), and any other relevant records, are retained appropriately by the school. k. notify the PMSA CEO immediately of the submission of the report and the occurrence of the matter. l. refer to other sections of these Processes for further information and required actions.

Non-mandatory Reporters

Child Safety is the appropriate statutory authority for assessing, investigating, and intervening in child safeguarding matters. As such, and in accordance with the PMSA Child Protection Policy, in addition to the mandatory reporting requirements above, the following process is to be followed by all staff, volunteers, and contractors who are not **mandatory reporters**:

Key Personnel	Actions
Staff, volunteers, and contractors including those with Appropriate Authority	<p>If staff and volunteers have concerns that may relate to a reasonable suspicion a child is in need of protection, regardless of the type of abuse or neglect, the following actions are required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. if there is an immediate danger, call '000'. b. discuss concerns with a CSO or the Principal. c. if the matter relates to sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse, immediately refer to <i>3.3 Reporting Sexual Abuse or Likely Sexual Abuse</i> to meet obligations relevant to the matter being reported to the Police.
Child Safeguarding Officer or the Principal	<p>CSOs and Principals are required to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. engage with the staff member, volunteer, or contractor to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) provide support and assistance in meeting their responsibilities, and (ii) gather and share relevant information available. b. consider the use of additional supports to guide decision making and management of the matter, such as the Child Protection Guide. c. where it is reasonable to suspect a child is in need of protection that is not related to physical or sexual abuse, report the matter to Child Safety, either by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) telephoning the Regional Intake Service; or (ii) making a written report to Child Safety, using Child Safety's online reporting form. <p><i>Note: where the matter relates to physical or sexual abuse, it is a reportable suspicion that <u>must</u> be made in writing.</i></p> d. if the matter is reported to Child Safety: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) ensure that all persons who have contributed concerns to the report are recorded as 'notifiers' (note only one report is required per incident or matter). (ii) inform all staff who contributed concerns to the report that the matter has been reported to Child Safety. e. complete the internal PMSA Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1). f. ensure all actions taken and decisions made are appropriately documented. g. ensure copies of both the report to Child Safety (if completed) and the Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1), and any other records, are retained appropriately by the school. h. refer to other sections of these Processes for further information and required actions.

3.2 Reporting Sexual Abuse or Likely Sexual Abuse

Key Documentation
<p>Child Safety's online reporting form</p> <p>Child Protection Guide CSYW</p> <p>Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1)</p>

Staff members, visitors, and contractors are required to immediately provide a written report when they become aware, or reasonably suspect, in the course of their employment or engagement at a PMSA school, that:

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

has been, or is likely to be, sexually abused by another person.

This includes sexual behaviour involving the student and another person, where:

- The other person bribes, coerces, exploits, threatens or is violent toward the student; or
- The student has less power than the other person; or
- There is a significant disparity between the student and the other person in intellectual capacity or maturity.

Sexual abuse may include a sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of a child, including:

- sexual assault.
- indecent acts.
- production or possession of child **abuse** material.
- '**grooming**' a child in order to commit a sexual offence. **Grooming** involves predatory conduct undertaken to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time.

This written report is to be provided immediately:

- to the Principal; or
- where the **concerns** relate to the Principal: to the PMSA CEO.

This report must include:

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

Key Personnel	Actions
<p>Staff, volunteers, and contractors including those with Appropriate Authority</p>	<p>If a staff, volunteer, or contractor develops, or are informed of, concerns that may relate to a reasonable suspicion a child, young person or student has been or is likely to be sexually abused, the following actions are required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. if there is an immediate danger, call '000'. b. discuss concerns with a CSO or the school's Principal. c. consider any additional information available to inform the decision and content of the report. d. if it's reasonable to suspect a child, young person or student has been or is likely to be sexually abused, immediately commence a Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1) (a written report) and provide to the Principal immediately. e. If concerns relate to the Principal, the Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1) is to be provided directly to the PMSA CEO for their management immediately. f. if the matter relates to a child who may be in need of protection, refer to section 3.1 regarding obligations relevant to the matter being reported to Child Safety.
<p>Child Safeguarding Officer or the Principal</p>	<p>Assistance</p> <p>CSOs and Principals are required to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. engage with the staff, volunteer, or contractor to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) provide support and assistance in meeting their responsibilities; and (ii) gather and share relevant information available; b. consider the use of additional supports to guide decision making and management of the matter. <p>Responsibilities</p> <p>For Principals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. if it's reasonable to suspect a child, young person or student has been or is likely to be sexually abused, immediately provide the Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1) to the Police as a written report. b. if it's reasonable to suspect a response is required that day, contact Police by telephone. c. where the concern is identified by an adult student, visitor, staff member, volunteer, or contractor, inform the person when their concern has been reported to Police. d. if the matter involves a teacher, follow the process outlined in section 3.4 of these Processes. e. ensure all actions taken and decisions made are appropriately documented.

	<p>f. ensure a copy of the Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1), and any other records, are retained appropriately by the school.</p> <p>g. if the concern was identified by the Principal, immediately provide a copy of the Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1) to a police officer, and to the PMSA CEO.</p>
PMSA CEO	The PMSA CEO must provide or ensure that any reports of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse to a police officer immediately.

3.3 Failure to protect

In addition to the requirement to report a child sexual offence, under section 229BB of the *Criminal Code Act 1899* (Qld) it is a criminal offence for an adult to fail to protect a child from a child sexual offence.

A failure to protect offence will be committed if an adult in a school:

- knows there is a significant risk that another adult associated with the school will commit a child sexual offence against a child; and
- they have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk; and
- they wilfully or negligently fail to reduce or remove the risk.

Undersection 229BC of the Criminal Code, any adult who gains information that:

- causes the adult to believe on reasonable grounds, or that ought reasonably to cause the adult to believe, that a child sexual offence is being or has been committed against a child by another adult; and
- at the relevant time, the child is or was:
 - (i) under 16 years; or
 - (ii) a person with an impairment of the mind

must disclose the information to a police officer as soon as reasonably practicable after the belief is, or ought to reasonably to have been, formed. Failure to report this information to the Police without reasonable excuse is a criminal offence and carries a maximum prison term of three years imprisonment.

This obligation to report child sexual offences to the Police applies to everyone in Queensland aged 18 years or over, including all staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors, and students aged 18 and over at a school.

3.4 Reporting to the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT)

Key Documentation
<p>Queensland College of Teachers: Notifications</p> <p>Queensland College of Teachers: Complaints</p>

The Principal is required to report reportable incidents to the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT).

Key Personnel	Actions
School Principal	<p>As part of responding to concerns related to an Approved Teacher, school Principals are required to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. manage the matter as per section 3.3 of these Processes b. report to QCT: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) As soon as practicable after starting to deal with an allegation of harm caused or likely to be caused to a child because of the conduct of a relevant teacher. Dealing with an allegation of harm includes if the employing authority takes action in relation to the allegation, including investigating, inquiring into, or examining the allegation or referring the allegation to another entity to deal with. (ii) As soon as practicable after the employing authority stops dealing with the allegation for any reason, notify the outcome of the employing authority's dealing with the allegations. (iii) Within 14 days of a notice of dismissal, notify dismissals of a relevant teacher where circumstances call into question the teacher's competency to be employed as a teacher. c. provide assistance, as necessary, to QCT.

3.5 Reporting to the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)

Key Documentation
<p>Australian Health Professional Regulation Agency: Concerns</p> <p>Australian Health Professional Regulation Agency: Mandatory Notifications</p>

The PMSA is required to report child safeguarding incidents that involve Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) certified personnel to AHPRA. PMSA Principals are to follow the following process when such an incident arises:

Key Personnel	Actions
School Principals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. As part of responding to concerns related to a person who is registered with AHPRA, report any child safeguarding incidents involving an AHPRA registered individual to AHPRA through the links above. b. Provide assistance, as necessary, to AHPRA in their investigations and response.

