



**Diocese of Toowoomba  
Catholic Schools**

# Safeguarding plan 2026-27



## Acknowledgement of country

As we gather together, let us have a sense of the importance of the country upon which we are meeting, where learning and ceremony has taken place over many thousands of years.

Let us sense the land beneath our feet, acknowledge to whom it belongs and pay our respects to the Elders, past, present and emerging.

For we too are one in land, one in spirit, one in faith, united in God's love.

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**Diocese of Toowoomba  
Catholic Schools**

# Safeguarding commitment statement

Toowoomba Catholic Schools (TCS) is committed to ensuring every child and young person is safe, valued, heard and able to flourish. Creating culturally safe and protective learning environments is central to who we are and a shared responsibility across our community.

**“Wherever a child or young person is safe,  
there we serve and honour Christ.”**

*(Pope Francis, 2025)*

This call reminds us that safeguarding is not only our responsibility,  
but at the heart of who we are as a Catholic community.



Safeguarding sits at the heart of our mission to enable each student to live a full and flourishing life within a distinctively Catholic community. Guided by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and Catholic Social Teaching, we uphold the dignity of every child, nurture their God-given potential, and remain steadfast in protecting life in all its fullness. Our schools are communities of care, trust and accountability where students are supported to learn, grow and thrive.

TCS has zero tolerance for child abuse. Every employee shares responsibility for safeguarding, understanding both their individual and collective role in promoting the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people. We are committed to continuous improvement and strengthening cultural safety across all schools.

This Safeguarding Plan complies with the

- Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)
- Working with Children Check Act 2000
- Education (General Provisions) Act 2006
- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld).

It is informed by

- The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- The National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (Edition 2)
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

The Plan outlines the system-wide policies, procedures and practices that support student safety across all TCS schools. It is reviewed annually, publicly available, and progressively implemented at a local level, with each school embedding safeguarding practices that reflect their context while maintaining our shared commitment to safe, inclusive and child-centred environments.

# The child safe standards



## **Standard 1: Leadership and culture**

Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in the entity's organisational leadership, governance and culture.



## **Standard 2: Voice of children**

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



## **Standard 3: Family and community**

Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.



## **Standard 4: Equity and diversity**

Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.



## **Standard 5: People**

People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.



## **Standard 6: Complaints management**

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



## **Standard 7: Knowledge and skills**

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



## **Standard 8: Physical and online environments**

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



## **Standard 9: Continuous improvement**

Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.



## **Standard 10: Policies and procedures**

Policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children.



**Universal Principle:** Requires child safe entities to provide an environment that promotes and upholds the right to cultural safety.

# The Universal Principle



At TCS, cultural safety is fundamental to safeguarding and to the dignity and flourishing of every child and young person. In line with the Universal Principle, we are committed to environments that promote and uphold the cultural safety of First Nations children, recognising this principle as embedded across all Child Safe Standards.

While the Universal Principle specifically affirms the rights of First Nations children, it also strengthens our broader commitment to inclusive, child-centred practice, ensuring our policies, procedures and everyday practices respond to the needs of all students, particularly those who may be marginalised or vulnerable.

## Cultural safety indicators

1	Transformational learning	Organisations must challenge unconscious bias, racism and colonial thinking with their structures and workforce.
2	Negotiating values, motivations and paradigm	Policies and programs should be co-designed with First Nations communities to reflect perspective on child safety.
3	Prioritising social and emotional wellbeing and health	A holistic, strengths-based approach must be adopted to support the wellbeing of First Nations children, staff and families.
4	Sharing power and decision-making	Decision-making processes should be led or co-led by First Nations peoples to ensure genuine partnerships.
5	Sharing resources	Organisations should dedicate resources and funding to First Nations-led initiatives, research and governance mechanisms.
6	Creating a strategic enabling environment	Leadership must set clear priorities and accountability structures to embed cultural safety into daily operations.
7	Operating on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander terms of reference	Service delivery should be grounded in First Nations knowledge systems and self-determination principles.
8	Accountability and continuous quality improvement	Progress should be measured using First Nations-defined success indicators, ensuring sustained improvement.

