



QUEENSLAND GIRLS
Secondary Schools
Sports Association

Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy

Updated 27 May 2026

Queensland Girls Secondary Schools Sports Association Inc
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Established 1908 – Performance, Participation, Tradition & Innovation

1.0 Our Commitment

Queensland Girls Secondary Schools Sports Association (**QGSSSA**) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who use its services, participate in its events, and who are invited to participate in its programs. Our staff, committees and volunteers will treat them with respect and understanding at all times. To ensure that children and young people are kept safe from harm, the following policy and procedures have been implemented.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the QGSSSA Statement of Commitment to Children's Safety and Wellbeing, which outlines QGSSSA's commitment to the Queensland Child Safe Standards and the Universal Principle for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Safety under the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)*, and the *QGSSSA Child Safe Code of Conduct*.

2.0 Alignment with the Queensland Child Safe Standards

QGSSSA is committed to implementing the **Queensland Child Safe Standards** under the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)*.

The following outlines the organisation's expectations and practices in relation to each Standard.

Standard 1 – Leadership, Governance and Culture

Child safety and wellbeing are embedded in QGSSSA leadership, governance and organisational culture.

QGSSSA will:

- ensure the Board provides oversight of child safety governance
- implement and monitor the Child Safe Framework and related policies
- maintain a culture where concerns about child safety are taken seriously
- allocate appropriate resources to support child safe practices
- ensure leaders model child safe behaviour.

Standard 2 – Student Voice and Participation

QGSSSA recognises the right of children and young people to participate in decisions that affect them.

QGSSSA will:

- encourage students to speak up about concerns
- provide clear pathways for raising concerns
- listen to and respect student perspectives
- incorporate feedback from students where appropriate
- ensure students understand their rights and available support.

Standard 3 – Family and Community Engagement

QGSSSA recognises that families and communities play an important role in promoting child safety.

QGSSSA will:

- communicate child safety expectations to member schools and stakeholders
- make child safety policies publicly available
- encourage collaboration with schools and families
- provide information about reporting concerns.

Standard 4 – Equity and Inclusion

QGSSSA is committed to inclusive and culturally safe environments.

QGSSSA will:

- respect the diverse backgrounds and needs of students
- promote culturally safe environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- support participation of students with disability
- promote environments free from discrimination, bullying and harassment.

Standard 5 – Safe Recruitment and Screening

QGSSSA takes steps to ensure suitable people work with children.

QGSSSA will:

- require Blue Cards where applicable
- verify qualifications and roles
- communicate behavioural expectations through the Code of Conduct, Child Safe Code of Conduct and relevant job descriptions
- provide appropriate supervision and guidance.

Standard 6 – Complaints and Concerns Processes

QGSSSA maintains clear processes for reporting and responding to concerns.

QGSSSA will:

- take all concerns seriously
- respond promptly to allegations or complaints
- follow legislative reporting obligations
- maintain secure records of complaints and investigations.

Detailed reporting procedures are outlined in this Policy.

Standard 7 – Staff and Volunteer Training

QGSSSA supports staff and volunteers to understand their child safety responsibilities.

QGSSSA will:

- provide information and guidance about safeguarding responsibilities
- communicate expectations through policy and induction processes

- provide training or briefings where appropriate.

Standard 8 – Safe Physical and Online Environments

QGSSSA takes steps to ensure physical and online environments are safe.

QGSSSA will:

- implement supervision arrangements
- manage risks in venues and event environments
- implement safe photography and media practices
- promote safe digital communication practices.

Standard 9 – Continuous Improvement

QGSSSA regularly reviews and strengthens child safety practices.

QGSSSA will:

- review incidents and complaints
- monitor risks and emerging issues
- review policies periodically
- seek feedback from stakeholders.

Standard 10 – Policies and Procedures

QGSSSA maintains clear policies and procedures that support child safety.

These include:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safe Framework
- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Statement of Commitment to Children’s Safety and Wellbeing
- Risk Management and Compliance Policy.

3.0 Purpose

This document supports QGSSSA’s commitment to child safety by clearly outlining roles, rights and responsibilities for all stakeholders. It guides staff, coaches, team managers and others involved in developing programs, tournaments and activities, while providing assurance to young players and their parents or guardians of QGSSSA’s strong commitment to safeguarding children.

