

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Executive Management Committee

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide written processes about the health and safety of the Discovery Christian College staff and students and about the appropriate conduct of the College's staff and students to meet accreditation legislation and best practice.

SCOPE

Students and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements at Discovery Christian College and covers information about the reporting of harm and abuse.

RESPONSIBILITY

Executive Management Committee

POINT OF CONTACT

Principal

Supersedes:

Version 2015

Authorised by:

Executive Management Committee

Date of Authorisation:

2017

Review Date:

Annually

Next Review Date:

2018

Policy Owner:

Discovery Christian College Executive Management Committee

POLICY STATEMENT

Every child has the right to feel and be safe at College. The College will have policies and procedures in place to encourage a high level of protection for all the children in the College as a paramount concern.

The Christian College can provide expertise to help fulfil the parents' goals, and complement the parents' efforts. The aim of this College is to enhance, not cut across, parental training. This can only properly occur if ample communication from parent to College is maintained.

Discovery Christian College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people in our care. We support the rights of the child and will act without hesitation to ensure a child's safe

environment is maintained at all times. We also support the rights and well-being of our staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants.

Definitions

Section 9 of the Child Protection Act 1999

“Harm”, to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child’s physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.

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

Section 10 of the Child Protection Act 1999

A “child in need of protection” is a student who—

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

Section 364 of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006

“Sexual abuse”, in relation to a relevant person, includes sexual behaviour involving the relevant person and another person in the following circumstances –

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

Health and Safety

The College has written policies in place about the health and safety of its staff and students in accordance with relevant workplace health and safety legislation.

Responding to Reports of Harm

When the College receives any information alleging ‘harm’ to a student (other than harm arising from physical or sexual abuse) it will deal with the situation compassionately and fairly so as to minimise any likely harm to the extent it reasonably can. This is set out in the College’s Child Risk Management Strategy. Information relating to physical or sexual abuse is handled under obligations to report set out in this policy.

Conduct of Staff and Students

All staff, contractors and volunteers must ensure that their behaviour towards and relationships with students reflect proper standards of care for students. Staff, contractors and volunteers must not cause harm to students.

Reporting Inappropriate Behaviour

If a student considers the behaviour of a staff member to be inappropriate, the student should report the behaviour to:

- (a) the Principal; or
- (b) the Office Manager who will refer it to the Principal

Dealing with Report of Inappropriate Behaviour

A staff member who receives a report of inappropriate behaviour must report it to the Principal. Where the Principal is the subject of the report of inappropriate behaviour, the staff member must inform a member of the college's Executive Management Committee who then will receive advice from ISQ and ACS.

Reporting Sexual Abuse

Section 366 of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 states that if a staff member becomes aware, or reasonably suspects in the course of their employment at the College, that any of the following has been sexually abused by another person:

1. a student under 18 years attending the college;
 2. a pre-preparatory aged child registered in a pre-preparatory learning program at the college;
 3. a person with a disability who:
 - under section 420(2) of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 is being provided with special education at the College; and
 - is not enrolled in the preparatory year at the college
- then the staff member must give a written report about the abuse or suspected abuse to the Principal or to a director of the college's Executive Management Committee immediately.
- The College's Principal and a director of the College's Executive Management Committee who receives a report of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student by the first person must immediately give a copy of the report given to the Principal or director to a police officer.

(Under section 366B of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, the directors of a school's governing body may delegate the directors' function under section 366 to an appropriately qualified individual (this cannot be the Principal or any other staff member of the school). Directors should ensure they are well briefed about the requirements of section 366B before delegating this function.)

However, if the first person to receive the report of sexual abuse, or suspected sexual abuse of a student is the Principal, the Principal must give a written report about the abuse, suspected abuse or likely sexual abuse to a police officer immediately and must also give a copy to the Chair of the College's Executive Management Committee.

A report under this section must include the following particulars:

1. the name of the person giving the report (the first person);
2. the student's name and sex;
3. details of the basis for the first person becoming aware, or reasonably suspecting, that the student has been sexually abused by another person;
4. details of the abuse or suspected abuse;
5. any of the following information of which the first person is aware:
 - the student's age;
 - the identity of the person who has abused, or is suspected to have abused, the student;
 - the identity of anyone else who may have information about the abuse or suspected abuse.

Reporting Likely Sexual Abuse

Section 366A of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 states that if a staff member becomes aware, or reasonably suspects in the course of their employment at the College, that any of the following is likely to be sexually abused by another person:

1. a student under 18 years attending the college;
 2. a pre-preparatory aged child registered in a pre-preparatory learning program at the College;
 3. a person with a disability who:
 - under section 420(2) of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 is being provided with special education at the College; and
 - is not enrolled in the preparatory year at the College
- then the staff member must give a written report about the suspicion to the Principal or to a director of the College's Executive Management Committee immediately.

- The College's principal and a director of the College's Executive Management Committee who receives a report of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student by the first person must immediately give a copy of the report given to the Principal or director to a police officer.

(Under section 366B of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, the directors of a school's governing body may delegate the directors' function under section 366A to an appropriately qualified individual (this cannot be the Principal or any other staff member of the school). Directors should ensure they are well briefed about the requirements of section 366B before delegating this function.)

However, if the first person to receive the report of likely sexual abuse of a student is the Principal, the Principal must give a written report about the abuse, suspected abuse or likely sexual abuse to a police officer immediately and must also give a copy to the Chair of the College's Executive Management Committee.

A report under this section must include the following particulars:

1. the name of the person giving the report (the first person);
2. the student's name and sex;
3. details of the basis for the first person reasonably suspecting that the student is likely to be sexually abused by another person;
4. any of the following information of which the first person is aware:
 - the student's age;
 - the identity of the person who has abused, or is suspected to be likely to abuse, the student;
 - the identity of anyone else who may have information about suspected likelihood of abuse.

Reporting Physical and Sexual Abuse

Under Section 13E (3) of the Child Protection Act 1999, if a doctor, a registered nurse or a teacher forms a 'reportable suspicion' about a child in the course of their engagement in their profession, they must make a written report.

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

1. has suffered, is suffering, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse; and
2. may not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.

The doctor, nurse or teacher must give a written report to the Chief Executive of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (or other department administering the Child Protection Act 1999). The doctor, nurse or teacher also should give a copy of the report to the Principal.

A report under this section must include the following particulars:

1. state the basis on which the person has formed the reportable suspicion; and
2. include the information prescribed by regulation, to the extent of the person's knowledge.

Awareness

The College will inform staff, students and parents of its processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students in communications to them and it will publish these processes on its website.

Training

The College will train its staff in processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students on their induction and will refresh training annually.

Implementing the Processes

The College will ensure it is implementing processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students by auditing compliance with the processes annually.

Accessibility of Processes

Processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students are accessible on the College website and will be available on request from the College administration .

Complaints Procedure

Suggestions of non-compliance with the College's processes may be submitted as complaints under the Complaints and Grievance Procedure.