Across TCS, this commitment is enacted through culturally responsive practice. Using data-informed approaches within our Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), schools identify needs early and provide targeted support to enhance wellbeing, engagement and learning for all students, families and communities.

Grounded in our Catholic identity and commitment to human dignity, TCS acknowledges First Nations peoples as the First Peoples of Australia and honours their ongoing connection to land, culture and community. In unity with the Australian Catholic Church, the National Catholic Education Commission and Catholic Education Queensland Limited, we affirm the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

We continue to walk alongside First Nations communities to strengthen relationships, build cultural capability and create environments where every learner is seen, heard and empowered to thrive.

# Leadership and culture



**Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in the entity's organisational leadership, governance and culture.**

Alignment with

- *National Catholic Safeguarding Standard (NCSS), Standard 1: Committed Leadership, Governance and Culture*
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld): s 6(1), (2) and s 9(e)*

## TCS commitment to Standard 1

At TCS, a strong safeguarding culture is championed by leadership and embedded at every level of our system. As a Catholic community, we place the safety, wellbeing and dignity of every student at the centre of all we do. The welfare and best interests of students are paramount, and all students have the right to be protected from harm. TCS has zero tolerance for any form of abuse.

Our commitment is reflected in the TCS Strategic Plan 2026–2028, which prioritises high-quality teaching within safe and inclusive learning environments so that every student can grow, learn and live a full and flourishing life. Safeguarding is actively monitored with regular review and continuous improvement embedded through our Integrated Strategies.

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility across our system. All staff, volunteers and service providers are guided by the TCS Student Protection Policy, Processes and Guidelines, supported by clear Codes of Conduct and mandatory annual training. This is strengthened through targeted professional learning, ongoing communication and curriculum that promotes student safety and wellbeing.

Leaders within TCS visibly champion safeguarding by actively promoting a strong culture of safety and wellbeing. They model this commitment through their presence in schools, direct involvement in the delivery of training and consistent reinforcement of safeguarding expectations. By prioritising open dialogue, leaders encourage safeguarding and student wellbeing to be a regular and integral part of everyday conversations, ensuring shared understanding, vigilance and collective responsibility across the school community.

TCS maintains robust assurance and governance through regular compliance monitoring, with oversight from the Executive Leadership Team and the TCS Council. We take a proactive and preventative approach - working to create environments that not only respond to risk, but actively promote safe, respectful and inclusive communities.

Guided by our Catholic values and commitment to human dignity, we stand firmly against all forms of discrimination, bias and harm. We are also committed to cultural safety and to walking alongside First Nations communities in genuine and respectful partnership, fostering schools and workplaces where all students and staff experience belonging, respect and opportunity to thrive.



# Voice of children



**Children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.**

Alignment with

- *National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 2: Children and Adults are safe, informed and participate*
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation (Qld) 2017, s 16(40 (a)-(b))*

