



POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

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1. OVERVIEW

First released: 9 June 2020

Last reviewed: 19 June 2020

Review cycle: Annually

Approver: Board

Owner: Chief Executive Officer

Stakeholders: Board members, staff, parents, students, volunteers, visitors, contractors

Child Safety: National Principles 1-10

Rehoboth Christian College seeks to provide a learning environment in which all students are protected from harm and places the highest possible priority upon the safety and nurture of young people. The College expects all stakeholders to espouse this approach and to be aware of the Child Safe Framework, accessible from the College website.

- a) We believe all children are made in the image of God and are a gift from Him. Children are therefore due the dignity and respect this entails and have the right to be protected from abuse and harm.
- b) We recognise that we have a vital responsibility to put students' academic, spiritual, social, physical, and emotional interests first. We can achieve this by ensuring that child safe practices are systematically adopted across the College and that the safety and wellbeing of students is routinely considered.
- c) We are committed to providing an environment that safeguards all students by promoting a culture and practices which provide for their physical and mental safety and wellbeing and which treats any concern, complaint, or allegation seriously.
- d) The purpose of this policy is to provide high-level management of our Child Safe Framework and direction for the review and implementation of child safe standards and practices across all policies and procedures at the College.

2. ATTACHMENTS AND REFERENCES

- a) This policy forms part of the College's [Child Safe Framework](#), which consists of:
 - i. Bullying and Countering Bullying Policy;
 - ii. Child Safety (Mandatory and Non-Mandatory Reporting) Policy;



- iii. Child Safety (Online Learning Environments) Policy;
 - iv. Code of Conduct (Staff);
 - v. Code of Conduct (Students);
 - vi. Complaints and Grievances (International Students) Policy;
 - vii. Complaints and Grievances (Parents) Policy;
 - viii. Contractors Policy;
 - ix. Discipline (Foundational Understandings) Policy
 - x. Discipline (Students) Policy.
- b) Our Child Safe Framework has been developed by the Senior Leadership Team and endorsed by the Board. It draws on the following sources:
- i. [Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse](#);
 - ii. [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#);
 - iii. [Child Safe Organisations WA](#);
 - iv. AISWA Child Protection Guidelines for Schools

3. DEFINITIONS

- a) **Child** or **children** means persons under the age of 18 years.
- b) **National Principles** means the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
- c) **Safety** means freedom from harm or danger, where the risk of harm or danger has been mitigated by appropriate practices, policies, and culture.
- d) **Wellbeing** means living well and leading a flourishing life under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. This includes exploring faith, being positive, connecting with God and others, building resilience, and having a plan.

4. A BIBLICAL RATIONALE FOR CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING

- a) We believe that Children are made in God's image ([Genesis 1:27](#)) and are therefore due the dignity and respect that this entails.
- b) Jesus' teaching in [Matthew 18](#) makes clear the value of children to Him and the seriousness of causing them to stumble. As a community of His followers, we seek to take this teaching seriously.
- c) God's people (including children) are promised safety when they obeyed His commands ([Deuteronomy 12:10](#); [Proverbs 18:10](#)). Jesus further qualified this when He taught that not only our actions but even our thoughts must be obedient to Him ([Matthew 5:21-22; 27-28](#)). It is when we turn from obedience and follow



our sin nature instead that our safety is threatened. We therefore seek to obediently follow God's commands and imitate Christ both in thought and action.

- d) Abuse of any kind involves an individual taking advantage of another who is vulnerable or powerless. Throughout the Bible, God condemns such action, calling us instead to protect the vulnerable and serve those in need ([Isaiah 1:23](#); [James 1:27](#)).
- e) As staff attempt to imitate Jesus Christ ([Ephesians 5:1-2](#)), particularly in their dealings with students, so too are students encouraged to be Christ-like and become His disciples. Part of such discipline involves, among other things, genuine respect for authority and a willingness to care for those set over them in authority. The qualities of commitment, reliability, trustworthiness, and care for each other are to be emphasised.

5. IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL PRINCIPLES

5.1 Leadership, Governance, and Culture

NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 1:

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

- a) We will maintain a 'zero tolerance' approach to issues of child abuse. All stakeholders are expected to espouse this approach. We explicitly forbid the use of any form of child abuse, corporal punishment, or other degrading punishment in the discipline and behaviour management of students.
- b) We will maintain a rigorous Child Safe Framework that:
 - i. reflects a Biblical rationale and the National Principles;
 - ii. holds all stakeholders accountable; and
 - iii. will be publicly available via the College's website.
- c) The safety and wellbeing of students must be at the forefront of all planning, decision-making, and activities undertaken by all stakeholders. Every person involved at the College has a responsibility to understand the important role he or she plays in ensuring the wellbeing and safety of students.
- d) We will maintain Codes of Conduct for all stakeholders that outline behavioural standards and responsibilities, with attention to child safety.
- e) The stakeholders understand their obligations and responsibilities under the College's Privacy Policy.



- f) We will cooperate in the Multi-Agency Protocol for Education Options for Young People Charged with Harmful Sexual Behaviours. Where such enrolments arise, the College will implement a risk assessment and management plan for these students.

5.2 Children are Safe, Informed, and Engaged

NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 2:

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

- a) Children are created by God and loved and valued by Him. From that, it follows that their voice will not be ignored; on the contrary, their expression, whether positive or negative, will be listened to. This is particularly so in any matter affecting their safety and wellbeing.
- b) We recognise the authority of a teacher over a student as a Biblical principle ([Luke 6:40](#)), where the aim is for the teacher to fully equip and effectively nurture the student. This view recognises that such authority is entrusted to us by God and that we must ultimately give an account to Him. It is the role of staff to seek to lead students to become like Jesus Christ in their behaviour, personal development, and relationship with others.
- c) We will inform all students before the commencement of Term 1 each year of the Child Safe Framework and its elements.
- d) Students are encouraged to contact a trusted adult at any time with questions, concerns, or feedback on any aspect of the Child Safe Framework, our implementation of the National Principles, or any other matter related to child safety.
- e) We will, as part of our cycle of community satisfaction surveys, ask students for feedback on our child safe policies and practices.
- f) Teachers will engage students in the development of a set of class rules at the beginning of each academic year. These rules should take the Codes of Conduct into consideration, outline a commitment to respect and service, and cover the roles and responsibilities of students and teachers in an age-appropriate manner.
- g) We will maintain an appropriate Protective Behaviours program that aims to educate students on their rights, safety issues, risk identification, and identifying trusted adults and friends.



- h) The Code of Conduct (Students) must aim to explain to students their rights, roles, and responsibilities as young Christians and involve them in the development and updating of the policy.

5.3 College Community Involved

NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 3:

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

- a) Parents have the primary responsibility for raising and nurturing their children. Rehoboth exists to help parents meet this responsibility. In partnership with parents, we will seek to promote a Christ-centred culture where children and families are highly valued.
- b) We are governed by a Board elected from Members of the Association for Christian Education. Members of the Association are, in the main, parents with children enrolled at Rehoboth. As such, the College, including its staffing, educational programs, policies and procedures, has parent oversight.
- c) We will, as part of our cycle of community satisfaction surveys, ask parents for feedback on our child safe policies and practices.
- d) We will inform all parents before the commencement of Term 1 each year of the Child Safe Framework and its elements. This will be reiterated at the beginning of each Term via College newsletters or other appropriate means.
- e) In addition to the College website, the Child Safe Framework will be included in SEQTA where it can be accessed at any time by parents and students.
- f) Parents are encouraged to contact us at any time with questions, concerns, or feedback on any aspect of the Child Safe Framework, our implementation of the National Principles, or any other matter related to child safety.

5.4 Equity and Diversity

NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 4:

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

- a) We appreciate and celebrate the diversity of God's people represented in the Rehoboth community and recognise that this diversity takes many forms (race, age, sex, financial, denominational, disability, etc). We



uphold the belief that while our community is diverse in many ways, each member has been created in God's image, is precious in His sight, and is therefore equally deserving of access to the College's resources, programs, etc.

- b) Particular attention will be paid to the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the additional requirements to assure the safety and wellbeing of children with a disability.

