



Pinnacle Academic College
Strive. Empower. Perform.

PINNACLE ACADEMIC COLLEGE – CHILD PROTECTION POLICY 2021

This document contains information about Policy and Procedures regarding the handling and reporting of harm of children.

Pinnacle Academic College has written processes in place to enable it to comply with the requirements of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld) and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld). See Pinnacle Academic College Work Health and Safety Policy and Pinnacle Academic College Risk Management Strategy

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 to minimise any likely harm to the extent it reasonably can. This is set out in the Pinnacle Academic College 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. There is a Code of Conduct form contained in The Pinnacle Academic College Risk Management Policy that staff/teachers complete when becoming employed at the College. This form lists the required behaviour expected from staff at Pinnacle Academic College. Particular point 1.6 refers to: Employees do not engage in bullying, violence, harassment or any other forms of victimisation.

Dealing with Report of Inappropriate Behaviour

A staff member who receives a report of inappropriate behaviour to a child must report it to the Principal. Where the Principal is the subject of the report of inappropriate behaviour, the staff member must inform the Akademeia Ltd Board Chair. Reports will be dealt with under the College's Complaints Handling Policy.

Handling disclosures and/or suspicions of harm, including reporting

The following section details Pinnacle Academic College's policy and procedures for handling disclosures and/or suspicions of harm, including reporting procedures. Children and young people can only be protected from harm if it is reported and dealt with quickly and effectively. Pinnacle Academic College Child Protection Policy and Procedures ensures staff respond as quickly as possible to a disclosure or suspicion of harm. In this Child Protection Policy and Procedures document, details involve information about:

1. Defining 'harm'
2. Identifying 'harm'
3. Managing and recording a disclosure or suspicion of harm
4. Reporting a disclosure or suspicion of harm, and
5. Reviewing policies and procedures following an incident

1. Defining Harm

- Definitions (these sections have NOT been amended in the Child Protection Reform Amendment Act 2017 and remain as written in the Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld))

- 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—

- a) physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or
- b) sexual abuse or exploitation.

3. Harm can be caused by—

- a) a single act, omission or circumstance
- b) 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 child who—

- a) has suffered significant harm, is suffering significant harm, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm
- b) 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 –

- (a) the other person bribes, coerces, exploits, threatens or is violent toward the relevant person
- (b) the relevant person has less power than the other person
- (c) there is a significant disparity between the relevant person and the other person in intellectual capacity or maturity.

2. Identifying harm:

Considerations when forming a reasonable suspicion about harm to a child include:

- whether there are detrimental effects on the child’s body or the psychological state or emotional state
 - that are evident to the person, or
 - that the person considers are likely to become evident in the future, and
- in relation to any detrimental effects mentioned above
 - their nature and severity, and
 - the likelihood that they will continue, and
- the child’s age (section 13C of the Child Protection Act 1999).

The table below is a guide in identifying harm;

TYPES OF ABUSE Actions/behaviours by perpetrator	RESULTING HARM Impact experienced by the child
<u>Physical abuse</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting • Shaking • Burning/scalding • Biting • Causing bruise or fractures by excessive discipline • Poisoning • Giving children alcohol, illegal drugs or inappropriate medication • Domestic and family violence 	<u>Physical</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruising • Fractures • Internal <u>Psychological</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning and developmental delays • Impaired self-image <u>Emotional</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression • Hypervigilance • Poor self-esteem • Self-harm • Fear/anxiety <i>This is not a complete list of the types of abuse and resulting harm that may be experienced by children and young people, however it is to be used as a predictive tool for potential signs of harm. Each child's experience is different and depends on a range of factors, including the child or young person's age, the nature of harm, how long the abuse has been occurring, their relationship to the abuser, and their support networks.</i>
<u>Psychological or Emotional abuse</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scapegoating • Persistent rejection or hostility • Constant yelling, insults or criticism • Cultural affronts • Teasing/bullying/cyberbullying • Domestic and family violence 	
<u>Neglect</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not giving a child sufficient food, housing, clothing, enough sleep, hygienic living conditions, health care and adequate supervision • Leaving children unattended • Children missing school 	
<u>Sexual abuse or exploitation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kissing or holding a child in a sexual manner • Exposing a sexual body part to a child • Exposing children to sexual acts or pornography • Making obscene phone calls or remarks to a child • Having sexual relations with a child or young person under 16 years of age 	