3.6 Additional Reporting to the Queensland Police Service

Key Documentation
<p>Queensland Police Service: https://www.police.qld.gov.au/</p>

When responding to **concerns**, in addition to contacting '000' in response to an emergency or reporting to Police as per section 3.3 of these Processes, it may be appropriate to report other matters, e.g. when the reporting is necessary to reduce a risk of **harm**.

3.7 Reporting concerning behaviour of a staff member, volunteer, or contractor

This section applies where **concerns** relate to the behaviour or alleged behaviour of a person who has a role in, or (direct or indirect) contact with children and young people, through a PMSA school.

The violation of behavioural expectations and professional boundaries, irrespective of the person's intent, represents a breach of trust, a failure to meet a duty of care requirement to children and young people, and a failure to follow conduct requirements of their employer. When staff, volunteers or contractors violate boundaries, they can risk:

- serious or harmful consequences for the child or young person.
- seriously undermining the learning process.
- seriously undermining their professional reputation and the confidence of the school.
- formal directions or other disciplinary action from their employer or regulating authority.
- termination of employment or contractual arrangement.
- criminal charges.

It is the responsibility of adults to take action and promote a safe environment for children and young people. People often feel uncomfortable challenging boundary transgressions of others, especially adults. While raising a potential issue about another staff member, volunteer, or contractor can feel very difficult, being able to do so is of utmost importance to the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and young people. It is therefore an expectation that people will 'call out' behaviour that may be inconsistent with requirements or not in the best interests of children or young people.

Where a person raises a **concern** about the behaviour of a staff member, volunteer, or contractor (current or historical), the following actions are required:

Key Personnel	Actions
Student or Child/Young Person	If a student, child, or young person has any concerns about the conduct of any person over the age of 18, they are to report the matter to either the school's CSO, or the Principal. If the matter concerns either of these parties, the individual is to report the matter to the PMSA CEO.
Staff, volunteer, or contractor	If a staff member, volunteer, or contractor develops or receives a child safeguarding concern they will, as soon as practicable (usually immediately), report the matter to the either a CSO or the Principal. This should be both verbally (for timeliness) and in writing (to evidence that Appropriate Persons were advised). Commence a Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1).
Child Safeguarding Officer or School Principal	CSOs and Principals are required to: Assistance a. engage with the staff, volunteer, contractor or child or young person to: (i) provide support and assistance in meeting their responsibilities; and

- (ii) gather and share relevant information available.
- b. consider the use of additional supports to guide decision making and management of the matter.
- c. on receiving these **concerns**, ensure a Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1) is commenced.
- d. CSOs will, as soon as practicable, bring the **concerns** to the attention of the Principal and provide a copy of the commenced Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1).
- e. If the **concerns** relate to the Principal, then **concerns** are to be reported directly to the PMSA’s CEO who will meet any responsibilities otherwise delegated to that Principal regarding the management of the matter.

Responsibilities for Principals

Principals are required to:

- a. as soon as practicable, report all **concerns** to the PMSA’s CEO.
- b. adhere to all applicable statutory reporting requirements.
- c. work with the PMSA CEO to plan an appropriate response that demonstrates integrity, using a process that would stand up to external scrutiny. An investigation may be commenced where there is a **reasonable suspicion** that the staff member, volunteer or contractors’ behaviour has caused or is likely to cause **harm** to a child or young person and if it is appropriate in the circumstances. Investigations must be conducted by a third party, e.g. a law firm or external investigator.
- d. ensure all actions taken and decisions made are appropriately documented.
- e. ensure a copy of the Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1), and any other records, are retained appropriately by the school.
- f. refer to other sections of these Processes for further information and required actions.

PMSA CEO	The PMSA’s CEO is required to work with the Principal to respond appropriately to the concerns and meet relevant responsibilities.
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3.7.1 Allegations of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse against a Principal

A staff member, volunteer or contractor may form a **reasonable suspicion** that a student has been sexually abused or is likely to be sexually abused by a school’s Principal. In these circumstances, the reporting processes detailed in section 3.3 *Reporting Sexual Abuse or Likely Sexual Abuse* must be followed and the report from the staff member, volunteer or contractor must be made to the PMSA CEO, not the Principal. The PMSA CEO is to execute the following actions:

Key Personnel	Actions
PMSA CEO	a. The PMSA CEO will take immediate steps to ensure that a risk assessment is undertaken to determine whether the Principal should continue to be allowed to work in the school.

- b. Pending the outcome of the risk assessment, and following consultation with Queensland Police Service, the Principal may be stood aside (down) from duties, or have duties restricted.
- c. After discussions with Queensland Police Service and upon their advice, the PMSA CEO will inform the parent(s) or carer(s) of the student involved, stressing the confidentiality of the matter that a report has been made in relation to suspected **sexual abuse** of the student by the Principal.
- d. The PMSA CEO will keep a copy of the mandatory report in a separate confidential file and may establish liaison with the Queensland Police Service to assist in the management of the issue.
- e. On receiving a copy of a mandatory report in which suspected **sexual abuse/likely sexual abuse** has been committed by the Principal, the PMSA CEO will immediately make a written notification of the event to the Queensland College of Teachers.

The PMSA CEO will seek advice from the Queensland Police Service as to when the Principal should be informed of the allegation. As soon as it is deemed appropriate to inform the Principal, a meeting will be held between the Principal and the PMSA CEO. The Principal will be advised that they can have a support person at this meeting. At the meeting, the Principal will be informed that a suspicion of **sexual abuse/likely sexual abuse** has been reported about them and that this information has been handed to the Queensland Police Service. The Principal will be advised that they may access confidential counselling services available to all PMSA staff members. They will also be given the details of a nominated person to contact who will be available to provide information regarding the processes being undertaken and to facilitate the accessing of other support. The information communicated verbally at the meeting will also be provided in writing.

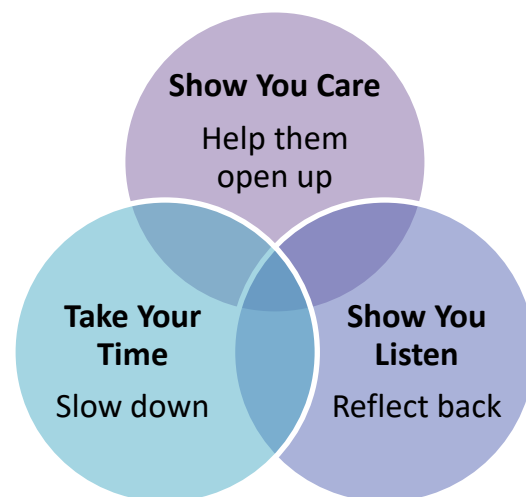
4. Support

Once a child safeguarding incident has been identified and reported, support must be given to the child or young person to ensure they are supported throughout the process. The following sections outline how all PMSA staff are to support children experiencing child safeguarding incidents.

4.1 Support when children make disclosures

Research about how adults can better respond to a child who is disclosing **abuse** found three key interpersonal skills that help a child feel they are being listened to and taken seriously:

1. Show you care, help them open up: Give your full attention to the child or young person and keep your body language open and encouraging. Be compassionate, be understanding and reassure them their feelings are important. Phrases such as 'you've shown such courage today' help.
2. Take your time, slow down: Respect pauses and don't interrupt the child – let them go at their own pace. Recognise and respond to their body language. Remember that it may take several conversations for them to share what's happened to them.
3. Show you understand, reflect back: Make it clear you're interested in what the child is telling you. Ask 'tell me more about that'. Reflect back what they've said to check your understanding – and use their language to show it's their experience.