5.5 Recruitment and Screening

NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 5:

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

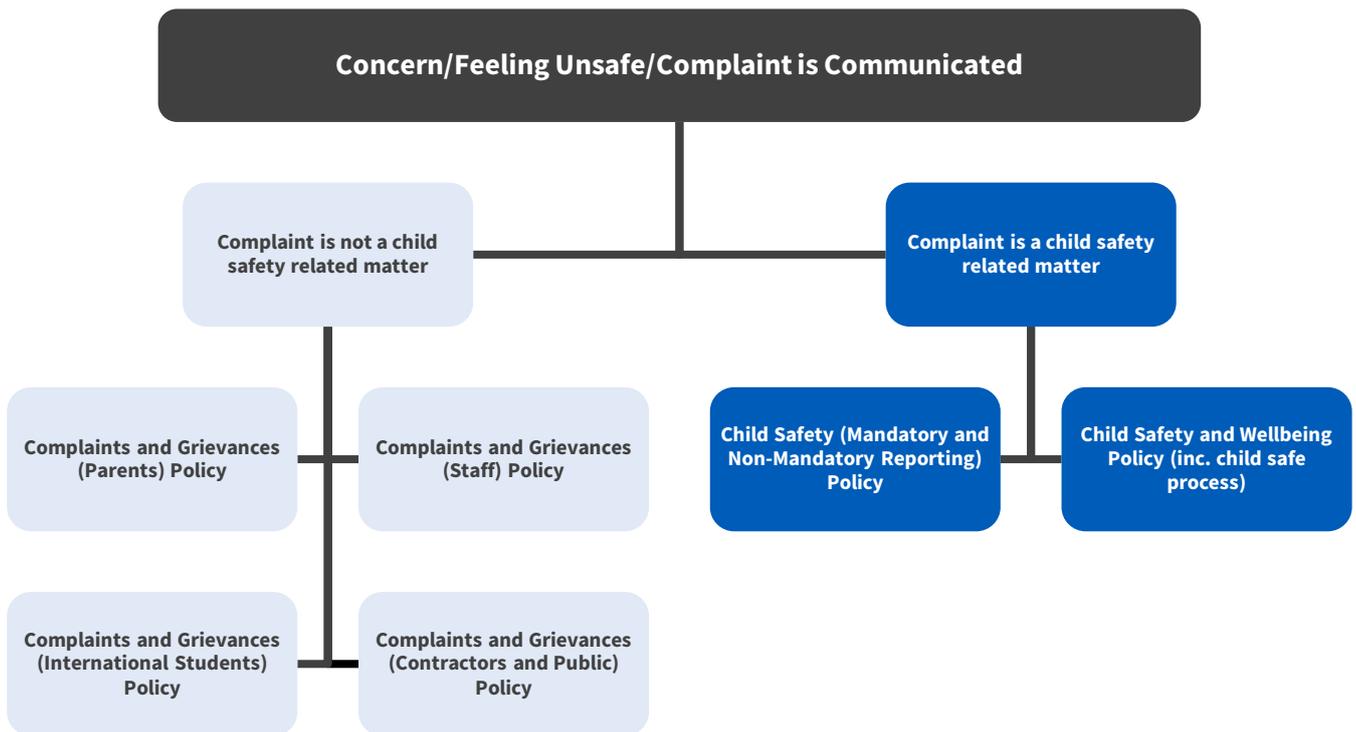
- a) All staff employed by the College will meet the needs of the vacancy and uphold and promote our Christian values and faith basis. The CEO will not employ any staff who do not uphold and promote these values and faith basis.
- b) It is imperative that, as role models, the behaviour, conduct, and lifestyle of all Board members, staff members, and parents is of the highest standard and consistent with the Biblical principles.
- c) All Board and staff members must be able to demonstrate that they are committed, practising Christians actively involved with a local Protestant Christian church for the duration of their employment or term on the Board.
- d) We maintain rigorous policies around recruitment, staff induction, professional development, and performance management. All Board and staff members are required to provide a Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check that is no more than three months old at the time of their appointment and must hold a valid Working with Children Check at all times.

5.6 Complaints Management

NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 6:

Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focussed.