Some general indicators of child abuse	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showing wariness and distrust of adults • rocking, sucking or biting excessively • bedwetting or soiling • demanding or aggressive behaviour • sleeping difficulties, often being tired and falling asleep • low self-esteem • abusing alcohol or drugs • being seemingly accident prone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having broken bones or unexplained bruising, burns or welts in different stages of healing • being unable to explain an injury, or providing explanations that are inconsistent, vague or unbelievable • feeling suicidal or attempting suicide • having difficulty concentrating • being reluctant to go home • creating stories, poems or artwork about abuse.
Some general indicators of neglect	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • malnutrition, begging, stealing or hoarding food • poor hygiene, matted hair, dirty skin or body odour • unattended physical or medical problems • comments from a child that no one is home to provide care • being constantly tired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • frequent lateness or absence from school • inappropriate clothing, especially inadequate clothing in winter • frequent illness, infections or sores • being left unsupervised for long periods.

3. Managing and recording a disclosure or suspicion of harm

Pinnacle Academic College staff consider these important points when managing a disclosure of harm:

- remain calm and listen attentively, actively and non-judgmentally
- ensure there is a private place to talk
- encourage the child to talk in their own words and ensure just enough open-ended questions are asked to act protectively (e.g. 'Can you tell me what happened'...or 'Can you tell me more about that'). Don't ask leading questions which tend to suggest an answer. Ensure the child is advised that the disclosure cannot remain a secret and it is necessary to tell someone in order to get help.
- reassure the child they have done the right thing by telling you
- advise the child that you need to tell someone else who can help them
- document the disclosure clearly and accurately, including a detailed description of: – the relevant dates, times, locations and who was present – exactly what the person disclosing said, using "I said," "they said," statements – the questions you asked – any comments you made, and – your actions following the disclosure
- not attempt to investigate or mediate an outcome, and
- follow any relevant process for reporting a disclosure of harm and consider whether there are requirements to report matters to the Queensland Police Service or Child Safety.

In relation to a suspicion of harm (or other concern for a child's welfare) Pinnacle Academic College staff are advised to:

- remain alert to any warning signs or indicators
- pay close attention to changes in the child's behaviour, ideas, feelings and the words they use
- make written notes of observations in a non-judgmental and accurate manner
- assure a child that they can come to talk when they need to, and listen to them and believe them when they do, and
- follow any relevant process for reporting a suspicion of harm and consider whether there are requirements to report matters to the Queensland Police Service or Child Safety or consider what support services could be offered to the family if the concern does not meet the relevant threshold to make a report.

4. Reporting a disclosure or suspicion of harm

Reporting Physical and Sexual Abuse Under Section 13E (3) of the Child Protection Act 1999, if a doctor, a registered nurse, a teacher or an early education and care professional 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: -

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

The procedure for reporting a disclosure or suspicion of harm is to report concerns to the Principal, with all notes and concerns, in a timely manner. The Principal then proceeds to continue to report to the relevant authorities.

a) If the child is at imminent risk of harm or has been the victim of a criminal offence, then the matter is reported to the Queensland Police Service.

b) At Pinnacle Academic College It is mandatory that staff and the Principal report harm to Child Safety. These individuals MUST report to Child Safety a reasonable suspicion that a child has suffered, is suffering, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse AND does not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.

A report under this section must include the following particulars: -

- a) state the basis on which the person has formed the reportable suspicion
- b) include the information prescribed by regulation, to the extent of the person's knowledge

Mandatory reporters should also report to Child Safety a reasonable suspicion that a child or unborn child may be in need of protection where the harm or risk of harm relates to any other type of abuse or neglect under s13A of the Child Protection Act 1999.