4.0 Resources & Related Documents

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- QGSSSA Statement of Commitment to Children’s Safety and Wellbeing
- QGSSSA Child Safe Code of Conduct
- QGSSSA Media and Social Media Policy

- QGSSSA Privacy Policy
- QGSSSA Code of Conduct

5.0 Who Must Comply with this Policy

This Policy applies to any person who acts in an official capacity in any QGSSSA activity in which it could be reasonably expected that persons under the age of 18 years might be involved.

Such persons would include, without being restricted to:

- Members of the QGSSSA Board and the Executive Officer (**EO**);
- Staff;
- Contracted coaches and other support service providers;
- Program Managers (Interstate Carnival);
- Support Group Members;
- Fellow Competitors;
- Team members;
- Volunteers; and
- Other young people.

6.0 Scope of Policy

This Policy applies to:

- All events, programs and activities organised by QGSSSA; and
- All official QGSSSA representative team activities (whether or not they be conducted in Queensland).

7.0 Staff and Volunteers

QGSSSA recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. Contracted coaches, volunteer officials, staff and Board members involved in programs and events must all possess “**Blue Cards**” (being Queensland's Working with Children Check – issued by Blue Card Services) prior to commencing in these roles.

All employees (and volunteers) must attend an informal induction/meeting, during which:

- Their qualifications should be substantiated.
- The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified.
- Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified.

- Their responsibilities and how to report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse are explained.
- The procedure for responding to concerns expressed by a child or young person are explained.
- Expectations for working safely and effectively with children are explained.

8.0 Reporting Suspicions, Allegations and Complaints

When responding to allegations or suspicions, it is not the responsibility of anyone working for QGSSSA (in a paid or unpaid capacity) to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to report on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities. Where it has been suspected that abuse has taken place, the QGSSSA representative will formally raise it with the child's school representative. This will be raised verbally as well as a written statement to ensure evidence of communication has been made with the school.

The QGSSSA assures all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports his/her concern that a person is, or may be, abusing a child.

9.0 When there is a Complaint

Complaints should be made to the EO of QGSSSA, in the first instance.

When there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- a criminal investigation;
- a child protection investigation; or
- a disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may be considered for the disciplinary investigation.

10.0 Action in Relation to Complaints

a) Concerns about poor practice:

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, the EO will treat it as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the EO, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the President who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

b) Concerns about suspected abuse:

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused, or at the risk of being abused, by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the EO, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- The EO will refer the allegation to the relevant school.
- If the EO is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the President or in his/her absence another Board member.

11.0 Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only.

This includes the following people:

- the EO, President, or another Board Member, and school involved;
- the parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused, or at risk of being abused;
- the person making the allegation;
- social services/police; and
- the alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Advice should be sought from the police or the relevant social services authority on who should approach the alleged abuser. Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

12.0 QGSSSA Responsibilities – Produces in dealing with reports

Reporting Harm and Suspected Harm	
IF	THEN
A You are a student and you are aware or reasonably suspect that harm has been caused or may be caused by anyone to a student of the school who was under 18 years at the time of harm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report it to the EO or the QGSSSA President if the report has been made against the EO.
B You are aware or reasonably suspect that harm has been caused or may be caused by anyone to a student of the school who was under 18 years at the time of the harm; or you receive a report under (A) above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report it to the Board via the EO, or the QGSSSA President if the report has been made against the EO. • Keep a written record of your actions
C You are the EO and receive a report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report the matter to the relevant school

<p>under (A) or (B) above and you are aware or reasonably suspect that harm has been caused or may be caused by anyone to a student of the school who was under 18 years at the time of the harm.</p>	
Reporting Inappropriate Behaviour	
IF	THEN
<p>A A Student wishes to report behaviour by a staff member which you consider to be inappropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report the behaviour to the EO or relevant school
<p>B You are the EO and you receive a report under (A) above.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult as appropriate to decide on investigation process • Make initial enquiries of student to establish that matter is ‘inappropriate behaviour’ and not ‘harm’ or ‘sexual abuse’ • Take appropriate action based on findings.
Reporting Sexual Abuse	
IF	THEN
<p>A You are the EO and become aware or reasonably suspect that any person has sexually abused a student who is, or was at the time of the abuse, aged under 18 years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a written report about the abuse to the relevant school. The report must contain all required information
<p>B You are the EO or member and reasonably suspect that a student is likely to be sexually abused by any person.</p>	
<p>C You are the EO and you receive a report under (A) or (B) above.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a copy of the report to the relevant school immediately
Mandatory Reporting	
IF	THEN
<p>You are a mandatory reporter under the Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld), being a teacher, doctor, registered nurse, police officer with child protection responsibilities, person performing a child advocate function under the Public Guardian Act 2014 (Qld) or an early childhood education and care professional; and, you form a reasonable suspicion that a child has suffered, is suffering or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse;</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Report it to Child Safety.</p> <p>The written report may also be completed online through the Department of Families, Seniors & Disability Services and Child Safety utilising the Child Safety Services <u>online reporting form</u>.</p>

and, may not have a parent able and willing to protect them.	
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13.0 Support for Individual involved in Reported, Suspicions, Allegations and Complaints

Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.