## TCS commitment to Standard 2

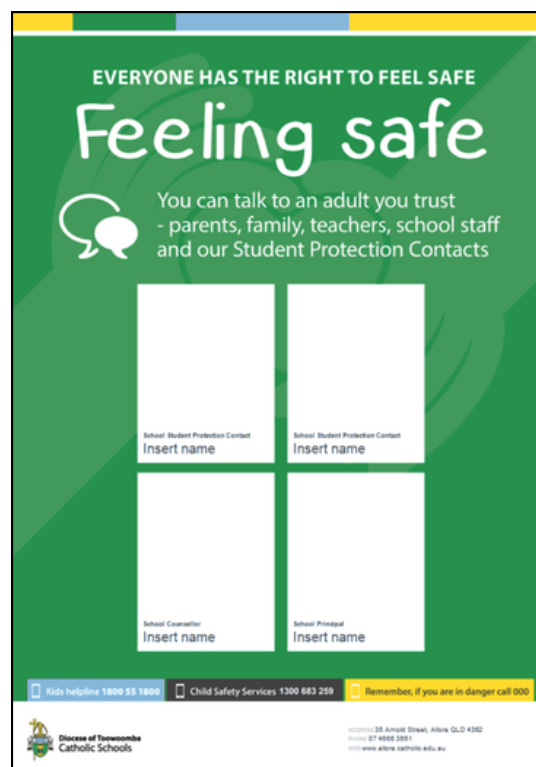
At TCS, creating safe learning environments is fundamental to student engagement, wellbeing and achievement. Guided by our mission, we support every student to grow, learn and live a full and flourishing life. We actively listen to, and act on, student voice, recognising students as partners in shaping their school experience. This builds trust and fosters communities where students feel safe, valued and confident to share their ideas and concerns.

All schools implement a quality-assured Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), providing consistent, targeted support to meet the diverse needs of students. Grounded in Catholic values, MTSS promotes inclusion, respects the dignity of each child, and ensures equitable access to learning regardless of background, culture or ability. Through structured curriculum lessons and targeted formation to nurture faith, character and knowledge, students are taught their rights, supported to identify trusted adults and empowered to speak up and seek support. Opportunities such as student leadership, service initiatives and co-curricular programs further strengthen their confidence, advocacy and sense of belonging.

TCS staff and volunteers participate in mandatory annual training to recognise signs of harm and respond in culturally safe, respectful and proactive ways. This is complemented by whole-school adoption of programs such as Respectful Relationships Education, embedded across leadership, teaching, wellbeing and community engagement, and aligned with the Australian Curriculum (Version 9.0) and endorsed resources.

Students are encouraged to speak up if they have concerns through the implementation of the Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum, the promotion of designated School Student Protection Contacts (SSPCs) in each school, and access to resources such as the 'It's OK to speak up' video available on the TCS website and used within schools.

Student voice is systematically gathered, including through the TCS 'Shaping our Future' biennial engagement surveys, and used to inform school improvement and system-wide priorities. TCS also strengthens inclusion and cultural safety through dedicated support for First Nations education, ensuring perspectives are reflected in teaching, policy and decision-making, and that students are empowered to contribute to their learning and wellbeing.



# Family and community



**Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.**

Alignment with

- *National Safeguarding Standards: Standard 3, Partnering with families, carers and communities*
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation (Qld) 2017 s 16(4) (a)-(b)*

## TCS commitment to Standard 3

At TCS, strong partnerships with families are central to student safety, wellbeing and learning. We recognise parents/legal guardians as the first educators of their children and value their ongoing influence in supporting growth, development and flourishing.

We are committed to authentic, respectful and transparent engagement with families, particularly in our shared responsibility to safeguard students. Through open communication and collaboration, we build trust and ensure families are well-informed, supported and actively involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing. Key resources, including the 'Working Together' brochure and 'Parent Engagement Charter' provided at enrolment and available on the TCS website, outline our safeguarding commitments and responsibilities.

TCS encourages meaningful family participation in shaping safe and inclusive school environments. Guided by the 'Parent Engagement Charter', schools actively engage families in conversations about safety, wellbeing and cultural safety, ensuring approaches are locally relevant and responsive to individual student needs. This is strengthened through respectful communication about teaching and learning, as well as resources that support and reinforce Respectful Relationships Education at home.

Partnerships extend beyond the school to include community organisations and specialist services, enhancing support for students and strengthening a collective approach to safeguarding and wellbeing. Families are regularly invited to share their perspectives, including through the TCS 'Shaping our Future' biennial engagement surveys. This feedback informs both local school improvement and system-wide priorities, reinforcing TCS's commitment to listening, responsiveness and continuous improvement.