If a child tells you they are experiencing **abuse**, it's important to reassure them that they've done the right thing in telling you. Make sure they know that **abuse** is never their fault.

The people the child chooses to disclose to need to listen, understand, and respond appropriately so the child gets the help, support, and protection they need.

4.2 Non-biased Approach

It's vital that any child who is trying to disclose **abuse** feels that they are being listened to and taken seriously. There can be a risk that, if professionals react inappropriately, this can lead to unfair bias against the child or young person, or the alleged abuser as formal investigations progress. This means it's important to maintain an unbiased approach when responding to disclosures and follow the PMSA Child Protection Policy and these Processes to ensure each case is treated in a fair and transparent manner and that the child gets the protection and support that they need.

This also means that any person who has a role in the management of the matter, needs to declare identified, actual or perceived, conflicts of interest, so as wherever possible, decisions are not made, or the management of matters are not influenced by, the person with that conflict.

4.3 Peer Support

For children and young people, friendship and support from peers is important to help children and young people feel safe and less isolated. Important considerations for schools regarding peer support include:

- Providing clear communication and support to children and young people about their ability to talk with an appropriate adult if they are concerned for either their, or another child or young person's, safeguarding. This includes their role as bystanders or witnesses to behaviours of **concern**, including peer risk taking behaviour.
- Providing support to both children and young people who make or receive disclosures.

4.4 Protective Interrupting

Where children or young people disclose in front of peers, or at another inappropriate time, it may be appropriate to use strategies labelled 'protective interrupting', these include:

- Gently interrupt the child by acknowledging them and preventing further disclosure. For example, "thank you, it sounds as though you have something really important to talk about..."
- Be supportive and gently indicate that the child or young person can talk in a more private situation. For example, "why don't we have a chat at recess?" or ask the student if they would like to leave the classroom to continue the conversation.
- Arrange to see the child as soon as possible in an appropriate location.

Note: for injuries seek appropriate medical assistance immediately.

4.5 Support from the PMSA

In addition to internal supports within schools from CSOs and the Principal, the PMSA encourages staff, volunteers, and contractors to access support and advice from the PMSA Group Office in any child related matters if they feel they need additional support. Staff, volunteers, and contractors are also able to access Acacia Employee Assistance Program to assist employees in dealing with personal or work-related problems in a positive way.

5. Risk Management

Taking action to reduce any reasonably foreseeable danger to a child or young person is of paramount importance.

PMSA schools recognise that despite implementation of best practice approaches, risk always exist for children and young people. To assist in mitigating this, schools adopt a risk management approach that aims to act in a preventative manner and reduce the likelihood of risks becoming realised. This same approach is applied when managing particular **concerns** or incidents.

There are criminal repercussions for individuals who fail to protect a child from a child sexual offence and civil penalties for organisations who breach the duty of care they owe to children in their care.

5.1 Managing Sexualised Behaviours

Key Documentation
Traffic Lights: Sexual behaviours in children and young people , published by True Relationships and Reproductive Health
Recognising and Responding to Harmful Sexual Behaviours Fact Sheet, the Changing Futures Program and other resources by the Daniel Morcombe Foundation .
Problem sexual behaviours and sexually abusive behaviours in Australian children and young people , published by Child, Family, Community, Australia.

Where the **concerns** relate to sexualised behaviour, the school will engage with evidence-based resources and, where necessary, seek specialist advice, to assist in the management of such behaviour.

The focus will be on identifying, understanding, and responding to the behaviour in a way that manages the safeguarding needs of all children and young people, with particular regard given to foreseeable danger.

5.2 Safeguarding and support planning for children and young people

Where children and young people are under the care, supervision, control, or authority of a PMSA school, schools are responsible for identifying reasonably foreseeable risks and putting strategies in place to reduce both the likelihood and impact of **harm** on children and young people. This risk management can often be assisted by developing safeguarding and support plans. A 'plan' will be documented and usually has the following characteristics.

- Is customised to the safeguarding and support needs of a particular child or group of children:
 - (i) where there is a **reasonable suspicion**, their behaviour may have caused, or place other children or young people at risk of, **harm**; or
 - (ii) where there is a **concern** for a child or young person's safeguarding whilst in a relevant school environment.
- Respectfully describes the **concern** or worry in sufficient detail.
- Describes any relevant strengths or actions already taken to address the **concern** or worry.
- Considers all environments the child or young person is located within as part of attending the school, e.g. classes, accessing toileting facilities, play areas, and after school care or activities.
- Reflects the relevant emotional/psychological and physical safeguarding needs of relevant children and young people and details of actions planned for those needs to be met.
- Includes actions that are reasonable to implement in the circumstances, proactive and preventative where at all possible, and reactive if necessary.

- Allocates a person responsible for implementing each action, noting this may be a child or young person, or any other relevant stakeholder.
- Allocates an appropriate staff member responsible for developing, communicating, monitoring, and reviewing the plan. Where possible and appropriate to the circumstances, this will be undertaken in collaboration with the child or young person, their family, relevant staff and other relevant stakeholders (other children, external professionals etc).
- Is communicated to relevant stakeholders who need to know the **information** to support the plan's success.
- Has a review timeframe and will be reviewed earlier if required due to changing circumstances.
- Agreed to by an appropriate representative of the school, and where appropriate to the circumstances, the child or young person, their parent, carer or guardian and any other person responsible for taking action.

Note, this type of planning can also be used with children and young people when talking about safeguarding and support strategies that may help them in other environments.

6. Information Management

It is appropriate for CSOs and Principals, when they have developed or receive a **concern**, to identify and gather information that will assist in determining the most appropriate response to the **concerns**. In doing so, the following will be considered:

- In these circumstances, what **information** is reasonable to be sought and from what source?
- What information gathering is not appropriate given its potential impact on an investigation by a statutory authority (e.g. Child Safety or Police)?
- The reporting threshold for most statutory authorities (including in particular the Police and Child Safety) is '**reasonable suspicion**' and it is the role of those authorities to investigate such suspicions, as relevant to either a child's need for protection, or criminal offences.
- Any school investigation regarding **concerns** will occur in a carefully planned manner, as coordinated by the Principal and the PMSA CEO, in consultation with any relevant statutory authority and any other appropriate support.
- In most cases schools do not need to photograph injuries. If required, Police or Child Safety will arrange for photographs.
- schools are to seek medical attention for known injuries as appropriate to the circumstance and will document such, using written notes and diagrams. Staff, volunteers and contractors will not seek to sight any injuries in an area normally covered by underwear.

6.1 Records Retention

All **concerns** that are reported to a CSO or Principal are to be recorded on a Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1). This form, and all supporting information/records, are to be stored securely and appropriately. A key goal of the Form is to provide a record that reflects and supports the decision-making process.

Where the **concerns** relate to:

- physical or **sexual abuse**, or likely **sexual abuse**, that may require reporting to Police or Child Safety; or
- **inappropriate behaviour** by a staff member, volunteer, or contractor.

and it is practicable, the Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1) is to be commenced by the person who first identifies, or otherwise receives, the **concerns**.

In retaining Child Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix 1), schools, noting the sensitive and personal nature of the **information** recorded, will:

- have a record keeping system that provides access to necessary if further **concerns** arise, or the school is required to account for actions taken.
- manage the form in keeping with the school's record keeping and retention requirements, as well as in accordance with its privacy obligations.

