



St Philomena School



Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Updated Dec 2025

Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to establish and promote a safe, inclusive and culturally responsive environment for all students, ensuring their safety and wellbeing are prioritised in every aspect of the school's operations. This policy provides written processes about how the school will implement and comply with the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle as required under the <i>Child Safe Organisation Act 2024</i> (Qld).	
Scope:	The School Community – students and staff including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements, members of the broader school community, including parents/guardians, and visitors.	
Status:	Approved	Supersedes: Nil – New
Authorised by:	School Governing Body	Date of Authorisation: Dec 2025
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)</i>• <i>Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld)</i>• <i>QFCC Guidelines for implementing the Child Safe Standards in Queensland</i>• St Philomena School Reporting Concerns of Harm and Abuse Policy• St Philomena School Statement of Commitment to Student Safety and Wellbeing	
Review Date:	Annually	Next Review Date: Dec 2026
Policy Owner:	School Governing Body	

Definitions

Child safe entity, as per s10 of the *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD*, is an entity—

- (a) that provides—
 - (i) services specifically for children; or
 - (ii) facilities specifically for use by children who are under the supervision of the entity; and
 - (b) that is either—
 - (i) mentioned in [schedule 1](#); or
 - (ii) prescribed by regulation.
- (2) However, an individual is not a child safe entity unless the individual carries on a business as an entity mentioned in subsection (1), including, for example, as a sole trader or partner in a partnership under the *Partnership Act 1891, section 5*.¹

Child safe standards, as per s9 of the *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD*, are the following standards applying to an entity—

- (a) child safety and wellbeing is embedded in the entity’s organisational leadership, governance and culture;
- (b) children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously;
- (c) families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing;
- (d) equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice;
- (e) people working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice;
- (f) processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused;
- (g) staff and volunteers of the entity are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training;
- (h) physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed;
- (i) implementation of the child safe standards is regularly reviewed and improved;
- (j) policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children.²

Student, is any child or young person of any age, enrolled or seeking enrolment at St Philomena School.

Universal Principle, in implementing and complying with the Child Safe Standards, a child safe entity must provide an environment that promotes and upholds the right to cultural safety of children who are Aboriginal persons or Torres Strait Islander persons (the Universal Principle).³

QFFC, Queensland Family and Child Commission

¹ *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD s10*

² *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD s9*

³ *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD s11(2)*

Objectives

St Philomena School will implement and comply with the Child Safe Standards and understand they may be required to give an authorised officer of the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) information about the school's compliance. In implementing and complying with the Child Safe Standards, St Philomena School will provide an environment that promotes and upholds the right to cultural safety of students who are Aboriginal persons or Torres Strait Islander persons (the Universal Principle). The school will have regard to [Guidelines](#) made by the QFCC in implementing and complying with the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle⁴.

As per the Guidelines, this policy outlines the ways in which St Philomena School actions and prioritises the safety and wellbeing of students. Rules and expectations regarding student safe practices are outlined for staff, volunteers and community members with the aim of establishing a student safe environment⁵.

This policy will:

- Set out the school's expectations, practices, and approaches in relation to each of the Child Safe Standards, including the Universal Principle
- Be displayed for public access on the school's website and at the school's office
- Cover acceptable and unacceptable student to student, and student to adult interactions
- Describe the school's commitment to equity, inclusion and cultural safety and how the organisation recognises, responds and respects these factors.

Principles

The implementation of, and compliance with, the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle by St Philomena School are to be based on the following fundamental principles:

- (a) Child safe entity's, including St Philomena School, are responsible for continuously improving the ways in which, in their operations—
 - (i) the safety of children is promoted; and
 - (ii) child abuse is prevented; and
 - (iii) allegations of child abuse are properly responded to;⁶
- (b) The Child Safe Standards are not a simple checklist. They encourage child safe entities to think about how their day-to-day work protects children's rights and safety.⁷

Responsibilities

St Philomena School is responsible for developing and implementing this Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy and related policies and procedures to ensure it fulfils its CSS and Universal Principle obligations.

All governing body members, staff and volunteers at St Philomena School are responsible for acting in compliance with this policy and related policies and procedures.