- a) We maintain complaints and grievance policies for parents, staff, students (including international students), contractors and the public. These are available via SEQTA Engage, SEQTA Learn, the College website, and Intranet. Complaints are recorded in the appropriate register maintained by the Business Office.
- b) Students have access to the College’s chaplains as they feel necessary. It is the role of the chaplains to provide pastoral support and to nurture students in their academic, spiritual, physical, emotional, and social development.
- c) The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) maintains two registers:
 - i. a confidential Suspicions and Allegations of Abuse Register. The purpose of this register is to record all concerns or complaints related to issues of child safety (sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse, or neglect).
 - ii. a general Complaints and Breaches Register. The purpose of this register is to record all other concerns or complaints which are not related to child safety and may involve parties other than



children.

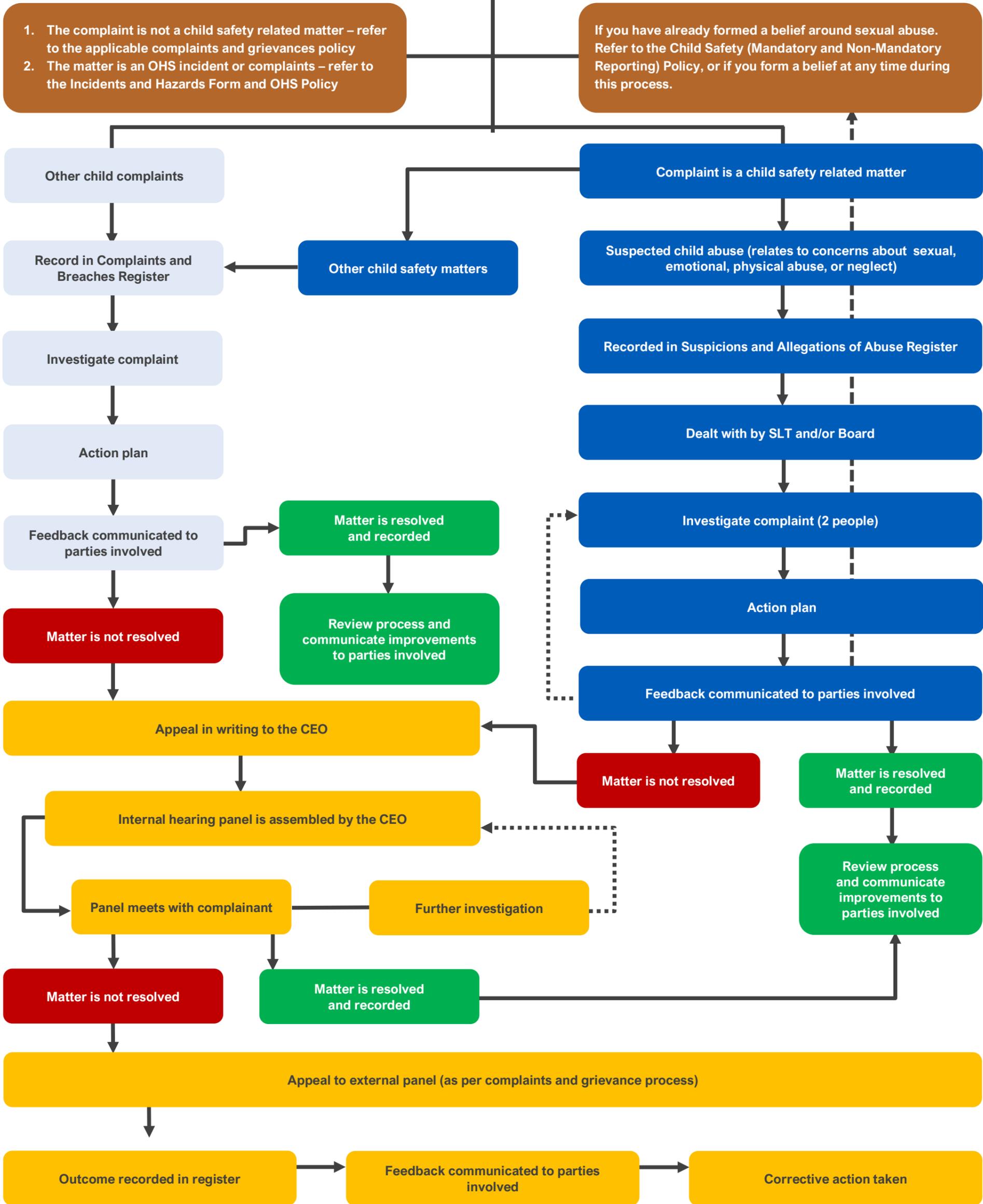
- d) Students are encouraged to contact a trusted adult to raise any concern or complaint. All student concerns are to be recorded in one of the two registers described above as appropriate. The flowchart above is design to assist with determining which register and policy applies.
- e) It is the responsibility of the trusted adult to inform the Senior Leadership Team as appropriate so that the complaint can be investigated.