At the local level, structures such as Parents and Friends Associations (P&F), School Advisory Councils and Parent Engagement Networks (PEN) provide opportunities for families to contribute to decision-making and to deepen understanding of safeguarding practices. Schools are encouraged to actively seek and incorporate family and community voice in planning for engagement, safety and wellbeing.

TCS recognises that families are diverse and that engagement must be flexible, inclusive and culturally responsive. Our approach is trauma-informed, student-centred and grounded in respect for each community. A 'Parent Code of Conduct' supports safe, respectful and positive interactions, contributing to a child-centred culture across all school communities.

Through ongoing partnership with families, TCS continues to strengthen a shared commitment to safe, inclusive and flourishing learning environments for every student. With respect to the ongoing implementation of the Child Safe Standards, resources to support parent engagement will be developed and continuously refined, including newsletter articles and prominently displayed posters.

# Equity and diversity



## Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected.

### Alignment with

- *Declaration of Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith “Dignita Infinita” on Human Dignity 8/4/2024*
- *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards: Standard 4 Equity is Promoted and Diversity is Respected*
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s 11, s 15 (a)*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*

## TCS commitment to Standard 4

TCS reflects the rich diversity of communities across the Diocese and is committed to ensuring every student learns in a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where they can flourish.

TCS is committed to upholding equity and diversity through the development and implementation of inclusive policies and procedures. These frameworks ensure that all students are treated with dignity and respect, and that individual needs, backgrounds and abilities are recognised and supported.

Inclusive education at TCS is grounded in Catholic Social Teaching and a commitment to the inherent dignity of every person. We support all students, regardless of background, identity or ability, to access and participate fully in learning, with equitable opportunities to achieve their potential within a caring Catholic community.

This commitment is strengthened through culturally responsive practice, where schools use data to understand student need and promote wellbeing, safety and belonging for all. Through a whole-school approach, supported by the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), students receive timely and targeted support within environments that respect diversity and foster inclusion.

In addition to learning support staff employed in schools, TCS employs specialist Inclusive Education coaches and Student Protection staff who work alongside schools to build staff capability and embed inclusive, best-practice approaches. Each school also identifies Student Protection Contacts, providing visible and accessible support for students and reinforcing messages of safety, inclusion and care.

In classroom and school life, students are encouraged to understand and value diversity, develop respectful relationships and contribute to inclusive communities. These principles are embedded in curriculum, including the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (Version 9.0), and brought to life through school initiatives and key awareness events throughout the year.

Guided by our faith and values, TCS fosters communities where every student is welcomed, respected and supported, creating conditions in which all can grow, belong and live full and flourishing lives.





**People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.**

Alignment with

- *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards: Standard 5 Robust Human Resource Management*
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s 15 (b)*
- *Working with Children Check Act 2000*

## TCS commitment to Standard 5

At TCS, we expect all schools and the TCS Office to implement robust recruitment and screening practices that ensure every adult working with our students is suitable and supported to prioritise student safety and wellbeing. Our recruitment and screening processes meet all legislative requirements and reflect our strong commitment to child safety. Individuals who do not meet these standards are not permitted to work or engage with students. Safeguarding is embedded at every stage of recruitment from selection and screening through to onboarding and ongoing performance and conduct management.

All staff, volunteers and visiting service providers complete comprehensive induction, including mandatory Student Protection and Code of Conduct training, alongside clear guidance specific to their school context.

Employee screening is a key measure for safeguarding students from abuse, exploitation and harm. Under the TCS Recruitment, selection and appointment procedure the following safeguarding measures and screening checks must be adopted.

