

School Camps Qld

Risk Management Policy and Guidelines

for working with

Children & Young People

2014

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# Introduction

School Camps Qld is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people, including those who use our services. Our workers will treat them with respect and understanding an address their concerns at all times. School camps Qld will endeavour to provide a safe and supportive service environment for children and young people through the implementation and consistent administration of procedures;

* for risk identification, evaluation, control and review
* receiving and reporting disclosures of harm
* selection and screening of all employees and volunteers

School Camps Qld supports the rights of children and young people and is committed to providing a safe and supportive service environment directed at ensuring their safety and wellbeing.

# Related Documents and policy affected by this strategy:

1. Code of Conduct (schedule 1)
2. Risk Assessments and OH&S
3. Definitions (Schedule 2)

# The eight requirements of the School Camps Qld Risk Management Policy

## Commitment

* A statement of commitment to the principles of safe and supportive service environments (mandatory requirement 1),and
* A code of conduct (mandatory requirement 2).

## Capability

* Recruitment, selection, training and management strategies that encourage best practice and enhance the safety and well-being of children and young people (mandatory requirement 3).

## Concerns

* Policies and procedures for handling disclosures and suspicions of harm (mandatory requirement 4)
* Policies and procedures for the occasions where there might be a breach of the
* organisation’s child and youth risk management strategy (mandatory requirement
* 5),and
* A planning process for high risk activities and special events (mandatory requirement 7).

## Consistency

* Policies and procedures for compliance with Chapter 8of the Commission’s Act (which regulates the blue card system) [mandatory requirement 6],and
* Strategies for communication and support for all stakeholders including children and young people (mandatory requirement 8).

# Code of conduct for employees and volunteers

## Statement of commitment

School Camps Qld is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people, especially those who use our services. Our workers will treat all children and young people with respect and understanding at all times and listen to their concerns. To ensure children and young people are kept safe from harm, the following code of conduct for interacting with children and young people applies.

This code of conduct applies to all paid employees, volunteers and visitors who enter our service environment.

All staff and volunteers must respect persons and property.

School Camps Qld is committed to maintaining an alcohol and free environment and all employees, volunteers and visitors acknowledge that any breach will result in dismissal and possible further action.

All staff and volunteers must ensure that they follow all safety procedures and practices, work within their level of training or competency and report all incidents or accidents immediately.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Behaviour | Appropriate | Inappropriate |
| Language | * Using encouraging/positive words and a pleasant tone of voice * Open and honest communication | * Insults, criticism or name calling * Bullying, swearing or yelling * Sexually suggestive comments or jokes |
| Relationships | * Being a positive role model * Building relationships based on trust * Empowering children to share in decision making. | * Favouritism or giving gifts * Spending excessive amounts of time * alone with children * Contact outside of working hours (either physical or via email/phone) * Bullying, harassment * ‘Grooming’ children or young people |
| Physical Contact | * Allowing for personal space * Touching due to medical emergency or protecting from physical harm * Non-threatening | * Violent or aggressive behaviour including hitting, kicking, slapping or pushing * Kissing or touching of a sexual nature consistent with ‘grooming |
| * Other | * Appropriate attire/clothing for role * Use of internet/mobile phone for work related purposes only | * Using alcohol or other substances before or during work * Inappropriate clothing * Sending inappropriate emails |

# Pre-Screening and Selection of Staff and Volunteers

1. A **volunteer** must not be engaged unless an application for a current Blue Card has been made and a current blue Card is issued to the volunteer. (Section 1014B CCYPCG Act)
2. An application for a Blue Card must be made prior to a new employee commencing work. Commencement of work must not begin prior to the application being made. (Section 106A CCYPCG Act)
3. Where an existing employees Blue Card has expired, an application for the Blue Card must be made to maintain currency. Unless application has been made, an existing employee cannot be allowed to work.
4. Persons legally exempt from holding a blue card under the Act will still be required to obtain a Blue Card where regular contract with children is made.
5. A person who withdraws their consent to screening under a Blue Card application cannot commence or continue work.
6. Management are responsible for ensuring the timely and accurate recording of information relating to positive notices in the system.
7. Persons commencing work with School Camps Qld must be provided with a copy of this strategy.
8. Reference checks will be completed for all prospective volunteers or employees
9. A probationary period of employment will apply in all roles with School Camps Qld

# Continued Compliance

* Continued training and management will be implemented to ensure the consistent application of the rights and expectations of School Camps Qld
* The Blue Card Register (Schedule X) will be reviewed by management annually to ensure that all employees and volunteers are included in the Blue Card Register and all Blue Cards are current and positive.
* Loss of Blue Card must be reported to management within five (5) days and application for replacement must be made within 14 days of the report.
* Any changes to criminal history (including charges for an offence or conviction of an offence);
* Must be reported to the Commission and Management immediately.
* The position of the employee or volunteer will remain suspended until a new Blue Card is issued.

