

Child Protection Procedure

Guiding Policy

Kairos Community College is committed to the protection of all children in its care. In order to manage the risks surrounding child protection the following policies, strategies and procedures apply at the College. This procedure is informed and guided by the Child Protection Policy and Child Protection Risk Management Strategy.

Rationale

The purpose of this procedure is to provide written processes to ensure that Kairos Community College complies with legislation applying in Queensland about the care and protection of children. In particular, the procedure sets out a process for the purpose of reducing the risk of harm to children.

Scope

This procedure applies to all staff, including volunteers, students over 18 and other operators associated with Kairos Community College and covers information about the College's commitment to child protection, procedures related to recruiting, selecting, training, and managing staff policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines; risk identification and management; and communication and support.

Responsibility: College Governing Board

Point of Contact: Principal

Relevant Legislation

- [Child Protection Act 1999 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Education \(Accreditation of Non-State Colleges\) Act 2017 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Education \(Accreditation of Non-State Colleges\) Regulation 2017 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Act 2000 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Regulations 2020 \(Qld\)](#)
- *Kairos Community College Complaints Handling Policy*
- *Kairos Community College Child Risk Management Strategy (for the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld))*
- *Kairos Community College Work Health and Safety Policy (for the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld))*

PROCEDURE

Dealing With Incidents

The College keeps a register in the Head of Campus office at each campus of all incidents related to sexual abuse, harm or inappropriate behaviour at that campus.

Where legislation requires, incidents of harm or suspected harm are reported to the relevant state authorities immediately, and the incident is noted in the register.

Where an incident of inappropriate behaviour is reported, full details, including the steps taken to resolve the incident, are entered in the register.

Staff, parents and students can access the College's comprehensive complaints handling procedure in cases where an issue is not resolved to their satisfaction on the College website or through requesting it at the reception and in the student and parent information pack at enrolment.

Suspicion of harm

A person has 'reasonable grounds' to suspect harm if:

- A child or young person tells them they have been harmed
- Someone else, for example another child, a parent, or staff member, tells them that harm has occurred or is likely to occur
- A child or young person tells them they know of someone who has been harmed (it is possible they may be referring to themselves)
- They are concerned at significant changes in the behaviour of a child or young person, or the presence of new unexplained and suspicious injuries, or
- They see the harm happening.

Disclosures of harm

Disclosures of harm may sound like:

- "I think I saw ..."
- "Somebody told me that ..."
- "Just think you should know ..."
- "I'm not sure what I want you to do, but ..."

Any disclosure of harm is important and must be acted upon, regardless of whether:

- The harm to a child or young person has been caused by a person from within or outside your organisation, or
- The child or young person disclosing the harm to you is from within or outside your organisation.

What to do when a disclosure is made

- Remain calm
- Find a private place to talk
- Listen
- Believe the person, and
- Don't ask leading questions.

It is NOT the role of the person receiving a disclosure or a report to investigate allegations of harm. Questions should be limited to confirming the need to report the matter to the Queensland Police Service or the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (Child Safety Services). The safety of the child or young person is paramount. Unnecessary questions or interviews could cause distress, confusion and interfere with any subsequent investigation authorities undertake.

The College must not:

- conduct its own investigation to substantiate claims

- hold its own internal hearing, or
- attempt to mediate a settlement of the matter instead of notifying relevant authorities.

Remember, when a person makes a report to the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (Child Safety Services) or the Queensland Police Service, their details are kept confidential, and the person's identity is strictly protected.

REPORTING OF HARM

The College has reporting procedures that comply with legislation, as follows:

Procedures for reporting harm

The following procedures apply to any incidents of:

- harm or suspicion of harm of any student at this College who was under 18 years at the time the harm or suspected harm was caused; and
- behaviour of a staff member that a student considers is inappropriate.

Reporting harm

- Students who are aware, or reasonably suspect, that harm has been caused by anyone to either themselves or another student of the College who was under 18 at the time should report it to one of the following:
 - the Head of Campus (Deception Bay or Caloundra)
 - Lead Teacher (Deception Bay or Caloundra)
 - Principal
- Staff members are aware, or reasonably suspect, that harm has been caused by anyone to a student of the College who was under 18 at the time should report it in writing to the Principal.
- In the event that the Principal receives a report of harm, or suspected harm, of a student of the College; and is aware of the harm having been caused or reasonably suspects the harm to have been caused legislation requires it must be reported to the Queensland Police Service or the Department of Child Safety. The Principal must maintain a written record of all actions taken and the dates those actions were taken.

Reporting Inappropriate Behaviour

- Students who wish to report behaviour by a staff member that they consider inappropriate should report this behaviour to one of the following:
 - the Head of Campus (Deception Bay or Caloundra)
 - Lead Teacher (Deception Bay or Caloundra)
 - Principal

Upon receipt of such a report the Principal will take the following actions as a matter of priority:

- Interview the student
- Interview the staff member named in the report
- Interview any other person who may be able to provide useful information
- Provide a written report of the findings to the Board Chairperson, with recommendation for action to be taken
- Ensure the report recommendations are enacted

Reporting Sexual Abuse

Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (s.366 and S366B)

- Staff member;

Any staff member who becomes aware, or reasonably suspects, that a student of the College who was under 18 at the time has been sexually abused by another person must give a written report about the abuse to the Principal immediately, or a director of the governing board if there is a concern regarding Principal involvement.