- f) It is the responsibility of the trusted adult to inform the Senior Leadership Team as appropriate so that the complaint may be acted on.

- g) The flowchart over the page is designed to help staff with determining the correct process to follow when forming a belief (as per mandatory reporting guidelines) or investigating a complaint.

Concern/Feeling Unsafe/Complaint is communicated





5.7 Education and Training

NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 7:

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

- a) In our an annual schedule of professional development, we will provide training on child protection and mandatory reporting for staff and Board members. This training should provide individuals with an awareness of attitudes towards children and equip them with an understanding of child development, the range and indicators of harm, appropriate and effective response, and support for children, families, and colleagues.
- b) All staff and regular volunteers will complete our induction program at the time of their appointment. The induction program will include substantive training on our Codes of Conduct, Child Safe Framework, and associated policies and practices.
- c) All Board members will complete the Board's induction program within three months of their appointment. The induction program will include substantive training on our Codes of Conduct, Child Safe Framework, and associated policies and practices.

5.8 Physical and Online Environments

NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 8:

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

- a) We are committed to providing safe environments for children. A safe environment is defined as those with responsibility adequately discharging their duty of care by adhering to policies and practices that keep those in their care safe, including from spiritual, physical, sexual, emotional abuse (including bullying), or neglect.
- b) Security and safety measures for both physical and online environments will be assessed according to the National Principles and our child safe policies before they are implemented. Children, families, and staff will be informed about these measures as they are implemented and are expected to access applications, tools, and resources in keeping with these measures, the Codes of Conduct, and any other applicable policies.



- c) Opportunities for delivering learning online are increasing, and we support the integration of appropriate technology in teaching and learning. As such, we will maintain a policy of child safety in online environments.
- d) Children will complete Protective Behaviours and Digital Citizenship courses that aim to educate them conducting themselves appropriately and safely online, educate students on their right, safety issues, risk identification, and identifying trusted adults and friends.
- e) We will ensure that the physical environment of our campuses is maintained, and a schedule of maintenance is adhered to. Maintenance and building works will ensure that 'blind spots' are minimised throughout the campuses, either by design or the addition of security cameras.
- f) Contractors and other visitors must adhere to the standards and expectations outlined in the Contractors Policy. This includes completing a contractor induction which must cover the Child Safe Framework. Contractors are expected to have appropriate child safety measures in place, such as recruitment and screening of employees and Working with Children Checks (where applicable).

5.9 Regular Improvement

NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 9:

Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.

- a) We will report to the College community on the outcome of community satisfaction surveys. This will typically be via the Annual Report but may also include updates via newsletters or other appropriate communication channels.
- b) Community satisfaction surveys will incorporate suitable child safety and wellbeing indicators that the Board and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) can use to monitor and review the implementation of the National Principles.
- c) Child safety and wellbeing will be a regular agenda item at Board, SLT, Academic Executive, departmental, and staff meetings (including forward planning meetings). The SLT will report monthly to the Board on child safety matters.
- d) The SLT will review all complaints, suspicions, or allegations recorded on the registers during its regular meetings. A record of these reviews will be kept in SLT meeting minutes, including whether or not a complaint, suspicion, or allegation has been received.



5.10 Child Safety Policies and Procedures

NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 10:

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

- a) We take our faith-basis and Biblical values seriously and these are fundamental to the identity and character of the College. This Christian worldview informs all aspects of governance, operations, teaching, and learning at all year levels and in age appropriate ways. Board, staff, and parents are expected to espouse this approach as a condition of appointment or enrolment and to encourage this approach in students.

- b) A perspective on the National Principles informed by the College's faith-basis and values will be embedded across all policies and procedures. This will be denoted in each policy's summary table with the National Principles that have been considered to apply to that policy and a statement of intent regarding child safety at Rehoboth.