

Year Adopted: 2012

## STUDENT PROTECTION

### Policy R/C303

#### **Preamble**

This policy expresses St Mary's commitment to the care and protection of children and young people. It also provides a framework for St Mary's to operate to fulfil their legislative student protection responsibilities. This policy is supported by the following documents:

- Integrity in Relationships (Catholic Education Office Rockhampton information brochure)
- Code of Conduct for all Staff in the employ of Catholic Education (Diocese of Rockhampton)
- Student Protection (Catholic Education Office Rockhampton information brochure)
- Student Protection Processes (Catholic Education Rockhampton)

#### **Rationale**

Student protection is integral to learning and teaching. Safety, security and nurture are fundamental human rights and needs. These rights and needs underpin students' capacity for learning and maximise potential for personal development and ultimately enhancing their wellbeing and life opportunities.

It is recognised that students are harmed, or could be at the risk of harm, from many sources, including self-harm. Appropriate and responsive interventions by schools can provide hope to, and foster resilience in students who may be at risk by protecting them from harm and supporting healing.

#### **Values**

Jesus showed a special preference for people who were poor, powerless and vulnerable, those often relegated to the margins of society. He especially loved children 'for of such are the Kingdom of Heaven' (Mt 19:14).

All people, like Jesus himself, are called especially to love and care for children, protecting them from anyone who would harm or abuse them.

St Mary's is committed to environments that are welcoming, nurturing and stimulating where community witness to Catholic beliefs and attitudes found in the Gospels.

#### **Policy**

All schools in the Diocese of Rockhampton will implement the Student Protection Processes and Procedures.

#### **Implementation Issues**

1. Measures to ensure compliance with State and Commonwealth legislative requirements and Catholic Church expectations will include:-

On-going development, monitoring and review of:-

- School culture and ethos that promotes and encourages the reporting of potential harm and abuse
  - Reporting processes that empower students to report concerns
  - Student protection processes including the reporting of harm and abuse of children and young people in our schools
  - Participation of all employees in regular mandatory professional learning
  - Ensuring the implementation of strategies enacted to minimize risk of harm to students
2. St Mary's will:-
    - Build a culture in the school to ensure that student protection is the responsibility of every person and is an integral aspect of student well being
    - Provide learning programs for students to develop awareness and skills that lead to their empowerment and an ability to identify risk, act protectively and seek assistance.
    - Provide additional professional learning for the St Mary's Leadership Team
    - Specialist personnel and support resources are provided by

DCEO to assist school

3. Provide two (2) hours of Student Protection Training annually for all staff.
4. Liaising with external agencies such as Child Protection and Police and partnering with the community will occur as part of whole community student protection strategies:-
  - Partnership with parents/caregivers is recognized as an essential element of student protection within school communities thus supporting parents to be educated in understanding what protection means, reading the signs and knowing the dangers as well as understanding the school's and Catholic Education's procedures and guidelines.
  - Relations with relevant government and non-government agencies to enhance the protection and support of students will be maintained and developed.

## **Reflection Material**

Diocesan Catholic Education Office Rockhampton *Code of Conduct 2010*

Diocesan Catholic Education Office Rockhampton *Student Protection Processes 2012*

Diocesan Catholic Education Office *Integrity in Relationships* brochure

Diocesan Catholic Education Office *Student Protection Processes* brochure

National Committee for Professional Standards. (2010 January) *Towards healing: Principles and procedures in responding to complaints of abuse against personnel of the Catholic Church in Australia*. NSW: Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and Catholic Religious Australia

National Committee for Professional Standards. (2009, August) *Integrity in the Service of the Church*. (Resource document draft for trial). NSW: Australia Catholic Bishops Conference and Catholic Religious Australia.

Student learning and Support Services Taskforce of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment and Training and Youth Affairs. (2003). *National Safe Schools Framework* Canberra: MCEETYA. (Under review: 2010)

### *Legislation:*

Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld).

Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 (Qld)

Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools Act 2001 and Regulation 2001 (Qld)

Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 (Qld).

Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 and Regulation 2006 (Qld).

Education and Training Legislation Amendment Act 2011 (Qld).

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