# Policy and Procedures for Handling Disclosures or Suspicions of Harm

The following policy and procedures will ensure that staff respond as quickly as possible

and in the best interests of the child or young person under 18 years of age, when disclosures or suspicions of harm are received.

School Camps Qld recognises that children and young people are vulnerable members of the community and that extra measures must be taken to protect and support them.

## Policy

All staff will receive training in identifying risks of harm and handling disclosures or suspicions of harm as soon as possible upon commencing employment. All staff will report disclosed or suspected harm to either the Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) or the Queensland Police Service who will decide on an appropriate course of action.

Who must comply with this policy?

* employees and volunteers
* contractors
* committee members
* work experience students/students on placement.

## Definitions

Harm may be categorised in the following types:

* physical abuse, for example,
* beating, shaking, burning, biting, causing bruise or fractures by inappropriate discipline, giving children alcohol, drugs or inappropriate medication
* emotional or psychological abuse,for example, constant yelling, insults, swearing, criticism, bullying, not giving children positive support and encouragement
* neglect for example, not giving children sufficient food, clothing, enough sleep, hygiene,
* medical care, leaving children alone or children missing school, and
* sexual abuse or exploitation, for example, sexual jokes or touching, exposing children to sexual acts or pornography or having sexual intercourse with a child or young person under 16 years of age (even if the child appears to have consented).

## Suspicion of harm

You can suspect harm if:

• you are concerned by significant changes in behaviour or the presence of new unexplained and suspicious injuries.

## Disclosure of harm

A disclosure of harm occurs when someone, including a child, tells you about harm that has happened or is likely to happen.

Disclosures of harm may start with:

•“I think I saw...”

•“Somebody told me that...”

•“Just think you should know...”

•“I’m not sure what I want you to do, but...”

# Procedures to minimise harm to children and young people

School Camps Qld works to minimise harm to children and young people by acting in a manner that supports their interests and wellbeing, by:

* making sure that children know that it is their right to feel safe at all times
* teaching them about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in general
* letting them know who is and who is not an employee in the organisation
* allowing them to be a part of decision-making processes
* making sure they are safe by monitoring their activities and ensuring their environment meets all safety requirements
* taking anything a child or young person says seriously and following up their concerns
* letting them know there is no secret too awful, no story too terrible, that they can’t share with someone they trust
* teaching them about appropriate and inappropriate contact in a manner appropriate to their age and level of understanding
* teaching children and young people to say ‘no’ to anything that makes them feel unsafe
* encouraging them to tell staff of any suspicious activities or people,and
* listening to children and young people and letting them know that staff are available for them if they have any concerns.

## Procedures for receiving a disclosure of harm

When receiving a disclosure of harm:

•remain calm and find a private place to talk

•don’t promise that you’ll keep a secret; tell them they have done the right thing in telling you but that you’ll need to tell someone who can help keep them safe

•only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter; probing questions could cause distress, confusion and interfere with any later enquiries, and

•do not attempt to conduct your own investigation or mediating outcome between the parties involved.

## Reporting guidelines for disclosures or suspicions of harm

Following are the actions our organisation will take immediately following a disclosure or suspicion of harm.

## Documenting a suspicion of harm

If you or others have concerns about the safety of a child, record your concerns in a non-judgmental and accurate manner as soon as possible.

If a parent explains a noticeable mark on a child, record your own observations as well as accurate details of the conversation.

If you see unsafe or harmful actions towards a child in your care, intervene immediately, provided it is safe to do so.

If it is unsafe, call the police for assistance.

## Documenting a disclosure of harm

Complete an incident report form or record the details as soon as possible so that they are accurately captured. Include:

• time, date and place of the disclosure

•‘word for word’ what happened and what was said, including anything you said and any

actions that have been taken, and

• date of report and signature.

If you need to take notes as the person is telling you, explain that you are taking a record in case any later enquiry occurs.

# Reporting the disclosure or suspicion of harm to authorities

School Camps Qld will not conduct its own enquiries in relation to the disclosure or suspicion of harm or try to come to an agreement between the parties involved.

The person who receives a disclosure or suspects harm is to contact the relevant authority to ensure information provided is comprehensive and

accurate.

Report the matter to:

* Department of Communities
* (Child Safety Services) on free call 1800 811 810,or
* Queensland Police Service (07) 5463 3999.