Consistent with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recommendation (8.4), schools' actions will be in keeping with the following principles for records and recordkeeping:

- **Principle 1:** Creating and keeping full and accurate records relevant to child safeguarding and wellbeing is in the best interests of children and should be an integral part of institutional leadership, governance, and culture.
- **Principle 2:** Full and accurate records should be created about all incidents, responses and decisions affecting child safeguarding and wellbeing.
- **Principle 3:** Records relevant to child safeguarding and wellbeing should be maintained appropriately.
- **Principle 4:** Records relevant to child safeguarding and wellbeing, should only be disposed of in accordance with law or policy.

- **Principle 5:** Individuals' existing rights to access, amend or annotate records about themselves should be recognised to the fullest extent.

6.2 Information Sharing

Information sharing by PMSA schools is compliant with section 176 of the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017* (Qld). Schools are required to comply with the Australian Privacy Principles in privacy legislation and any relevant supporting policy and procedures. Specific to these Processes, where the **concern** identified by an adult student, visitor, staff, volunteer, or contractor causes the person to believe on reasonable grounds that a child sexual offence is being or has been committed against a child by another adult, the person who has identified the **concern** is required to disclose the **concern** to the Police. A report to Police may not be required in certain circumstances, including where the person who identified the **concern** believes on reasonable grounds that the **concern** has already been disclosed to the Police. Accordingly, the Principals or the PMSA CEO is required to inform the person when their **concern** has been reported to Police.

6.3 Communication with Children and Young People

While a **concern** is being managed, consideration must be given to the children or young people involved.

Where possible, one person is to be identified to be responsible for liaising with the child or young person throughout the entire process. This person is to be someone appropriate and trusted by the child or young person. Schools will be particularly mindful to:

- Listen to what children and young people say without judgement and take their views seriously.
- Ask children and young people about the types of support they need to participate and develop a plan for involving them.
- Be honest and open about the things children and young people have control over or a say in, and those where they do not.
- Never dismiss or give less value to children's or young people's views simply because they are not adults.
- Not necessarily prioritise an adult's opinion over that of a child or young person where they may differ.
- Recognise that the most marginalised children and young people are often more vulnerable, and in doing so implement strategies for effective engagement. Specific consideration will be given to diversity associated with culture, disability, sexual and gender identity.

6.4 Information Sharing with Relevant Stakeholders

Where allowed to by law, relevant stakeholders are to be kept informed of the progress and outcome of a matter. This includes, but may not be limited to:

- Children and young people
- Their parents, carers, and guardians
- People who raise or receive **concerns**
- People whose behaviour the **concerns** relate to
- Broader cohorts within the school community
- People or organisations identified as necessary to reduce risk of **harm** to a child or young person

Such information sharing will be to:

- Assist in the safeguarding and wellbeing of children or young people
- Assist in the successful operations of the school

Communication of complex matters will often require consultation and support.

Where allowed by law, and where the sharing of such **information** will not cause **harm**, relevant stakeholders will:

- Be informed of the potential outcomes for certain types of complaints, as well as the final outcome and the reasons for it.
- Be informed of what action was taken to deal with the **concern**.
- Receive reasons for decisions that affect them, and advice about avenues for review of decisions.
- Explain, where relevant, how complaints can be made regarding the management of the matter. These may include internal and external options.

Finding out about the management of a **concern** may be traumatic for a relevant stakeholder, irrespective of the outcome. This doesn't mean the information shouldn't be shared, however consideration is required as to the most appropriate way to communicate **information** to the relevant person, and the support they might require.

When managing a **concern**, schools will proactively consider how relevant stakeholders will be appropriately supported. This includes monitoring for and managing inappropriate adverse consequences.

6.5 Information Sharing with the Queensland Child Protection System

Key Documentation
CYJMA Information Sharing Guidelines

Information Sharing Guidelines are issued by the Queensland Government under Section 159C of the *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld). They aim to support and guide organisations and agencies within the Queensland child protection and family support system, including government and non-government organisations to:

- understand their obligations when they share information under the *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld).
- outline what information can be shared, the circumstances in which it may be shared and who may share information.
- define when information must be shared with Child Safety.
- support the legislative framework for information sharing.
- provide practical guidance about how to store and manage personal information.

These guidelines are to be used in schools in the sharing of information with Child Safety to ensure correct processes are followed.

When reporting to Child Safety, the identity of the person who is listed as the Notifier is protected. This means their identity will not be disclosed by Child Safety or the Police unless the person provides their consent, or it is otherwise required to be provided by law. This also means that schools should be careful to not disclose the identity of a Notifier to a third party unless confident that to do so is lawful. This includes where responding to a subpoena.

Information is to be shared with a Law Enforcement Agency (Queensland Police Service or Australian Federal Police) where the sharing is necessary for the prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution or punishment of a criminal offence or a breach of a law imposing a penalty or sanction in accordance with the above guidelines.

7. Referrals

Where a **concern** is identified, it is often appropriate to refer children and young people, or the family, to support services. By referring to support, schools can help **concerns** to be addressed before they escalate further.

Referrals will usually be undertaken by a CSO who obtains consent prior to referral; however, Principals can make referrals without consent.

7.1 Family and Child Connect (FaCC)

Key Documentation
Website: https://www.familychildconnect.org.au/professionals
Call: 13 32 64 (13 FAMILY)

Funded by the Queensland Government, FaCC has locations across Queensland that can provide:

Information and advice: Information and advice on how you could respond. This may include advice on how to keep the family engaged and information on local support services. Note, you don't need a family's consent to access this option if you do not identify the family to FaCC.

Referral to a support service: Help you refer the family to a support service.

Active engagement and referral: Where families have multiple or complex needs, FaCC will engage them in a more detailed needs assessment and seek their consent to be referred to an Intensive Family Support service, or other service options. An experienced Child Protection Practitioner is also based at each FaCC location to help identify and respond to more serious **concerns**.

7.2 Domestic and Family Violence (DFV)

When referring for domestic and family violence, staff are to use the following services:

DV Connect: <https://www.dvconnect.org/>

The Queensland Government also publishes the following information on domestic and family violence support: <https://www.qld.gov.au/community/getting-support-health-social-issue/support-victims-abuse/domestic-family-violence>

Local support services can be found: <https://www.qld.gov.au/community/getting-support-health-social-issue/support-victims-abuse/domestic-family-violence/find-local-support>

Helplines include:

- DVConnect Womensline: 1800 811 811.
- DVConnect Mensline: 1800 600 636.
- 1800RESPECT: 1800 737 732 (24/7 information, referral, and counselling for sexual assault and DFV).

7.3 Mental Health Support for Children and Young People

raisingchildren.net.au is a high-quality source of information for parents and professionals.

Headspace: headspace.org.au. Headspace is the National Youth Mental Health Foundation providing early intervention mental health services to 12-25 year olds. Headspace can help young people with mental health, physical health (including sexual health) alcohol and other drug services, and work and study support.

Kids Helpline: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/> or call 1800 551 800. Kids Helpline is Australia's only free, confidential 24/7 online and phone counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25. Qualified counsellors at Kids Helpline are available via WebChat, phone or email anytime and for any reason.

Child and Youth Mental Health Service (CYMHS): <https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/our-services/mental-health-services/>. CYMHS specialises in helping infants, children and young people up to the age of 18 who have complex mental health needs. They provide community and hospital-based services, outreach and telepsychiatry programs, early intervention, forensic and other specialty services.

In emergencies, it may be appropriate to call an ambulance, or access a hospital emergency department. In non-emergencies, it may be appropriate to ask families to engage with their GP for appropriate intervention and referral.

7.4 Online Safeguarding

Where **concerns** relate to online **abuse**, guidance can be sought from the eSafety Commissioner <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>. The eSafety Commissioner has powers relating to cyberbullying, image-based **abuse**, and illegal and harmful online content.

