STUDENT SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to establish and promote a safe, inclusive and culturally responsive environment for all students, ensuring their safety and wellbeing are prioritised in every aspect of the school's operations. This policy provides written processes about how the school will implement and comply with the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle as required under the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld).	
Scope:	The School Community – students and staff including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements, members of the broader school community, including parents/guardians, and visitors.	
Status:	Approved	**Supersedes**: 29 December 2025
Authorised by:	School Governing Body	**Date of Authorisation**: 30 October 2026
References:	• *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)* • *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld)* • *QFCC Guidelines for implementing the Child Safe Standards in Queensland* • The Rainforest School Reporting Concerns of Harm and Abuse Policy • The Rainforest School Statement of Commitment to Student Safety and Wellbeing • For further related policies refer to [link to end section]	
Review Date:	Annually	**Next Review Date**: October 2027
Policy Owner:	School Governing Body	

DEFINITIONS

Child Safe Entity, as per s10 of the *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD,* is an entity—

(a) that provides—
  (i) services specifically for children; or
  (ii) facilities specifically for use by children who are under the supervision of the entity; and
(b) that is either—
  (i) mentioned in schedule 1; or
  (ii) prescribed by regulation.

(2) However, an individual is not a child safe entity unless the individual carries on a business as an entity mentioned in subsection (1), including, for example, as a sole trader or partner in a partnership under the *Partnership Act 1891, section 5*.[1]

Child Safe Standards, as per s9 of the *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 QLD,* are the following standards applying to an entity—

(a) child safety and wellbeing is embedded in the entity's organisational leadership, governance and culture;
(b) children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously;
(c) families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing;
(d) equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice;
(e) people working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice;
(f) processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused;
(g) staff and volunteers of the entity are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training;
(h) physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed;
(i) implementation of the child safe standards is regularly reviewed and improved;
(j) policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children.[2]

Student, is any child or young person of any age, enrolled or seeking enrolment at The Rainforest School.

Universal Principle, in implementing and complying with the Child Safe Standards, a child safe entity must provide an environment that promotes and upholds the right to cultural safety of children who are Aboriginal persons or Torres Strait Islander persons (the universal principle).[3]

QFCC, Queensland Family and Child Commission.

[1] *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld) s10
[2] *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld) s9
[3] *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld) s11(2)

OBJECTIVES

The Rainforest School will implement and comply with the Child Safe Standards and understand they may be required to give an authorised officer of the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) information about the school's compliance. In implementing and complying with the Child Safe Standards, The Rainforest School will provide an environment that promotes and upholds the right to cultural safety of children who are Aboriginal persons or Torres Strait Islander persons (the Universal Principle). The school will have regard to Guidelines made by the (QFCC) in implementing and complying with the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle[4].

As per the Guidelines, this policy outlines the ways in which The Rainforest School actions and prioritises the safety and wellbeing of students. Rules and expectations regarding child safe practices are outlined for staff, volunteers and community members with the aim of establishing a child safe environment[5].

This policy will:

- Set out the school's expectations, practices, and approaches in relation to each of the Child Safe Standards, including the Universal Principle
- Be displayed for public access on the school's website and at the school's office
- Cover acceptable and unacceptable child to child, and child to adult interactions
- Describe the school's commitment to equity, inclusion and cultural safety and how the organisation recognises, responds and respects these factors.

PRINCIPLES

The implementation of, and compliance with, the Child Safe Standards and universal principle by The Rainforest School are to be based on the following fundamental principles:

(a) Child safe entity's, including The Rainforest School are responsible for continuously improving the ways in which, in their operations—
  (i) the safety of children is promoted; and
  (ii) child abuse is prevented; and
  (iii) allegations of child abuse are properly responded to;[6]

(b) The Child Safe Standards are not a simple checklist. They encourage child safe entities to think about how their day-to-day work protects children's rights and safety.[7]

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Rainforest School is responsible for developing and implementing this Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy and related policies and procedures to ensure it fulfils its Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle obligations.

All governing body members, staff and volunteers at The Rainforest School are responsible for acting in compliance with this policy and related policies and procedures.

[4] *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld), s11.
[5] *Guidelines for implementing the Universal Principle and Child Safe Standards in Queensland,* QFCC, p94.
[6] *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld), s14.
[7] *Guidelines for implementing the Universal Principle and Child Safe Standards in Queensland,* QFCC, p4.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

1. Leadership and Culture

Student safety and wellbeing is embedded in <<school names'>> leadership, governance and culture.[8]

Statement of Commitment

The Rainforest School is committed to taking all reasonable steps to promote the safety and wellbeing of students enrolled at the school and their protection from foreseeable harm. We prioritise child safety in all aspects of our work and do not tolerate any form of child abuse or harm. We act in accordance with the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld) and implement the Child Safe Standards to create a safe, inclusive, and accountable environment. We listen to children, value their views, and support them to participate in decisions that affect them.