## Actions following a disclosure of harm

Support and counselling will be offered to all parties involved.

Processes for those involved in the report

* The child or young person
* The children and young people involved should be offered appropriate counselling and support.
* The person who made the report
* Under Section 22 of the Child Protection Act 1999, a person who reports suspected child abuse is protected from civil or criminal legal actions and is not considered to have broken any code of conduct or ethics.

# Plan for Managing Breaches

## Purpose

This plan outlines the steps to be taken following a breach of the child and youth risk management strategy in order to address the breach in a fair and supportive manner.

Definition

A breach is any action or inaction by any member of the organisation, including children and young people, that fails to comply with any part of the strategy.

This includes any breach in relation to:

* statement of commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm
* code of conduct for interacting with children and young people;
* procedures for recruiting, selecting, training and managing paid employees and volunteers
* policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines
* policies and procedures for implementing and reviewing the children and youth risk
* management strategy and maintaining an employee register
* risk management plans for high risk activities and special events, and
* strategies for communication and support.

All stakeholders are to be made aware of the actions or inactions that form a breach as well as the potential outcomes of breaching the child and youth risk management strategy.

Who must comply with this plan?

* employees, volunteers and contractors
* committee members
* work experience students/students on placement
* parents and carers
* children and young people

## Processes to manage a breach of the child and youth risk management strategy

Breaches will be managed in a fair, unbiased and supportive manner.

The following will occur:

* all people concerned will be advised of the process
* all people concerned will be able to provide their version of events
* the details of the breach, including the versions of all parties and the outcome will be recorded
* matters discussed in relation to the breach will be kept confidential, and
* an appropriate outcome will be decided.

# **A risk management plan for high risk activities and special events**

**School Camps Qld provides individual risk assessments for all activities and special events.**

This is based on the risk management process detailed below.

The following is adapted from the Standards Australia’s AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 Risk management— Principles and Guidelines from the Commision for Children and Young People Thing.

There are six steps to consider in the development of an effective risk management plan:

Establish the Context (describe the activity)

* Identify the Risks
* Analyse the Risks
* Evaluate the Risks
* Manage the Risks and reassess, and
* Review.

## Step 1 – Establish the Context (describe the activity)

* what is the activity and what are your objectives
* where is the activity going to take place – what environmental factors need to be considered
* identify the stakeholders, staff, parents, and children and young people involved in the activity, and
* identify all elements of the event from beginning to end.

Step 2 - Identify the risks

Consider involving a wide range of stakeholders, including children and young people, to identify the risks associated with the high risk activity or special event. Checklists may identify general risks that should always be considered, however, it is important to brainstorm with your stakeholders to ensure all potential risks that might result in harm to a child or young person are identified.  Workplace health and safety processes consider environment and equipment risks. Once you have fulfilled the workplace health and safety requirements, you must assess the risks associated with the child and youth risk management strategy. These risks are physical, emotional, sexual and cultural in nature, including the risks from:

* other children or young people
* someone outside the organization
* an employee or volunteer, and
* Themselves.

In relation to potential risks of harm associated with the high risk activities and special events your organization provides to children and young people, ask yourself questions such as:  How might harm occur?

Running an activity where children and young people are required to change clothes, where the change rooms are unsupervised and open to the public.

Paid employees or volunteers spending long periods alone with a child or young person.

A coach offering special private sessions to a child or young person.

Why might harm occur?

* Inadequate recruitment and selection practices of paid employees and volunteers
* Incorrect instructions given to employees working with children or young people
* Not providing training to employees and volunteers
* inadequate attention to cultural considerations  When might harm occur?
* Inadequate adult supervision
* A staff member giving a child a lift home

Step 3 - Analyse the risks

The purpose of risk evaluation is to make decisions, based on the outcomes of risk analysis. The level of risk will determine whether the high risk activity or special event is practical. Consider here:

* How likely is it that the risk will occur? (Likelihood)
* What would happen if the risk did occur? (Consequences)