⁴ *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD s11*

⁵ *Guidelines for implementing the Universal Principle and Child Safe Standards in Queensland, QFCC, p94*

⁶ *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD s14*

⁷ *Guidelines for implementing the Universal Principle and Child Safe Standards in Queensland, QFCC, p4*

Implementation of the Child Safe Standards

1. Leadership and Culture

Student safety and wellbeing is embedded in St Philomena Schools' leadership, governance and culture.⁸

Statement of Commitment

St Philomena School is committed to taking all reasonable steps to promote the safety and wellbeing of students enrolled at the school and their protection from foreseeable harm. We prioritise student safety and wellbeing in all aspects of our work and do not tolerate any form of child abuse or harm. We act in accordance with the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (QLD)* and implement the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle to create a safe, inclusive, and accountable environment. We listen to students, value their views, and support them to participate in decisions that affect them.

St Philomena School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all students, including those from diverse cultural backgrounds, students with disability, LGBTQIA+ students, and students who may be experiencing vulnerability. We also make a clear commitment to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and to providing an environment where their identities, cultures, and connections to Country are respected and upheld.

Risk Management

St Philomena School implements robust risk management processes to prevent, identify, and mitigate risks to students, and is committed to the monitoring of risk to the safety of students on an ongoing basis. St Philomena School will utilise various risk management tools including St Philomena School Risk Management Framework, Risk Management Policy, Risk Registers, Work Health & Safety Policy to assist it in this process and will keep appropriate records of decisions made and actions taken in relation to risks to students.

Code of Conduct

At St Philomena School we expect our staff and volunteers to conduct themselves as follows:

- School staff and volunteers are expected to always behave in ways that promote the safety and wellbeing of our students. Staff must actively seek to prevent harm to students, and to support those who have been harmed.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Staff and volunteers should avoid situations where they are alone in an enclosed space with a student.
- When physical contact with a student is a necessary part of the teaching/learning experience, staff and volunteers must exercise caution to ensure that the contact is appropriate and acceptable. Staff must always advise the student of what they intend on doing and seek their consent.
- Staff must not develop a relationship with any student that is, or that can be interpreted as having a personal rather than a professional interest in a student.
- Staff and volunteers must not have a romantic or sexual relationship with a student.

⁸ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(a)*

- Staff and volunteers must treat all students, colleagues and community members with respect, fairness and dignity, regardless of culture, race, ethnicity, language, religion, ability, gender, sexual orientation, or background.
- Staff and volunteers must not engage in any form of racism, discrimination, harassment, or exclusionary behaviour. This includes verbal, written, online or behavioural actions that demean, stereotype or disadvantage an individual or group.
- Staff and volunteers must actively challenge racist or discriminatory behaviour when it occurs and follow school procedures for reporting such incidents.
- Staff and volunteers must promote a culturally safe, inclusive and respectful environment by valuing diversity, acknowledging cultural differences, and modelling culturally responsive behaviour at all times.

Information Sharing & Recordkeeping

Staff and volunteers understand their obligations in information-sharing and maintaining accurate, secure records about student harm and abuse concerns, disclosures, and responses.

2. Student Voice

Students are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.⁹

St Philomena School is committed to championing the voices of children and young people, ensuring they have genuine agency in matters that affect them. We listen to students in age-appropriate and culturally appropriate ways and create safe, structured opportunities for them to express their views.

St Philomena School uses the curriculum and educational programs to actively promote positive peer relationships and reduce student isolation by embedding learning experiences that strengthen social skills, empathy and respectful behaviours. Through age-appropriate lessons and whole-school wellbeing programs, students are also provided with access to sexual abuse prevention education that builds their understanding of personal safety, protective behaviours and where to seek help. Together, these curriculum-based approaches support safer, more connected and more informed students.

St Philomena School ensures that all staff and volunteers are consistently attuned to indicators of harm and abuse and are equipped to recognise when a student may need support. Age-appropriate and trauma-informed processes are in place to help students communicate their concerns safely and confidently, and staff actively respond to these disclosures with care and professionalism.

3. Family and Community

Families and the community are informed and involved in promoting student safety and wellbeing.¹⁰

St Philomena School recognises the vital role families and communities play in the safety, wellbeing, and education of students. We value strong, respectful, and collaborative partnerships with families and the broader school community.

We are committed to build relationships, particularly with First Nations families of our students, local community members, and Elders. We honour Country and acknowledge Country in our

⁹ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(b)*

¹⁰ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(c)*

practices to ensure students understand the importance of knowing and respecting the land on which we learn.

St Philomena School provides opportunities for parents and carers to contribute to the school community, especially through the St Philomena School P&F, School Committees and surveys.