Summary of Reporting Harm

Who	What abuse	Test	Report to	Legislation
All staff	Sexual	Awareness or a suspicion Sexually abused or likely to be sexually abused	Principal, through to police	EGPA sections 366 and 366A
Teacher	Sexual and physical	Significant harm Parent may not be willing and able	Confer with principal, report to Child Safety	CPA sections 13E and 13G
All staff	Physical, psychological, emotional, neglect, exploitation	Significant harm Parent may not be willing and able	Principal, through to Child Safety	Accreditation Regulations section 16
All staff	Any	Not a level that is otherwise reportable to Child Safety, refer with consent	Principal, through to Family and Child Connect	CPA Sections 13B and 159M
Principal	Any	Not a level that is otherwise reportable to Child Safety, refer without consent	Family and Child Connect	CPA Sections 13B and 159M
Any member of the public	Any	Significant harm Parent may not be willing and able	Child Safety	CPA section 13A

Contacting Child Safety

The Brisbane Child Safety Regional Intake contact – 1300 705 339 (direct line) and 1300 682 254 (general line). The afterhours number for 1800 177 135

This is a very in-depth guide about different types of abuse and symptoms to look for: <https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/about-us/partners/government/child-protection-procedures-manual.pdf> This is the website with in-depth reporting guidelines: <https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/protecting-children/reporting-child-abuse>

5. Reviewing policies and procedures following an incident.

The College will undertake a review of the policies and procedures following a disclosure or suspicion of harm being actioned to:

- consider the application of the policies and whether there are any changes necessary, for example, whether they are suitable for: - responding to a child or young person when a disclosure is made - protecting children and young people from harm, and - assisting involved parties within your organisation, and
- identify any additional training requirements.

Any process about reporting abuse must not interfere with Court processes, and the College may seek legal advice before starting a review of policies and procedures. The reviews shall determine what records that worked well and what may need to be improved upon. Annual reviews of policies and training of staff in these matters are a priority. Note: Media attention - A disclosure or suspicion of harm may attract the media. It is critical to avoid giving out protected or potentially damaging information. The College will limit contact with the media to the Principal or legal agent.

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.

Counselling

At any stage during this process the College will provide opportunity for staff to have counselling in regard to coping with the processes about child abuse.

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 processes may be submitted as complaints under the Pinnacle Academic College Complaints Handling Policy

Appendix 1 Form used for reporting abuse

Private and Confidential
Report of Suspected Harm or Sexual Abuse

Date:	
School:	
School Phone:	
School Email and/or Fax:	

DETAILS OF STUDENT/CHILD HARMED OR AT RISK OF HARM/ABUSE:

Legal Name: [REDACTED]		Preferred Name: [REDACTED]	
DOB: [REDACTED]		Gender: [REDACTED]	
Year Level: [REDACTED]		Cultural Background: [REDACTED]	
Primary language spoken: [REDACTED]			
Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/> Torres Strait Islander <input type="checkbox"/>		Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander <input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the student have a disability verified under EAP: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Disability Category: [REDACTED]	
Student's Residential Address: [REDACTED]		Phone: [REDACTED]	
		Student's Personal Mobile: [REDACTED]	

FAMILY DETAILS

Parent/caregiver 1:		Relationship to Student:
Address (if different from student):		
Phone: (H):	(W):	(M):
Parent/caregiver 2:		Relationship to Student:
Address (if different from student):		
Phone: (H):	(W):	(M):
Is the student in out of home care? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Are there any Family Court or Domestic Violence orders in place? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/>		

PERSON ALLEGED TO HAVE CAUSED THE HARM OR ABUSE

☐ Adult family member ☐ Child family member ☐ Other adult

☐ Student/other child ☐ Unknown

PROVIDE ALL INFORMATION YOU HAVE WHICH LED TO THE SUSPICION OF HARM OR ABUSE (Attach extra pages if necessary).

Details of any harm and/or sexual abuse to the student – please include: Time and date of the incident; location of the incident, source of information; details of person alleged to have caused the harm or sexual abuse; physical appearance of any injury; immediate and ongoing safety concerns; any disclosures made by student; any previous incidents of harm; behavioural indicators of harm; presence of any medical needs or developmental delays; and if the information relates to an unborn child, the alleged risk to the unborn child.

5

Please indicate the identity of anyone else who may have information about the harm or abuse

1

Additional information provided as an attachment YES ☐ NO ☐

Name of staff member making report if not the Principal:		
Position:	Signature:	Date:
Principal: <input type="text"/>	Signature:	Date:
Principal's email address: <input type="text"/>		
Response requested by school: <input type="text"/>		

(Adapted from EQ SP-4 Report of Suspected Harm or Risk of Harm)

Confirm receipt of faxed or emailed form and ensure original is stored in a secure location along with any other documentation collected for the purpose of this report.