

Student protection

Fact sheet for parents

For Queensland state schools, there is no higher priority than the safety and wellbeing of their students.

This fact sheet provides information about how state schools respond to student protection concerns, including the mandatory reporting responsibilities of school staff.

Reporting student protection concerns

All school staff members must report reasonable suspicions of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse to the Queensland Police Service (QPS). Teachers, registered nurses and early childhood education and care professionals must also report reasonable suspicions of physical or sexual abuse to Child Safety when the child may not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from harm. These responsibilities are known as mandatory reporting obligations.

Since July 2021, all adults in Queensland are required to report a reasonable belief that a child is being or has been sexually abused by another adult to the QPS. Where such a belief arises in the course of a staff members' employment, the matter must be reported in accordance with the Department of Education's [Student protection procedure](#).

The [Student protection procedure](#) provides clear instructions to school staff members on how to report student protection concerns in a way that meets their mandatory reporting obligations. The principal or delegated staff member finalises student protection reports and determines if they meet the threshold for forwarding to Child Safety and/or the QPS.

School staff members may make enquiries to determine if there is a reasonable suspicion of harm, and therefore that the threshold for reporting has been reached. However, schools are not responsible for undertaking formal investigations, or for substantiating allegations of harm against a child.

If the principal or delegated staff member determines that a report does not need to progress to Child Safety and/or the QPS, the child and their family may be offered a range of support options. One of these may be to refer the family to local support services, such as [Family and Child Connect](#), to assist them to receive any support they may need.

What happens when a school submits a report to authorities?

When a principal or delegated staff member submits a student protection report, Child Safety and/or the QPS will assess the information provided in the report and may take action to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing. During this time the school will support the child and report any new suspicions of harm to Child Safety and/or the QPS.

Sometimes the principal is notified of the outcome when Child Safety and/or the QPS decide what action will be taken. If the report does not meet the Child Safety or QPS threshold for intervention and no action is taken, the school will continue to support the child.

What if I suspect a child is being harmed?

If you are a volunteer or visitor in a state school, you must report to the principal when, in the course of your duties, you become aware or suspect a student or child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Since July 2021, all adults in Queensland are required to report a reasonable belief that a child is being or has been sexually abused by another adult to the QPS. Where such a belief arises in the course of your duties in connection with the school, the matter must be reported to the principal. A report will be forwarded to the QPS and/or Child Safety if the information meets the threshold for reporting.

All parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns regarding the possible abuse and neglect of students with the principal, guidance officer or the child's teacher. Every person has the right to make a report directly to Child Safety or the QPS.

Confidentiality

The identity of a notifier (a person who notifies Child Safety of suspicions of harm to children) is protected under the *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld). Any person who becomes aware of the identity of a notifier must not disclose the identity of the notifier to another person (with a few exceptions). Notifiers are also protected from liability for notification of, or information given about, alleged harm or risk of harm.

Further information

Information for the public about child protection is available on [Child Safety's website](#). Information about the law requiring adults to report sexual offences against children is available on the [Queensland Government website](#).