To guide appropriate actions, the eSafety Commissioner also publishes the following Toolkit for schools: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/educators/toolkit-schools>.

<https://www.thinkuknow.org.au/> is an education program led by the Australian Federal Police focused on preventing online child sexual exploitation.

7.5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families

The Queensland Government funds *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Support Services* with an explicit goal of making it easier for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in communities across Queensland, to access culturally responsive support to improve their social, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing, and build their capacity to safely care for and protect their children. For information on local service options visit:

<https://familysupportreferral.org.au/>

<https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/protecting-children/child-family-reform/meeting-needs-requirements-aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-children-families-communities/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-family-wellbeing-services>

8. Child Safeguarding Officers

Pursuant to Section 16(3) of the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld), each PMSA school has two nominated staff members who are listed as Child Safeguarding Officers (CSO's) for the school. These CSOs act as a point of contact for reporting **inappropriate behaviour** or child safeguarding issues, or to confer with on the best course of action to take in any child safeguarding issues. In co-educational settings, a balance in gender between the CSOs should be a consideration in their appointment. The contact details for each CSO are listed on the individual school's website.

CSOs are staff members appointed by a Principal in a school. Principals must have **at least two** staff appointed to this role, however more are usually necessary. In appointing CSOs, the Principal must be sure that these staff members understand and have capacity to adhere to all relevant child safeguarding Policies and Procedures, and their related roles and responsibilities.

The following key attributes are to be considered when appointing CSOs:

- **Trustworthy**. Children and others need to feel they can trust the person they are talking with.
- **Contemporary knowledge** of child safeguarding and the role of the school in the safeguarding and wellbeing of children, and ability to apply this knowledge to meet the responsibilities of the role.
- Ability to **work collaboratively** with all stakeholders towards the achievement of child safeguarding and wellbeing outcomes.
- Ability to **communicate effectively**, including approaching and responding to child safeguarding issues with appropriate sensitivity and appreciation of the impact of these issues on individuals.
- **Sufficient authority** within the school, including leadership skills and the ability to direct other staff, where appropriate, and manage upwards.

To maintain the role of CSO the staff member will, where practicable, attend professional development as arranged by the school or the PMSA.

Definitions

A Child in need of protection

As defined in section 10 of the *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld) a 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; and
- b. does not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.

Abuse

Behaviour that causes, or could reasonably be expected to cause, **harm**. It can be a single incident, or several incidents that take place over time. For the purpose of the PMSA Child Protection Policy and these Processes, examples of Abuse include:

Act	Definition
A sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of a child	Sexual offences refer to criminal conduct of a sexual nature and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sexual assault • indecent acts • production or possession of child abuse material • ‘grooming’ a child in order to commit a sexual offence. Grooming concerns predatory conduct undertaken to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time.
Sexual misconduct	Sexual misconduct includes behaviour, physical contact, speech or other communication of a sexual nature, inappropriate touching, grooming behaviour, and voyeurism. This captures a broader range of inappropriate behaviours of a sexual nature that are not necessarily criminal. Examples of sexual misconduct include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an adult developing a close and inappropriate relationship with a child which crosses professional boundaries. • an adult inappropriately discussing sex and sexuality with a child. • other overtly sexual acts that could lead the PMSA to take disciplinary or other action.
Physical violence	Physical violence includes an act that causes physical injury or pain. Examples of physical violence can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hitting/kicking/punching. • pushing/shoving/grabbing/throwing/shaking. • using an object to hit or strike. • using restraint or excessive force that is inappropriate to the situation. Physical violence does not include lawful behaviour. For example:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reasonable steps taken to protect a child from immediate harm, such as taking a child’s arm to stop them from going into oncoming traffic. • medical treatment given in good faith by an appropriately qualified person, such as a senior first aid officer administering first aid.
Behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child	<p>Examples of behaviours that may cause emotional or psychological harm include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exposure to violence or threats of violence, including family violence • persistent hostility/rejection • humiliation/belittling • scapegoating. <p>Please note the following does not constitute behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a person takes reasonable steps to protect a child from immediate harm. • a person with responsibility for discipline takes lawful and reasonable disciplinary action, such as sending a child to sit in ‘time out’ for a period of time, in line with organisational policy. • the conduct is related to providing medical treatment or care given in good faith, such as a first aid officer administering first aid.
Significant neglect of a child	<p>The neglect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • must be more than minor and insignificant. • does not need to have a lasting or permanent effect. • may be an ongoing situation or a one-off incident, as long as it is not minor in nature. <p>Examples of different types of neglect include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervisory neglect, which is the absence or inattention of a person which places the child at risk of physical harm or injury, sexual abuse or allows other criminal behaviour towards the child. • physical neglect, which is the failure to provide basic physical necessities for a child, such as adequate food, clothing and housing. • medical neglect, which is the failure to provide for appropriate medical care for a child, including a failure to acknowledge the seriousness of an illness or condition, or deliberately withholding appropriate care.

Appropriate Authority

An Appropriate Authority refers to the PMSA CEO.

Appropriate Person

The below table highlights the appropriate person for individuals:

Person with concern	Appropriate persons to share information with
<i>Children and young people</i>	Children and young people are asked to raise any concerns (impacting either themselves and/or their peers) with an adult they trust , so that the adult can help. CSOs are particularly available to help. Without minimising the responsibility of adults to respond to the care and protective needs of children and young people, it is also recognised that friendship and support from peers is important to help children and young people feel safe and less isolated.
<i>Visitors, including parents and carers</i>	A CSO or the Principal
<i>Volunteers, staff, and contractors</i> <i>(Staff are also to refer to relevant sections regarding statutory reporting obligations)</i>	A CSO or the Principal Where required to guide the application of the Policy, staff, volunteers, and contractors are also able to share information with staff from the PMSA. A person with Appropriate Authority (PMSA CEO)

Child

An individual under 18 years of age.

Child in need of protection

As defined in section 10 of the *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld), a child in need of protection is a child who:

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

Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy

Sections 171 and 172 of the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* (Qld) requires PMSA schools to have a Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy that implements employment practices and procedures to promote the wellbeing of a child affected by the regulated employment or regulated businesses undertaken as part of the school and to protect the child from harm.

Concern

Information of whatever nature and from whatever source, that leads to a **reasonable suspicion** of circumstances that may have posed or continues to pose a risk to the physical or psychological safeguarding of a child or young person. This includes, but may not be limited to:

- incidents or allegations of sexual, physical, or other abuse or inappropriate behaviour
- matters that are recent or historical in nature.

Grooming

The cultivation of a relationship in order to:

- initiate or hide sexual assault or abuse
- facilitate the procurement of a child to engage in a sexual act or
- expose, without legitimate reason, a child to any indecent matter.
- In the case of child sexual abuse, an offender may groom not only the child, but also the child's parents or guardians, colleagues, or other persons.

Harm

As defined in section 9 of the *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld), harm, to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by physical, psychological, or emotional abuse or neglect, or sexual abuse or exploitation. Harm can be caused by a single act, omission or circumstance, or a series or combination of acts, omissions, or circumstances.

Inappropriate behaviour

Any behaviour that is:

- sexual in nature, including grooming; or
- regardless of the nature of the behaviour, where it is reasonable to suspect this behaviour has placed a child or young person at risk of harm, caused harm, or there is a likelihood of future harm. For example, this includes behaviour defined as abuse.

Information

Information of whatever nature and from whatever source relating to:

- alleged conduct of an adult wherever or whenever occurring involving sexual harassment or assault, or sexually inappropriate behaviour, grooming or the possession, making or distribution of child exploitation material
- alleged inappropriate or unreasonable conduct or omission of a PMSA employee who had knowledge of (a); or
- an alleged process failure.