Regular communication through emails and the parent portal ensures parents, carers and the school community are informed about the school's operations and governance.

4. Equity and Diversity

Equity is upheld, and the diverse needs of students are respected in policy and in practice.¹¹

St Philomena School is committed to creating an inclusive, equitable environment where all students feel safe, respected, and supported. We actively work to remove barriers to participation and ensure our practices reflect cultural safety for all students.

This commitment is actioned through the following:

- Students with Disability Policy
- Anti-Discrimination Policy

5. People

St Philomena School is committed to recruiting, selecting, training and managing staff in such a way that limits risks to students. In particular, St Philomena School will:

- Ensure that its recruitment and selection procedures act to reduce the risk of harm to student from staff via:
 - Accurate position descriptions, including whether the successful applicant must be a teacher registered with the Queensland College of Teachers (who has been subject to relevant police and other safety checks), whether a Blue Card is necessary for the successful applicant, the responsibilities and supervision associated with the position, the nature and environment of the service provided to students, and the experience and qualifications required by the successful applicant.
 - Advertising the position with a clear statement about the school's commitment to safe and supportive work practices and identifying that candidates will be subject to a teacher registration check or Blue Card screening, a police check, referee checks, identification verification and the requirement to disclose any information relevant to the candidates' eligibility to engage in activities including students.
 - A selection process that includes assessing the application via an interview process, and referee and other checks (as identified above) based on the accurate position description.
 - A probationary period of employment, which allows the school to further assess the suitability of the new staff and to act as a check on the selection process.
- Ensure that its training and management procedures act to reduce the risk of harm to students from staff via:
 - Management processes that are consistent, fair and supportive.
 - Performance management processes to help staff to improve their performance in a positive manner.

¹¹ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(d)*

- Supportive processes for staff when they are experiencing challenges, such as mentoring, mediation, conflict resolution, coaching, additional training, and external support and counselling services.
- An induction program which thoroughly addresses the school's policies and procedures, particularly its expectations regarding student risk management, and to assist staff to understand their role in providing a safe and supportive environment for students.
- Training new and existing staff on an ongoing basis to enhance skills and knowledge and to reduce exposure to risks, as follows:
 - the school's policies and procedures
 - identifying, assessing and minimising risks to students
 - handling a disclosure or suspicion of harm to a student.
- Keeping a record of the training provided to staff.
- Exit interviews to assist the school to identify broader issues of concern that may impact on the safety and wellbeing of students at the school.

6. Complaints

Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.¹²

St Philomena School is committed to maintaining a student-focused approach to receiving and responding to complaints. Our Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure outlines how concerns can be raised, the roles and responsibilities of staff, and the processes used to respond to different types of matters. We ensure that all complaints are taken seriously, addressed promptly and thoroughly, and managed in line with our reporting, privacy and employment law obligations.

Any concerns, disclosures or allegations relating to harm or abuse of a student are managed under the school's Reporting Concerns of Harm or Abuse Policy, which sets out our mandatory obligations to act protectively and report to the appropriate authorities.

7. Skills and Knowledge

Staff and volunteers of the school are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep students safe through ongoing education and training.¹³

The school 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.¹⁴

8. Physical and Online Environments

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for students to be harmed.¹⁵

St Philomena School proactively identifies and mitigates risks within both the physical and online environments, ensuring that safety measures do not compromise students' privacy or healthy development. Staff and students use online platforms in line with the school's code of conduct and related policies, supporting a safe, respectful and well-managed digital learning environment.

¹² *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(f)*

¹³ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(g)*

¹⁴ *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s.16(4)(c)*

¹⁵ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(h)*

For further details about how St Philomena School manages risk see 1. Leadership and Governance above.

9. Continuous Improvement

Implementation of the child safe standards is regularly reviewed and improved.¹⁶

St Philomena School is committed to fostering a culture of continuous improvement in student safety, wellbeing and cultural respect. We recognise that embedding the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle is a continuing journey that requires ongoing commitment, regular review and continual strengthening of our practices.

St Philomena School will:

- Review policies, procedures and practices regularly to ensure they remain effective, responsive and appropriate for the St Philomena School community. This includes undertaking periodic audits, self-assessments and reflective practice to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- Analyse available data including complaints and concerns to identify causes and systemic issues and use these insights to inform continuous improvement of policies, procedures and practices.

10. Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures document how the school is safe for children.¹⁷

St Philomena School has embedded its Statement of Commitment to Student Safety and Wellbeing in all relevant policies and procedures. St Philomena School has made all relevant policies and procedures publicly available on its website and copies are available on request from the school office. Staff and volunteers are trained in implementing relevant policies and procedures regularly.

Related St Philomena School policies:

- St Philomena School Blue Card Register
- St Philomena School Complaints Handling Policy*
- St Philomena School Reporting Concerns of Harm and Abuse Policy*
- St Philomena School Restricted Person Declaration Form
- St Philomena School Risk Management Framework
- St Philomena School Staff Code of Conduct
- St Philomena School Statement of Commitment to Student Safety and Wellbeing*

*publicly available on the school website.

¹⁶ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(i)*

¹⁷ *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 QLD, s9(j)*

Checklist for implementing and complying with the Child Safe Standards

This checklist has been developed to support schools in reviewing and strengthening their implementation of the Child Safe Standards. Although the Child Safe Standards and QFCC Guidelines are not intended to operate as a prescriptive set of rules, schools may benefit from having a structured tool to monitor progress, provide assurance, and guide continuous improvement.

The checklist is based on Recommendation 6.6 of the [Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Final Report](#), which outlines the core components that should guide all organisations when implementing the Child Safe Standards.

Schools can use this resource at any point in time, as an annual audit or review tool to identify strengths, highlight areas for further development, and support the ongoing creation of a strong, culturally responsive, and child-centred safety culture.

Standard 1: Student safety and wellbeing is embedded in leadership, governance and culture

- ☐ The school publicly commits to student safety and wellbeing and leaders champion a student safe culture.
- ☐ Student safety and wellbeing is a shared responsibility at all levels of the school.
- ☐ Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to students.
- ☐ Staff and volunteers comply with a code of conduct that sets clear behavioural standards towards students.
- ☐ Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and recordkeeping.

Standard 2: Students are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

- ☐ Students are able to express their views and are provided opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their lives.
- ☐ The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, helping students feel safe and be less isolated.
- ☐ Students can access sexual abuse prevention programs and information.
- ☐ Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for students to communicate and raise their concerns.

Standard 3: Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting student safety and wellbeing

- ☐ Families have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their student and participate in decisions affecting their student.
- ☐ The school engages in open, two-way communication with families and communities about its student safety and wellbeing approach and relevant information is accessible.
- ☐ Families and communities have a say in the school's policies and practices.
- ☐ Families and communities are informed about the school's operations and governance.

Standard 4: Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

- ☐ The school actively anticipates students' diverse circumstances and responds effectively to those with additional vulnerabilities.
- ☐ All students have access to information, support and complaints processes.
- ☐ The institution pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students with disability, and students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Standard 5: People working with students are suitable and supported to reflect student safety and wellbeing values in practice

- ☐ Recruitment, including advertising and screening, emphasises student safety and wellbeing.
- ☐ Relevant staff and volunteers have Working With Children Checks.
- ☐ All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their student safety and wellbeing responsibilities, including reporting obligations.
- ☐ Supervision and people management have a student safety focus.

Standard 6: Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused

- ☐ The school has a student-focused complaint handling system that is understood by students, staff, volunteers and families.
- ☐ The school has an effective complaint handling policy and procedure which clearly outline roles and responsibilities, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints and obligations to act and report.
- ☐ Complaints are taken seriously, responded to promptly and thoroughly, and reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.

Standard 7: Staff and volunteers of the school are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep students safe through ongoing education and training

- ☐ Relevant staff and volunteers receive training on the nature and indicators of child maltreatment, particularly institutional child sexual abuse.
- ☐ Staff and volunteers receive training on the school's student safe practices and child protection.
- ☐ Relevant staff and volunteers are supported to develop practical skills in protecting students and responding to disclosures.

Standard 8: Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for students to be harmed

- ☐ Risks in the online and physical environments are identified and mitigated without compromising a student's right to privacy and healthy development.
- ☐ The online environment is used in accordance with the school's code of conduct and relevant policies.

Standard 9: Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved

- ☐ The school regularly reviews and improves student safe practices.
- ☐ The school analyses complaints to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.

Standard 10: Policies and procedures document how the school is student safe

- ☐ Policies and procedures address all Child Safe Standards.
- ☐ Policies and procedures are accessible and easy to understand.
- ☐ Best practice models and stakeholder consultation inform the development of policies and procedures.
- ☐ Leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.
- ☐ Staff understand and implement the policies and procedures.