- compulsory student protection interview questions
- robust referee checks
- employment checks, qualification verifications and driver's licence
- criminal history checks (as appropriate)
- Blue Card and teacher registration checks
- social media screening
- internal employment record checks

Clear expectations for professional conduct and boundaries are set through TCS Codes of Conduct for staff, volunteers, service providers, students and parents/legal guardians. Responsive processes are in place to support the reporting, management and investigation of concerns, ensuring that any issues are addressed promptly and appropriately. TCS employs Professional Standards staff who lead the assessment and investigation of concerns, provide specialist advice to schools, and oversee reporting obligations under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

TCS takes a proactive approach to building safeguarding capability. Mandatory training is regularly reviewed and strengthened and is complemented by ongoing professional learning and targeted communication to ensure staff remain informed, skilled and responsive. Staff are also encouraged to deepen their understanding of trauma-informed practice and respectful relationships education to support culturally safe, inclusive and student-centred engagement.

Through these consistent and system-wide practices, TCS ensures that every person working with our students understands their responsibility to uphold safety, wellbeing and dignity, helping to create school communities where all children can feel safe and thrive.

# Complaints management



## Processes to respond to complaints and concerns.

Alignment with

- *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards: Standard 6 Effective complaints management*
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s7*
- *Child Safe Organisations Act (Qld) Chapter 3*

## TCS commitment to Standard 6

As Catholic educators, schools in the Toowoomba Diocese have a moral, mission-driven and legal responsibility to actively promote safeguarding and wellbeing for all students. This includes ensuring that all concerns and complaints are heard and promptly responded to, so that parents/legal guardians, students and community members feel safe to speak up.

Schools and colleges proactively seek feedback from the school community to identify and address concerns before they escalate into complaints. This occurs both informally - through regular, day-to-day communication between staff and parents/legal guardians - and formally, through structured opportunities such as parent-teacher conferences. In addition, Quadrennial School Reviews as a part of the School Renewal and Improvement Processes (SRIPs), are conducted on a four-year cycle, to provide a systematic approach to seeking community feedback to support ongoing review, reflection and continuous improvement at the school level.

Complaints relating to student safety are welcomed, and TCS provides a clear and accessible complaints pathway on the TCS website. TCS procedures for resolving complaints outline a clear, thorough and considered approach, ensuring all perspectives are heard, relevant information is carefully gathered to inform appropriate outcomes and that resolution is encouraged at the earliest, appropriate stage before formal escalation.

Complaints received by the Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office are managed by experienced, independent staff and systematically used to inform continuous improvement across schools and system-level practices. A dedicated complaints register is used to provide regular, evidence-based insights to inform and determine any required systemic action or reform.

TCS is continually strengthening its approach to complaints management. A planned review of student complaint processes will ensure they are accessible to all students, protect privacy, minimise the risk of re-traumatisation and are culturally safe. This work will support consistent, effective complaints handling practices across both general and student specific processes systemwide.



# Knowledge and skills



**Staff and volunteers of the entity are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training.**

Alignment with

- *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards: Standard 7 Ongoing Education and Training*
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s16, 4 (c)*

## TCS commitment to Standard 7

At TCS, professional learning is central to building a confident, capable workforce committed to student safety, wellbeing and flourishing. Guided by our Professional Learning Strategy, we support staff to learn, lead and serve within safe and inclusive learning environments, grounded in our Catholic values and shared responsibility for every student.

All staff, volunteers and service providers are required to complete mandatory training that meets legislative obligations and equips them to uphold their responsibilities for student protection. This is supported by clear procedures outlining expectations and accountability. Mandatory training is delivered through the TCS Learning Management System, with completion monitored through automated tracking and reporting. Role-specific training is provided as required, ensuring staff remain informed, compliant and confident in their responsibilities.

Professional learning is continuous and responsive. Schools are supported to identify areas for improvement in student safety and wellbeing and to implement targeted development plans that strengthen staff capability in practice.

Induction programs include targeted learning on cultural safety, supporting staff to understand and respond appropriately to the needs of First Nations students and communities. This is complemented by ongoing professional learning in areas such as trauma-informed practice and Respectful Relationships Education.

Staff in key safeguarding roles, including School Student Protection Contacts, receive specialised annual training to strengthen their capacity to respond effectively to student concerns and disclosures. Volunteers and visiting service providers also complete mandatory onboarding and annual refresher training to ensure a consistent, system-wide approach to safeguarding.