Mandatory Reporter

Pursuant to s 13E of the *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld) a mandatory reporter is any of the following:

- a doctor.
- a registered nurse.
- a teacher who is an approved teacher Under the *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005* (Qld) employed at a school.

- a police officer who, under a direction given by the commissioner of the police service under the *Police Service Administration Act 1990* (Qld), is responsible for reporting under this section.
- a person engaged to perform a child advocate function under the *Public Guardian Act 2014* (Qld)
- an early childhood education and care professional.

Principal

Consistent with the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (Qld), the person responsible for the school's day-to-day management. Also known as a Head of the school, Headmaster/mistress or other similar title.

Reasonable suspicion

Means to suspect on grounds that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Note:

- This requires the application of judgement.
- The threshold for reporting 'reasonable suspicion', is less than needing to believe something is true or know something for certain. Conversely, to reasonably suspect something is more than something being remotely possible.

Reportable suspicion

Reportable suspicion about a child or young person is:

- a reasonable suspicion that the 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 the child from the harm.

Sexual abuse

Defined in section 364 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (Qld) as including sexual behaviour involving the student and another person, where:

- the other person bribes, coerces, exploits, threatens or is violent toward the student; or
- the student has less power than the other person; or
- there is a significant disparity between the student and the other person in intellectual capacity or maturity.

Serious Incident

A Serious Incident includes:

- the death of a child,
- any incident involving serious injury or trauma to a child where it could be reasonably expected the children required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner, or attend a hospital (e.g. broken limb),
- any incident involving serious illness, where a child ought reasonably to have attended a hospital (e.g. anaphylaxis),
- any emergency for which emergency services attended,
- any circumstance where a child appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for,
- any circumstance where a child appears to have been taken or removed from the premises in a

manner that contravenes regulations; or

- any circumstance where a child is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the premises or any part of the premises.

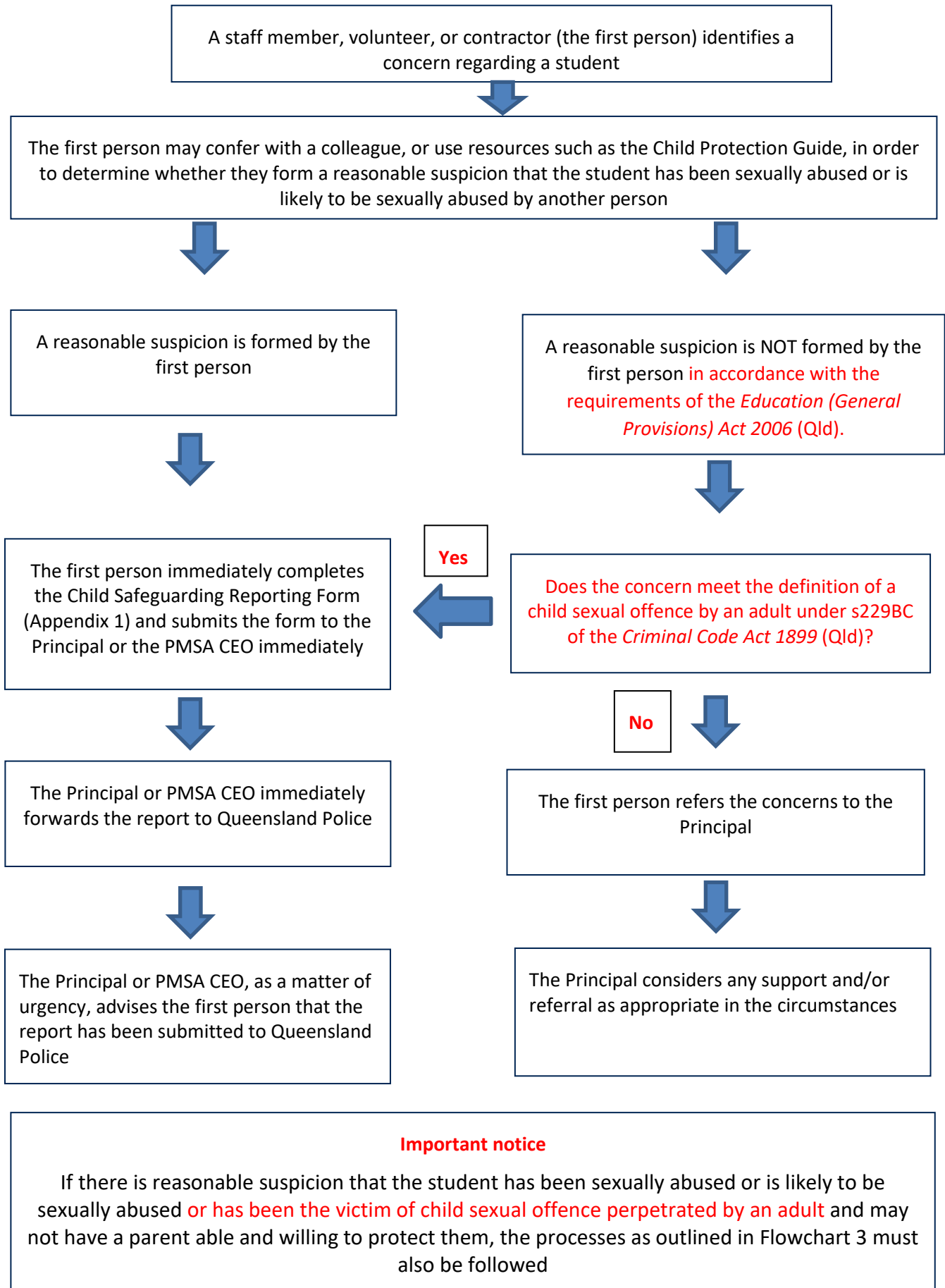
Staff

A staff member is a person who is employed by the PMSA and its schools.