The Rainforest School is committed to the safety and inclusion of all children, including those from diverse cultural backgrounds, children with disability, LGBTQIA+ children, and children who may be experiencing vulnerability. We also make a clear commitment to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and to providing an environment where their identities, cultures, and connections to Country are respected and upheld.

Risk Management

The Rainforest School implements robust risk management processes to prevent, identify, and mitigate risks to children, and is committed to the monitoring of risk to the safety of students on an ongoing basis. The Rainforest School will utilise various risk management tools including [insert your school's Risk Management Framework, Risk Management Policy, Risk Management Processes, Risk Appetite Statement, Risk Registers, Work Health & Safety Policy to assist it in this process and will keep appropriate records of decisions made and actions taken in relation to risks to children.

Code of Conduct

All staff will 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. The Rainforest School Board Code of Conduct and Staff Codes of Conduct define acceptable and unacceptable behaviours toward students and are aligned with child safety principles.

At The Rainforest School we expect our staff and volunteers to conduct themselves as follows:

- School staff and volunteers are expected to always behave in ways that promote the safety and wellbeing of our students. Staff must actively seek to prevent harm to students, and to support those who have been harmed.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Staff and volunteers should avoid situations where they are alone in an enclosed space with a student.
- When physical contact with a student is a necessary part of the teaching/learning experience, staff and volunteers must exercise caution to ensure that the contact is appropriate and acceptable. Staff must always advise the student of what they intend on doing and seek their consent.
- Staff must not develop a relationship with any student that is, or that can be interpreted as having a personal rather than a professional interest in a student.

[8] *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld), s9(a).

- Staff and volunteers must not have a romantic or sexual relationship with a student.
- Staff and volunteers must treat all students, colleagues and community members with respect, fairness and dignity, regardless of culture, race, ethnicity, language, religion, ability, gender, sexual orientation, or background.
- Staff and volunteers must not engage in any form of racism, discrimination, harassment, or exclusionary behaviour. This includes verbal, written, online or behavioural actions that demean, stereotype or disadvantage an individual or group.
- Staff and volunteers must actively challenge racist or discriminatory behaviour when it occurs and follow school procedures for reporting such incidents.
- Staff and volunteers must promote a culturally safe, inclusive and respectful environment by valuing diversity, acknowledging cultural differences, and modelling culturally responsive behaviour at all times.

Information Sharing & Recordkeeping

Staff and volunteers understand their obligations in information-sharing and maintaining accurate, secure records about child safety concerns, disclosures, and responses.

2. Student Voice

Students are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.[9]

The Rainforest School is committed to championing the voices of children and young people, ensuring they have genuine agency in matters that affect them. We listen to students in age-appropriate and culturally appropriate ways and create safe, structured opportunities for them to express their views.

The Rainforest School uses the curriculum and educational programs to actively promote positive peer relationships and reduce student isolation by embedding learning experiences that strengthen social skills, empathy and respectful behaviours. Through age-appropriate lessons and whole-school wellbeing programs, students are also provided with access to sexual abuse prevention education that builds their understanding of personal safety, protective behaviours and where to seek help. Together, these curriculum-based approaches support safer, more connected and more informed students.

The Rainforest School ensures that all staff and volunteers are consistently attuned to indicators of harm and abuse and are equipped to recognise when a student may need support. Age-appropriate and trauma-informed processes are in place to help students communicate their concerns safely and confidently, and staff actively respond to these disclosures with care and professionalism in accordance with The Rainforest School's Reporting Concerns of Harm and Abuse Policy

3. Family and Community

Families and the community are informed and involved in promoting student safety and wellbeing.[10]

The Rainforest School recognises the vital role families and communities play in the safety, wellbeing, and education of students. We value strong, respectful, and collaborative partnerships with families and the broader school community.

We intentionally build inclusive relationships, particularly with First Nations families, local community members, and Elders. We honour Country and embed an Acknowledgement of Country in our practices to ensure students understand the importance of knowing and respecting the land on which we learn.

[9] *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld), s9(b).
[10] *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld), s9(c).

The Rainforest School provides the following opportunities for parents and carers to contribute to the school community: Parents and Friends Association, Surveys and Parent Circles.

Regular communication through Parent Circles ensures parents, carers and the school community are informed about the school's operations and governance.

4. Equity and Diversity

Equity is upheld, and the diverse needs of students are respected in policy and in practice.[11]

The Rainforest School is committed to creating an inclusive, equitable environment where all students feel safe, respected, and supported. We actively work to remove barriers to participation and ensure our practices reflect cultural safety for all students.