Step 4 – Evaluate the risks

The fourth step requires you to evaluate the level of risk, which will depend on your answers to the questions asked at Step 3. For example, if a risk is likely to occur and the consequences could result in major harm to a child, then this would be considered high risk. Below is an example of a risk analysis matrix for analysing and evaluating risks in organisational activities. To determine the likelihood of risk using this matrix, refer to the left hand column of the risk analysis matrix. Then use the impact information to determine the level of consequence. Finally, combine the consequence and likelihood rating to arrive at the risk level.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Determine the likelihood of the risk by using the left hand column of the *Risk Analysis Matrix* (below). Use the impact information to detmine the consequences level. Combine the Consequence and Likelihood ratings to arrive at the risk level.** | | | | | |
| **Likelihood** | **Insignificant** | **Minor** | **Moderate** | **Major** | **Extreme** |
| ***Very Likely***  **Expected to occur in most circumstances** | **Medium** | **Medium** | **High** | **Critical** | **Critical** |
| ***Likely***  **Will probably occur in most circumstances** | **Low** | **Medium** | **High** | **High** | **Critical** |
| ***Possible* Might occur at some time** | **Low** | **Medium** | **Medium** | **High** | **High** |
| ***Unlikely***  **Not expected to occur** | **Low** | **Low** | **Medium** | **Medium** | **High** |
| ***Rare***  **Occurs in exceptional circumstances only** | **Low** | **Low** | **Low** | **Medium** | **Medium** |

## Step 5 - Manage the risk

Standards Australia’s AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 Risk management— Principles and guidelines describes risk treatment as “a cyclical process of:

assessing a risk treatment;

deciding whether residual risk levels are tolerable;

if not tolerable, generating a new risk treatment; and

assessing the effectiveness of that treatment.”

Risk management involves assessing the options in order to reduce the risk and the preparation and implementation of risk management plans, for example:

* Reduce the risk – will the proposed additional controls reduce the risk?
* Retain the risk - some risks will have to be retained and will require close monitoring.

Risk management options should consider the values and perceptions of stakeholders and the most appropriate way to communicate with them.

You now should consider how likely it is for the risk to occur after control measures have been put in place, and how bad the outcome would be if the risk was to occur. If you asses that a risk is still highly likely to occur and the outcome could result in harm to a child then you may need to rethink the activity.

Step 6 - Review

Ongoing review is essential to ensure that the risk management plan your organisation develops for your high risk activity or special event is effective. Reviewing controls and responsibilities can be useful for future planning. You should consider who will review the risk management plan after the event or activity.  Each stage of the risk management process should be recorded appropriately.

# Template Risk Management Plan for High Risk Activity:

In addition to occupational health and safety concerns, a child and youth risk management strategy should analyse the risk of ‘harm’ to children and young people.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Step 1** | **Step 2** | **Step 3** | **Step 4** | **Step 5** | **Step 6** |
| **Describe the activity**  ***Identify all elements of the event form beginning to end*** | **Identify Risks**  ***Something that could happen that results in harm to child or young person*** | **Analyse the Risk**  **(Likelihood/**  **Consequences)** | **Evaluate the Risk**  ***The level of risk*** | **Manage the Risk**  ***Assess the options*** | **Review**  ***Nominate who will review after event/activity*** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

# ****Strategies for communication and support****

In addition to the Teachers and Leaders Guide, the following information for parents teachers and caregivers is provided.

## School Camps Qld Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy

Creating safe and supportive service environments for children and young

people is everyone’s business.

Our organisation is committed to providing the highest standard of service to children and young people and ensuring they are kept safe from harm.

In order to create a safe and supportive service environment for children and young people, organisations must initiate and maintain ongoing planning and commitment.

In a safe and supportive environment, services and activities are provided so children and young people:

* feel safe and protected from harm
* help plan activities and make decisions
* are consulted and respected, and
* have their best interests considered and upheld.

In accordance with the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000, School Camps Qld is required to have a written child and youth risk management strategy to protect the children and young people in our organisation from harm. The strategy will help ensure School Camps Qld is a safe and supportive service environment for children and young people, by identifying and minimising risks.

Screening employees and volunteers through the blue card system is part of the strategy.

The child and youth risk management strategy addresses the following elements:

* a statement of commitment
* a code of conduct for interacting with children and young people
* procedures for recruiting, selecting, training and managing paid employees and volunteers
* policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm,
* including reporting guidelines
* a plan for managing breaches of the child and youth risk management strategy
* policies and procedures for implementing and reviewing the child and youth risk
* management strategy and maintaining an employee register for blue cards
* risk management plans for high-risk activities and special events and strategies for communication and support.

As a parent/carer, it is important for you to understand the policies and procedures that form the child and youth risk management strategy.

A copy of the strategy is attached for your information and comment.

# Training Register Template

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Instructor’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Brief description of training provided (or attach summary of training):**

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|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Job Title | Signature |
|  |  |  |
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# Training Register Template

Employee/Volunteer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Instructor’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Details of Training | Date | Refresher Required Yes/No if “yes” provide details | Competency Achieved | Signature |
|  |  |  |  |  |
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|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

# Employee Register

Macintosh HD:Users:Tracey:Desktop:Employee Register.pdf