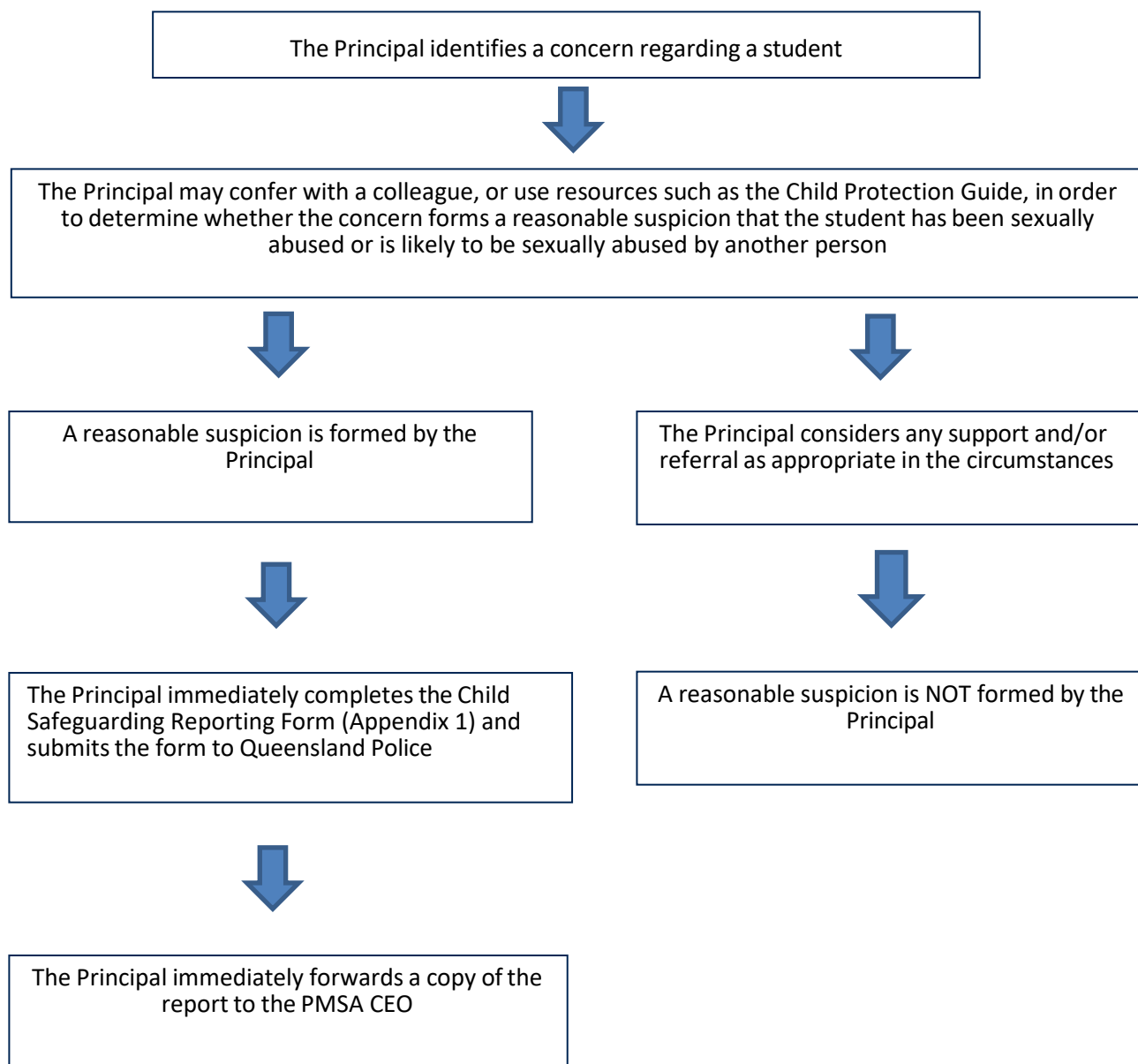
Volunteers

Consistent with the *Working with Children (Risk Assessment and Screening) Act 2000* (Qld), a person undertaking work for a school without receiving financial reward. 'Undertaking work' is understood to mean holding a position or performing a function with the actual or apparent authority of the school.

Flowchart 1: Reporting Sexual Abuse & Likely Sexual Abuse



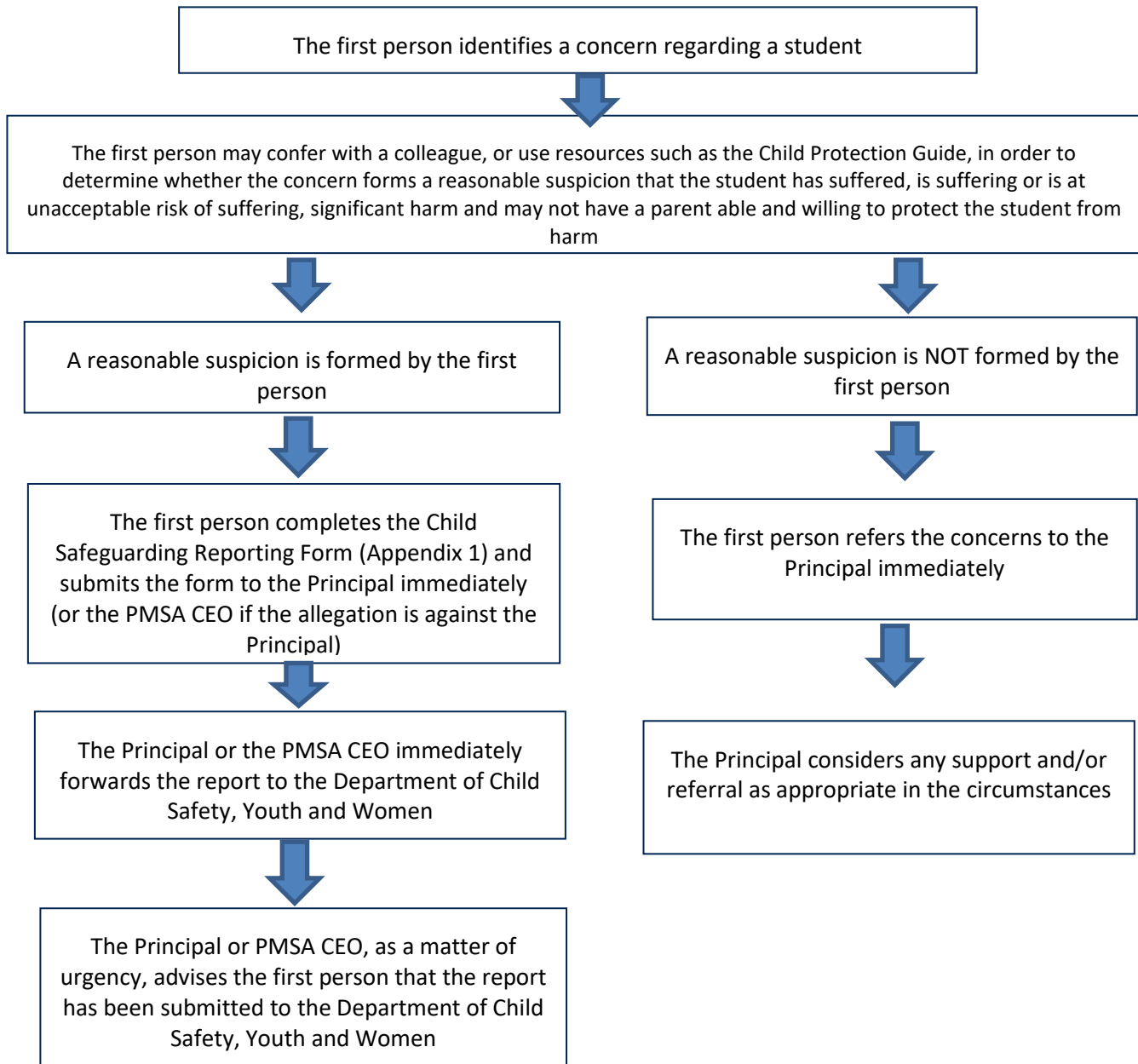
Flowchart 2: Reporting Sexual Abuse & Likely Sexual Abuse where the first person is the Principal



Important notice

If there is reasonable suspicion that the student has been sexually abused or is likely to be sexually abused and may not have a parent able and willing to protect them, the processes as outlined in Flowchart 3 must also be followed.

Flowchart 3: Reporting Significant Harm to Child Safety Services



IMPORTANT NOTICE

If there is a reasonable suspicion that the student has been sexually abused or is likely to be sexually abused by another person, then the processes as outlined in Flowchart 1 must also be followed, or Flowchart 2 if the first person is the Principal.

Mandatory Responsibilities for Teachers

If the staff member is a teacher, and the reasonable suspicion is that the student has suffered, is suffering, or is at an unacceptable risk of significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse and may not have a parent able and willing to protect the student from the harm (a reportable suspicion under section 13E of the *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld)), the teacher is responsible, as a matter of urgency, to ensure that the report has been submitted to the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women, unless they become aware, or reasonably suppose, that the matter has already been brought to the attention of the authorities.