This commitment is actioned through the following:

- Inclusion Policy
- Students with Disability Policy
- Anti-Discrimination Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Management Policy

5. People

People working with students are suitable and supported to reflect student safety and wellbeing values in practice.[12]

The Rainforest School is committed to recruiting, selecting, training and managing staff in such a way that limits risks to students. In particular, The Rainforest School will:

- Ensure that its recruitment and selection procedures act to reduce the risk of harm to children from staff via:
    - Accurate position descriptions, including whether the successful applicant must be a teacher registered with the Queensland College of Teachers (who has been subject to relevant police and other safety checks), whether a Blue Card is necessary for the successful applicant, the responsibilities and supervision associated with the position, the nature and environment of the service provided to students, and the experience and qualifications required by the successful applicant.
    - Advertising the position with a clear statement about the school's commitment to safe and supportive work practices and identifying that candidates will be subject to a teacher registration check or Blue Card screening, a police check, referee checks, identification verification and the requirement to disclose any information relevant to the candidates' eligibility to engage in activities including children.
    - A selection process that includes assessing the application via an interview process, and referee and other checks (as identified above) based on the accurate position description.
    - A probationary period of employment, which allows the school to further assess the suitability of the new staff and to act as a check on the selection process.

[11] *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld), s9(d).
[12] *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld), s9(e).

- Ensure that its training and management procedures act to reduce the risk of harm to students from staff via:
    - Management processes that are consistent, fair and supportive.
    - Performance management processes to help staff to improve their performance in a positive manner.
    - Supportive processes for staff when they are experiencing challenges, such as mentoring, mediation, conflict resolution, coaching, additional training, and external support and counselling services.
    - An induction program which thoroughly addresses the school's policies and procedures, particularly its expectations regarding student risk management, and to assist staff to understand their role in providing a safe and supportive environment for students.
    - Training new and existing staff on an ongoing basis to enhance skills and knowledge and to reduce exposure to risks, as follows:
        - the school's policies and procedures
        - identifying, assessing and minimising risks to students
        - handling a disclosure or suspicion of harm to a child.
    - Keeping a record of the training provided to staff.
    - Exit interviews to assist the school to identify broader issues of concern that may impact on the safety and wellbeing of students at the school.

6. COMPLAINTS

Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.[13]

The Rainforest School is committed to maintaining a student-focused approach to receiving and responding to complaints. Our Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure] outlines how concerns can be raised, the roles and responsibilities of staff, and the processes used to respond to different types of matters. We ensure that all complaints are taken seriously, addressed promptly and thoroughly, and managed in line with our reporting, privacy and employment law obligations.

Any concerns, disclosures or allegations relating to harm or abuse of a student are managed under the school's Reporting Concerns of Harm or Abuse Policy, which sets out our mandatory obligations to act protectively and report to the appropriate authorities.

7. SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Staff and volunteers of the school are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep students safe through ongoing education and training.[14]

The school 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.[15]

The Rainforest School will:

- Provide all staff with induction training in cultural competency and cultural responsiveness, with annual refresher training to maintain and deepen these capabilities.

[13] *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld), s9(f).
[14] *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld), s9(g).
[15] *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017* (Qld) s.16(4)(c).

- Ensure all staff receive induction training in trauma-informed practice, supported by annual refresher training to embed consistent, evidence-based approaches across the school.
- Develop and implement a communications strategy that identifies key stakeholders and delivers regular, relevant information on the prevention of student harm and abuse, as well as best practice in Student Safety and Wellbeing.

8. PHYSICAL AND ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for students to be harmed.[16]

The Rainforest School proactively identifies and mitigates risks within both the physical and online environments, ensuring that safety measures do not compromise students' privacy or healthy development. Staff and students use online platforms in line with the school's code of conduct and related policies, supporting a safe, respectful and well-managed digital learning environment.

For further details about how The Rainforest School manages risk see 1. Leadership and Governance above.

9. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.[17]

The Rainforest School is committed to fostering a culture of continuous improvement in child safety, wellbeing and cultural respect. We recognise that embedding the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle is a continuing journey that requires ongoing commitment, regular review and continual strengthening of our practices.

The Rainforest School will:

- Review policies, procedures and practices regularly to ensure they remain effective, responsive and appropriate for The Rainforest School community. This includes undertaking periodic audits, self-assessments and reflective practice to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- Analyse available data including complaints and concerns to identify causes and systemic issues and use these insights to inform continuous improvement of policies, procedures and practices.

10. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policies and procedures document how the school is safe for children.[18]

The Rainforest School has embedded its Statement of Commitment to Student Safety and Wellbeing in all relevant policies and procedures. The Rainforest School has made all relevant policies and procedures publicly available on its website trs.qld.edu.au, and copies are available on request from the school office. Staff and volunteers are trained in implementing relevant policies and procedures regularly.

[16] *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld), s9(h).
[17] *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld), s9(i).
[18] *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld), s9(j).

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Related policies of The Rainforest School

- The Rainforest School Reporting Concerns of Harm and Abuse Policy
- The Rainforest School Restricted Person Declaration Form
- The Rainforest School Statement of Commitment to Student Safety and Wellbeing
- The Rainforest School Blue Card Register
- The Rainforest School Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure
- The Rainforest School Enrolment Policy
- The Rainforest School Risk Management Framework
- The Rainforest School Staff Code of Conduct
- The Rainforest School Behaviour Management Policy

Resources

- Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the rights of children and young people
- The Australian Human Rights Commission National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- eSafety Commissioner's Toolkit for Schools.
- QFCC self-assessment tool or equivalent