Through this commitment to high-quality, contemporary professional learning, TCS ensures all who work with students are equipped to uphold a culture of safety, inclusion and care, supporting every child and young person to feel safe and thrive.



# Physical and online environments



**Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed.**

Alignment with

- *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards: Standard 8 Safe Physical and Online Environments*
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s 18 (1) s19*

## TCS commitment to Standard 8

Guided by our values of dignity, potential and life, TCS creates safe, inclusive and well-supervised physical and online environments where every student can learn and flourish. Our schools are designed to reflect and celebrate the diversity of our communities, fostering belonging and cultural safety, particularly for First Nations students and families.

Safeguarding is actively considered in all environments. School spaces are planned to maximise visibility and supervision, ensuring interactions between students and adults occur in safe, observable settings. Regular visibility audits support schools to identify and manage risks, with design features such as clear sightlines, supervision zones and natural surveillance embedded across learning and gathering spaces.

Students are explicitly taught how to engage safely and respectfully, both in person and online. Through curriculum and teaching practice, they are supported to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to promote safety, wellbeing and positive relationships.

Digital environments are carefully managed to support safe learning. TCS provides contemporary ICT resources alongside education in online safety, aligned with the Australian Curriculum. Devices and networks leverage content filtering and monitoring tools, and clear guidelines support the safe and responsible use of technology, including emerging tools such as Generative AI. Staff model appropriate digital behaviours in line with TCS policies and expectations.

Clear standards for conduct are outlined through TCS Codes of Conduct, ICT acceptable use and privacy policies, ensuring consistent expectations for behaviour across all settings. Student safety and wellbeing considerations are embedded in planning for all activities, including excursions and off-site events, through structured risk assessments.

Through these integrated approaches, TCS creates environments, both physical and digital, that are safe, inclusive and responsive, enabling every student to feel secure, respected and supported to thrive.



# Continuous improvement



**Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.**

Alignment with

- *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards: Standard 9 Continuous Improvement*
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) s20*

## TCS commitment to Standard 9

TCS adopts a structured and proactive approach to safeguarding improvement. Safeguarding and the wellbeing of our students is embedded within our core values, beliefs and culture, guiding our commitment to continuous enhancement. We remain responsive to emerging risks and opportunities, ensuring our practices are regularly reviewed and strengthened to maintain the highest standards of safety and care.

The TCS safeguarding improvement agenda involves multiple stakeholders to have significant, long-term and long-lasting effect. Operational and short-term safeguarding change and improvement agendas are managed within school leadership structures with oversight from TCSO.

The annual TCS Safeguarding review and the cyclical Non-State Schools accreditation process are two core mechanisms employed for continuous review of our safety and wellbeing achievements. These reviews focus on critical areas such as policy and procedure, responding to abuse and harm, employee screening and compliance management, complaint management, training compliance, safety in physical and online learning environments and management of volunteers and visiting service providers. This collaborative process defines future vision and action for schools, including safeguarding actions. Each school has a written and published Strategic Plan that is reviewed annually and substantially following the completion of each Quadrennial School Review. The resulting Annual Action Plans refine the broad timelines and priorities of the Strategic Plan. Findings from the reviews are shared with governance bodies as required, including external governance bodies, such as the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board, as well as internal governance bodies such as the Toowoomba Catholic Schools Council and the TCS Executive Leadership Team.

TCS maintains a register of critical incidents and risk assessments including curriculum activity risk assessments. All incidents, hazards and occupational aggression and violence reports are analysed to inform ongoing improvements to safeguarding practices.

School wellbeing committees and school student support committees play a role in defining school safeguarding and wellbeing objectives according to the presenting student need at each school. Schools share these objectives with the school community through communications and published updates about student protection and wellbeing eg newsletter articles promoting safety initiatives to parents/legal guardians. Parent engagement groups provide a further opportunity for collaboration with parents and the school community to identify, respond to and improve school safeguarding.