If a teacher forms a reportable suspicion and is not able to progress a report through the process detailed in the Flowchart above, they are able to meet their mandatory reporting obligation through reporting directly to Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women via the online reporting form:

<https://secure.communities.qld.gov.au/cbir/ChildSafety>

Appendix 1. Child Safeguarding Report Form

Student Protection Report to Queensland Police Service and/or the Department responsible for Child Safety

Type of Report

- Mandatory Report of Sexual Abuse/Likely Sexual Abuse to the Queensland Police Service
- Mandatory Report of a Reportable Suspicion to the Department responsible for Child Safety (Sexual Abuse/Physical Abuse) (this is compulsory reporting for non-teachers)
- Report of a reasonable suspicion that a child may be in need of protection caused by emotional abuse or neglect to the Department responsible for Child safety
- Report of sexual abuse, significant physical harm, risk of significant harm of a student by another student to Queensland Police Service
- Report of Inappropriate Behaviour towards a student by a staff member/volunteer to Principal / PMSA Chief Executive Officer

THE QLD CHILD PROTECTION GUIDE WAS USED TO SUPPORT THE DECISION TO SUBMIT THIS REPORT

- Yes
- No

PART A: FIRST PERSON REPORT (RECORD OF CONCERN) ALL sections of Part A should be completed

SCHOOL DETAILS

School Name	<input type="text"/>
School Address	<input type="text"/>
School Telephone	<input type="text"/>
School Suburb	<input type="text"/>
Name of Principal	<input type="text"/>

DETAILS OF THE AFFECTED CHILD

Please note: If you have more than one affected child (who is not a sibling), a separate report will have to be completed.

First Name	<input type="text"/>
Surname	<input type="text"/>
Preferred Name	<input type="text"/>
Gender	<input type="text"/>
Date of Birth	<input type="text"/>
Year Level	<input type="text"/>
Indigenous Status	<input type="text"/>
Main Language	<input type="text"/>

Interpreter Required?

- Yes
- No

Disability

Yes

No

Verified

Disability Details

Residential Address(es)

Current Location of the Child

Are there additional affected children in relation to this matter?

Please note: If you have more than one affected child (who is not a sibling), a separate student protection report will have to be completed. If the additional affected children are siblings, indicate below

Yes

No

PARENT GUARDIAN/CARER OF THE CHILD (MAIN CARER)

Legal Name

Preferred Name

Gender

Proximate Age

Relationship to Child

Lives with the affected child

Yes

No

Contact Telephone Numbers(s)

Residential Address(es)

Indigenous Status

Main Language

Interpreter Required

Yes

No

Disability

Yes

No

Verified

Disability Details

ADDITIONAL PARENT/GUARDIAN/CARER OF THE CHILD

Legal Name

Preferred Name

Gender

Proximate Age

Lives with the affected child

Yes

No

Contact Telephone Number(s)

Residential Address(es)

Indigenous Status

Main Language

Interpreter Required

Yes

No

Disability

Yes

No

Verified

Disability Details

SIBLINGS/OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS

Please type name, DOB (where known or approximate age) and relationship to the affected child for each family member. Please indicate if the siblings are also considered affected children in relation to this matter.

Eg John Smith (DOB (where known or approximate age), sibling, also an affected child

TYPE OF ABUSE

Sexual abuse

Likely sexual abuse

Physical abuse/unacceptable risk of physical abuse

Emotional abuse/unacceptable risk of emotional abuse

Neglect/unacceptable risk of neglect

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

Which does not include sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse

TYPE OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

- Physical Boundary Violation
- Emotional Boundary Violation
- Behaviour Boundary Violation
- Other

AWARENESS OF CONCERN

- Disclosure by student Information from another student
- Information from a relative of the student
- Information from another parent at the school
- Observations of a staff member
- Anonymous report
- Other

DESCRIPTION OF CONCERN

Please refer to PMSA Code of Conduct for description of Inappropriate Behaviour. Please include as much information as possible to facilitate a thorough assessment of safeguarding/harm by QPS and Child Safety. Include information.

What happened, who was involved? When did it happen? (approx date/time) Where did it happen?

If your description of concern cannot fit in the text box, please attach separate document

Has the concern (or similar) occurred previously?

- Yes
- No

INJURIES TO CHILD

Please describe any physical injuries if known, include information such as - location, shape, size, colour

- Yes
- No

IMMEDIATE SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Please detail any concerns you may have about the affected child's immediate safeguarding

- Yes
- No
- Unknown

Details

OBSERVATION OF AFFECTED CHILD'S BEHAVIOUR

Please provide details of the affected child's current behavioural/emotional presentation where known or relevant. For example, please indicate whether these behaviours were present prior to the disclosure of observed post disclosure

SOURCE(S) OF CONCERN

Details of person believed to have caused the harm

Legal Name

Preferred Name

Gender

Date of Birth/Approximate Age

Contact Telephone Number(s)

SOURCE OF CONCERN BY CATEGORY

- Staff member, other employee or volunteer
- Parent, carer, family member or other person in the community
- Other student enrolled at the school Self-harm

Is the source of concern a parent?

- Yes
- No
- Unknown

Relationship

Does this parent have current access to the affected child?

- Yes
- No
- Unknown

PERSON(S) WITH MORE INFORMATION

Please include information on each person, name, position, contact number/s

FIRST PERSON REPORT (REPORT OF CONCERN) COMPLETED BY

Name

Position

Contact Telephone Number(s)

Other contact Information

List other actions (if applicable)

PART B: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (COMPLETED BY THE PRINCIPAL) / DELEGATE

Family court orders

Details

Child protection orders

Details

Departmental out of home care

Details

Departmental intervention

Details

Previous student protection reports

Details

RISK FACTORS

Please provide details of any known risk factors. This includes issues that may impact of the child's vulnerability - medical issues, challenging behaviours, social issues and any issues that may impact on the parent's ability and willingness to protect the child - substance misuse, domestic violence, mental illness

Child risk factors

Details

Parent(s) risk factors

Details

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Please provide details of any known protective factors such as - any actions parent/s have taken to address the concerns, involvement of support agencies, family support network

- Yes
- No
- Unknown

Details

OTHER ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To be completed if the Principal has knowledge of any other relevant information not included above, for example - previous discussion with parent, support offered by the school any actions taken by school staff

PERSON(S) WITH MORE INFORMATION

Please include information on each person: name, position, contact number/s

The young person is aware a report is being made

The parents/guardians are aware a report is being made

REPORT SUBMITTED BY (PRINCIPAL/DELEGATE) DETAILS

Name	<input type="text"/>
Position	<input type="text"/>
Date	<input type="text"/>
Time	<input type="text"/>
Contact Number/s	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>
School	<input type="text"/>
Suburb	<input type="text"/>

REPORT SUBMITTED VIA PRINCIPAL/DELEGATE EMAIL TO

Queensland Police Service Child Protection Investigation Unit

Name of Officer and Region

Department responsible for Child Safety Regional Intake Service Team

Name of Staff Member and Region

Family and Child Connect (FaCC)

Reason/Information

REQUEST BY SCHOOL FOR OUTCOME ADVICE

The Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association (PMSA) request that the outcome of the state authorities (QPF/Child Safety) assessment of the reported concerns be communicated to the Principal.

FINALISED REPORT PROCESS for Principals of PMSA schools

1. Please save a copy of this form before submitting.
2. Ensure all Student Protection Reports (Form A) are forwarded (email) to: PMSA Chief Executive Officer.
3. All Student Protection Reports (Form A) sent to QPS/DCCSDS must be submitted by the Principal. A signature is not required as emailing of the report fulfills the legislative obligations of the Principal.
4. The Principal must inform the author of the First-Person Report (Record of Concern) that the report has been made.

1. Review and version control register

Version	Authorising officer	Approval date	Effective date	Change history / superseded documents
1.0	ED-LRCA	27.10.2022	01.11.2022	New Document for Child Safeguarding Processes.
1.1	ED-LRCA	16.02.2023	16.02.2023	Clarification of timeframes for reporting processes.

Contact officer: Executive Director – Legal, Risk & Corporate Affairs