

4. Brisbane Catholic Education will endeavour to make available Student Protection Officers to support

~ the implementation of Brisbane Catholic Education's *Student Protection – Reporting and investigative processes of inappropriate behaviour and child/student harm by employees*

~ the implementation of Brisbane Catholic Education's *Student Protection - Reporting processes for allegations of child/student harm*

by someone who is not immediately associated with the school, other students, and student self-harm

~ the development of student protection strategies for schools.

5. Brisbane Catholic Education will monitor and review the policy, reporting and investigation process required by Church protocol and legislation.

References

Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference and the Australian Conference of Religious Institutes. (2000). (third reprint) *Towards Healing – Principles and Procedures in Responding to Complaints of Sexual Abuse Against Personnel of Catholic Church in Australia*. National Committee for Professional Standards. Victoria.

Brisbane Catholic Education. (November 2004). *Student Protection – Reporting and investigation processes of inappropriate behaviour and child/student harm by employees*. Brisbane Catholic Education. Brisbane.

Brisbane Catholic Education. (November 2004). *Student Protection - Reporting processes for allegations of child/student harm by someone who is not immediately associated with the school, other students, and student self-harm*. Brisbane Catholic Education. Brisbane.



**Catholic
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**ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE
CATHOLIC EDUCATION COUNCIL**

POLICY

STATEMENT

Student Protection

FOR BRISBANE CATHOLIC
EDUCATION SCHOOLS

MAY 2005



The *Student Protection Policy* demonstrates Brisbane Archdiocese's commitment to the protection of students attending Catholic schools. It is written in response to our belief in the supreme dignity of each and every person as a child of God. Such dignity is undermined when a person is abused/harmed in any way whatsoever.

Respect for the human person entails respect for the rights that flow from his dignity as a creature. These rights are prior to society and must be recognised by it... (Catechism of the Catholic Church; n.1930)

Catholic education is driven by Gospel imperatives to protect students in its care from all forms of abuse/harm. Christ reminds us (Mt 19:14) to care for the young 'for it is to such as these that the Kingdom of heaven belongs'. My hope is that all students attending Catholic schools experience personal growth and development in an environment that protects students from individuals who may cause abuse or harm that would hinder their development. The provision of care for students to promote their welfare and protect them from abuse or harm is vital in the education process.

The legislative and duty of care responsibilities of implementing this policy resides with all who are employed by Catholic education in the overall mission of the Archdiocese.

I ask that Catholic school communities reflect upon this *Student Protection Policy* and ensure that all staff are adhering to the policy, procedures, practices and student protection education strategies. This will ensure the consequences of the policy are promoted and engaged with in schools. I have no doubt that the policy will promote the dignity of the human person among all who work in the educational mission of the Archdiocese.

Sincerely in Christ

Most Rev John Bathersby DD
ARCHBISHOP OF BRISBANE

MAY 2005

STUDENT PROTECTION

POLICY

Catholic schools uphold the dignity of the human person, strive to develop the whole person and are committed to ensuring that support is provided in cases of abuse/harm of children/students or where such abuse/harm is suspected or alleged.

INTRODUCTION

This policy document applies to Brisbane Catholic Education schools. It refers to cases of abuse/harm of children¹/students² or where such abuse/harm is suspected or alleged.

The document Towards Healing - Principles and Procedures in Responding to Complaints of Abuse Against Personnel of the Catholic Church in Australia (third reprint, December 2000) covers complaints of sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse against persons working in the name of the Church (clerics, religious personnel, lay employees or volunteers). The Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference and the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes have adopted this document. Brisbane Catholic Education applies *Towards Healing* principles and procedures through its document *Student Protection – Reporting and investigative processes of inappropriate behaviour and child/student harm by employees*.

All other cases of abuse/harm, e.g. sexual, emotional, physical abuse and neglect of child/student are covered by Brisbane Catholic Education's *Student Protection – Reporting processes for allegations of child/student harm by someone who is not immediately associated with the school, other students, and student self-harm*.

RATIONALE

Jesus insisted on the primacy of love: love of God and love of each other. No one was excluded from his love. In fact, by word and deed He showed a special preference for the poor, the powerless and the vulnerable, those often relegated to the margins of society. He especially loved children 'for of such are the Kingdom of heaven.' (Mt 19:14)

His disciples, like Jesus himself, must particularly love and care for children and protect them from anyone who would harm or abuse them.

Catholic schools are charged with the responsibility of fostering the growth and development of the children/students within its schools. Therefore schools must be vigilant to ensure that the children/students are protected from anyone who would harm or abuse them and thus impede their personal development. Accordingly, Catholic schools have an obligation to provide, whenever possible and practicable, an appropriate response to children/students who experience abuse/harm and to the school communities of those children/students.

CONSEQUENCES

1. In cases of complaints of sexual, emotional, psychological or physical abuse/harm of children/students by persons working in the name of the Church, principals and staff are required to follow appropriate intervention procedures as outlined in the document *Student Protection – Reporting and investigative processes of inappropriate behaviour and child/student harm by employees*.
2. In cases of suspected or alleged abuse/harm and neglect by:
 - ~ someone who is not immediately associated with the school (family member, friend or other)
 - ~ other students or
 - ~ student self-harm
 - ~ principals and staff are required to follow appropriate intervention procedures as outlined in the document *Student Protection – Reporting processes for allegations of child/student harm by someone who is not immediately associated with the school, other students, and student self-harm*.
3. Brisbane Catholic Education will endeavour to keep principals and staff informed about current issues in student protection and to provide professional development opportunities for staff in this area.

¹ Child refers to a person under 18 years of age (*Child Protection Act 1999*)

² Student refers to an individual who is, or has been, enrolled in a Brisbane Catholic Education School.