During implementation of the Child Safe Standards, Universal Principle and Reportable Conduct Scheme, the school renewal and improvement process will include a focus on continuous improvement in safeguarding and action-planning.

The TCSO Professional Standards and Student Protection teams continually review patterns and emerging issues across TCS. These insights have led to initiatives and collaborations with schools to drive systemic improvements. TCS will continue to review, reflect and act to strengthen the safeguarding culture and to uphold the commitment to every student's safety and wellbeing.



## Policy and procedures document how the entity is safe for children.

### Alignment with

- *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards: Standard 10 Policies and Procedures Support the Safety of Children and Adults.*
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld)*

## TCS commitment to Standard 10

The TCS Student protection policy is the central document guiding TCS's commitment to our safeguarding responsibilities. It is supported by a suite of policies, procedures and guidelines which promote the safety and wellbeing of students across schools and integrate compliance requirements.

As an educational institution, TCS is required to comply with accreditation standards set by the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board, which mandate adherence to multiple legislative requirements. Of particular relevance to safeguarding is the TCS Student Protection Processes and Guidelines, the principal document guiding the prevention, identification and mandatory reporting of abuse and harm to children and students. However, beyond the existence of required policies and procedures, TCS is committed to ensuring their consistent implementation. This is achieved through an annual compliance review led by the Student Protection team, alongside ongoing expert advice, support and engagement with schools.

Relevant policies and procedures are accessible to all members of the TCS community via the public TCS website and school websites. Employees have access to these documents via the TCS intranet.

The TCS Governance document management framework and Governance document development and improvement cycle procedure require that all policies, including the Safeguarding policy, are reviewed at least every three years. Policy development and review follow a process involving consultation, governance oversight, and approval through defined delegations of authority. Governance and reporting processes help our organisation to recognise strengths, embed effective processes, implement improvements and maintain a robust safeguarding culture across all schools and the office, to ensure that safety and wellbeing of students is visibly, and in practice, at the core of all we do.

### Student protection policy

**Rationale**

This policy applies to all employees, visiting service providers and volunteers engaged with Toowoomba Catholic Schools. It upholds the responsibilities set out in relevant legislation, the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Child Safe Standards.

Toowoomba Catholic Schools affirms that the safety, wellbeing and best interests of students are paramount. Every student has the right to learn in an environment free from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. All staff, visiting service providers and volunteers share a collective responsibility to actively promote student safety and respond to concerns in a timely, lawful and compassionate manner.

**Legislative references**

- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld)
- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld)
- Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)
- Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (Qld)
- Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 (Qld)
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)
- Evidence Act 1977 (Qld)
- Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)
- Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld)
- Child Safe Organisations Act 2024

**Definitions**

The following definitions are used in this policy.

- A **child** is a person under 18 years of age.
- **Harm**, to a child, as defined in section 9 of the *Child Protection Act 1999* is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused.

Harm can be caused by

- physical, psychological or emotional abuse or
- neglect or
- sexual abuse or exploitation.

Harm can be caused by

- a single act, omission or
- circumstance or
- a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.

- A student is any person enrolled as such within Toowoomba Catholic schools. This includes a 'relevant person' for the purposes of mandatory reporting under sections 366 and 366A of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*. A 'relevant person' is
  - a student under 18 years attending the school;
  - a kindergarten age child registered in a kindergarten learning program at the school; or

Diocese of Toowoomba  
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TCS Student protection policy  
Effective date: March 2026  
Review date: March 2029  
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# Authority

The Safeguarding plan is the responsibility of the Executive Director: Catholic Schools. Any changes to this plan can only be made with approval of the Executive Director: Catholic Schools.

# Version control and change history

Effective date

15/06/2026

Review date

18/01/2028



**Diocese of Toowoomba**  
**Catholic Schools**