- Principal, or a member of the board of directors'

The Principal or any Board Member who receives a report under the preceding step, or becomes aware of harm or reasonably suspects harm or abuse must provide a copy of the written report to the Queensland Police Service immediately.

ACTION REQUIRED:Risk assessment procedure

1. Identify risks

A risk is anything that can cause harm, either physically, psychologically or emotionally. It could be caused by a faulty piece of equipment, a poorly planned excursion, abuse, neglect, communication misunderstandings, leaving students alone in a car park while they wait for a lift from a friend, and so on.

Kairos Community College applies the parental test and the significant harm test when assessing the risk. The significant harm test is, has the child suffered, is suffering, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse? The parental test is whether the parent is able and willing to protect the child from the harm?

Risks can be identified through:

- audits or physical inspections
- brainstorming
- decision trees
- examining local or overseas experience
- expert judgment
- flow charting, system design review, systems analysis
- history, failure analysis
- incidents or complaints
- interviews/focus groups
- operational modelling
- organisational experience
- personal experience
- scenario analysis
- survey or questionnaire
- work breakdown structure analysis.

These key questions help to identify risks:

- When, where, why, how are the risks likely to occur?
- What is the source of each risk?
- Who might be involved?

- How often might these risks occur?
- How reliable is the information?
- What are the consequences of each risk?
- What is the potential cost in time, money and resources?
- What controls presently exist to mitigate the risk?
- What are the accountability mechanisms - internal and external?
- Is there a need to research specific risks or seek further information?

Staff members who are involved in identifying risks must be knowledgeable about the policy, program, process or activity being reviewed and, where it is complex, consult with experts who may assist them.

Some risks will not lend themselves to objective analysis or observation, and the cost of collecting all data might be too great for the benefits provided.

2. Analyse risks

After identifying a wide range of risks, the next step is to separate the minor risks from the major and to begin to prioritise the risks. The level of risk is defined by the relationship between consequence and likelihood, applicable to the area of risk or program under review.

Answer these key questions to define risk levels:

- What are the potential consequences of each risk if it occurs?
- What is the potential likelihood of the risk happening?
- What controls exist to prevent or detect the risk?
- What controls exist which will lower the consequences or likelihood of the risk?
- How well are these controls enforced by management?

3. Evaluate and prioritise

After analysing the risk, decisions can be made by you or by the organisation regarding whether the risk is acceptable or unacceptable. This involves comparing the level of risk with the identified level of unacceptable risk.

A risk is called 'acceptable' if it is not going to be treated. Unacceptable risks will be treated in some way. Evaluation should take account of the degree of control over each risk and the cost impact, benefits and opportunities presented by the risks. Combining likelihood and consequences will produce risk levels.

Level of risk

		Consequences				
		Insignificant	Minor	Major	Critical	Extreme
Likelihood	Almost Certain	Medium	Serious	High	High	High
	Likely	Medium	Medium	Serious	High	High
	Possible	Low	Medium	Serious	Serious	High
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Serious
	Rare	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Serious

Risk descriptors

High risk	Immediate action required, senior management/Board will be involved
Serious risk	Senior executive management attention needed and management responsibility specified
Medium risk	Manage by specific monitoring or response procedures
Low risk	Manage by routine procedures, unlikely to need specific application of resources

Answer these **key questions** to assess whether a risk is acceptable:

- How does the level of each risk stand up against the level of acceptable risk?
- Is the level of the risk so low that treatment is not appropriate?
- Do the opportunities outweigh the threats to such a degree that the risk is justified?
- Is the cost excessive compared to the benefit?
- Is there no treatment available?

4. Treat risks

Risk cannot be eliminated but choosing and implementing a treatment plan will help to master the risk.

A number of options are available:

- accept
- avoid
- reduce
- transfer

Assess treatment or control options to minimise risk by asking:

- What is the feasibility of each treatment option?
- What is the cost of implementing versus the benefits?
- What is the extent of risk reduction versus the benefits?
- What are the resources needed (people, money, technical)?
- Do the risk treatments comply with legal requirements, government and organisational policies, including those concerning access, equity, ethics and accountability?
- What are the criteria of acceptability?
- What opportunities are created by the risk?
- Are there rare but severe risks?

Prepare treatment plans by deciding:

- Which option is the best choice?
- What will be monitored and reviewed to determine the success of the treatment?
- Who is best placed to treat each risk, either through better knowledge, technical expertise or financial capability?
- What job design and work organisation options are appropriate for staff treating the risks?
- Who is accountable and responsible for the treatment of the risk?

Implement the treatment plan by following these steps:

- develop the policy

- establish the infrastructure, including management commitment, responsibility and authority and resources
- develop and establish the program at organisational level
- address management of cross-organisational risks
- manage program, project and team level risks
- manage individual level risks
- develop performance indicators to monitor the levels of risk, the performance of the treatment measures and the risk treatments.

5. Monitor and review

Risks will be monitored to determine the effectiveness of the treatment plan or strategies and the management system that was established to control the implementation. Review and monitor risks on an 'as needed' basis. Some risks should be reviewed daily, while others can be addressed at the start of semester, biannually or annually.

Key questions when monitoring and reviewing risks are:

- Are the risk treatments effective in minimising the risks?
- Are the risk treatments comparatively efficient/cost effective in minimising risks?
- Do the performance indicators address the key elements for risk treatment?
- Are the assumptions you made about the environment, technology and resources still valid?
- Are the management and accounting controls adequate?
- Do the risk treatments comply with legal requirements, government and organisational policies, including access, equity, ethics and accountability?
- How can improvements be made?