14.0 Allegation of Previous Abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children).

Where such an allegation is made, QGSSSA should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the relevant school. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is required by law to advise the body or bodies he/she is associated with, and should be automatically excluded from working with children.

15.0 Bullying and Harassment

If bullying or some other form of harassment is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to suspicions or allegations' above.

16.0 Actions to the help the victim and prevent bullying and harassment

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Notify the relevant school.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to the EO.

17.0 Action towards the bully(ies)

- Consult the relevant school.
- Impose sanctions as necessary.
- Inform all organisation members of action taken.
- Keep a written record of action taken.

Concerns Outside the Immediate Sporting Environment

- Report your concerns to the EO, who should contact the relevant school as soon as possible.
- Maintain confidentiality on a “need to know” basis only.

18.0 Information for relevant school/s about Suspected Abuse

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detail record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth.
- The child's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also, any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- If so, what has been said?

19.0 Definitions

For the purpose of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

Inappropriate Behaviour	Behaviour that is inconsistent with expected professional boundaries, codes of conduct or safe practices when interacting with children and young people. This may include conduct that is overly familiar, disrespectful, intimidating or that creates discomfort for a child or young person, even if it does not meet the legal threshold for abuse.
Bullying and Harassment	Bullying and harassment refer to behaviour that intimidates, humiliates, offends, degrades or threatens another person. Bullying may involve repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is intended to harm, control or distress another person. This can include exclusion, spreading rumours, intimidation or cyberbullying. Harassment may involve unwanted behaviour that offends, humiliates or intimidates another person and may be related to characteristics such as gender, race, disability, culture or religion.

<p>Actual or Suspected Abuse</p>	<p>Actual or suspected abuse refers to situations where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child or young person has been abused or is at risk of abuse.</p> <p>Child abuse may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical abuse – non-accidental injury or harm caused to a child. • Emotional or psychological abuse – behaviour that harms a child’s emotional development or wellbeing. • Sexual abuse – any sexual activity involving a child or young person that is exploitative or inappropriate. • Neglect – failure to provide for a child’s basic physical, emotional or developmental needs.
<p>Actual or Suspected Harm</p>	<p>Actual or suspected harm refers to any situation where a child or young person has suffered, is suffering or is at risk of suffering physical, emotional, psychological or sexual harm. Harm may occur as a result of abuse, neglect, unsafe environments, bullying, harassment or inappropriate behaviour.</p>
<p>Allegations</p>	<p>An allegation refers to a claim or assertion that a person has engaged in behaviour that may breach this Policy, the QGSSSA Code of Conduct, QGSSSA Child Safe Code of Conduct or relevant legislation relating to child safety. Allegations may relate to suspected abuse, harm, inappropriate behaviour, bullying or misconduct involving a child or young person.</p>
<p>Complaints</p>	<p>A complaint is an expression of concern or dissatisfaction about behaviour, actions or decisions that may breach this Policy, organisational standards or expected conduct. Complaints may be raised by students, parents, staff, volunteers, officials or other stakeholders and may relate to child safety, behaviour or organisational practices.</p>
<p>Confidentiality</p>	<p>Confidentiality refers to the obligation to protect the privacy of individuals involved in a concern, complaint, allegation or investigation. Information relating to child safety matters must be handled sensitively and shared only with those who need to know in order to respond appropriately, consistent with legal and reporting obligations. Maintaining confidentiality helps protect the wellbeing and privacy of the child, the person raising the concern and the person subject to the allegation.</p>

Policy Review

QGSSSA will regularly review this policy to ensure it remains consistent with legislation, the Queensland Child Safe Standards and best practice in child safety.

VERSION CONTROL TABLE			
VERSION CONTROL	DATE EFFECTIVE	APPROVED BY	AMMENDMENT
1	01/03/2007	Executive	Initial policy document
2	12/11/2024	Executive	Updated with legal advice
3	25/02/2025	Board	Updated with legal advice
4	27/05/2026	Board	Updated with legal advice

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