

Child Safety Policy and Procedures



PURPOSE

This document outlines how [Blue Dog Training](#) meets its commitment to child safety.

PRINCIPLES

All students under eighteen (18) years of age who are supported by [Blue Dog Training](#) have a right to feel and be safe. The underpinning principles of this policy are:

1. Care of the Child

[Blue Dog Training](#):

- ✓ Wants children to be safe, happy and empowered
- ✓ Supports and respects all children
- ✓ Is committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.

2. Supporting Cultural Diversity and Disability

[Blue Dog Training](#):

- ✓ Promotes the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children
- ✓ Promotes the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ✓ Promotes diversity and tolerance and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome
- ✓ Ensures that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

3. Child Safe Organisation

[Blue Dog Training](#)

- ✓ Has a zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently
- ✓ Has legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously
- ✓ Is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early and removing and reducing these risks.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

As [Blue Dog Training](#) delivers training in (predominately) in Queensland and NSW, it has implemented a Child Safe framework aligned to legislative requirements including, but is not limited to:

- ✓ Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)
- ✓ Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 (QLD)
- ✓ Child Protection Act 1999 (QLD).

Blue Dog Training is committed to establishing and maintaining child safe environments and has designed services with a particular focus on:

- ✓ Queensland's Blue Card System <https://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/index.html>
- ✓ The Keep Them Safe: A Shared Approach to Child Wellbeing framework (NSW).

As a child safe organisation, Blue Dog Training:

- ✓ Has a visible culture of child safety that is part of everyday practice.
- ✓ Has strong leadership driving a culture of child safety.
- ✓ Has the safety of children as a prime consideration.
- ✓ Has well-articulated policies and procedures to implement its child safe approach.
- ✓ Actively encourages participation, empowerment and serves to protect children.
- ✓ Has actively considered risks of abuse within the organisation.
- ✓ Engages with children to create a child safe environment and empowers children to speak up if something is wrong.
- ✓ Has inclusive approaches for children with a disability, aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The Blue Dog Training Code of Conduct for Working with Children, which all staff are required to observe is found in **Attachment 1**.

NOMINATED CHILD SAFETY OFFICER

Blue Dog Training has appointed a Child Safety Officer for its RTO operation, being the designated person to hear or be informed about all allegations or concerns and providing support to personnel.

This position provides a single contact for children, parents and personnel to seek advice and support regarding the safety and wellbeing of children.

The Blue Dog Training Child Safety Officer is the Chief Executive Officer, phone 07 3166 3900 or 0436 407 558.

PROCEDURES – for the management of allegations, concerns and complaints

Blue Dog Training takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Personnel are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

Blue Dog Training works to ensure all children, families and personnel know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour. Blue Dog Training understands it has a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if there is a reasonable belief that an incident took place.

a) Reporting Child Abuse

Reporting child abuse is a community-wide responsibility. Child abuse includes any act committed against a child involving:

- ✓ Physical violence;
- ✓ Sexual offences;
- ✓ Serious emotional or psychological abuse; and
- ✓ Serious neglect.

Reporting and Mandatory Reporting

Blue Dog Training will not tolerate incidents of child abuse. All personnel understand their obligation to notify relevant authorities if they have a reasonable suspicion that a minor has been, or is being, abused or neglected by a member of their family or any other individual. **Blue Dog Training** has procedures in place for staff to follow if they have a concern about the safety of a child.

Assistance is also available from:

- ✓ New South Wales Child Protection Line - 13 21 11
- ✓ Queensland Child Safety Line - 1800 177 135

Blue Dog Training personnel:

- ✓ Follow the **Blue Dog Training** - Child Safety Reporting Instructions (**Attachment 2**) when they become aware of an instance or risk of abuse or harm of a child
- ✓ Are aware that they must still act if a child is not subject to abuse, but they still hold significant concerns for their wellbeing
- ✓ Are aware individuals from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds may face barriers in reporting allegations of abuse
- ✓ Are aware that individuals with a disability may experience barriers disclosing an incident.

What is a 'reasonable belief'?

A 'reasonable belief' is not the same as having proof. A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. A reasonable belief is a deliberately low threshold. This enables authorities to investigate and take action.

Queensland - Non-mandatory reporting

Under the Child Protection Act 1999 any person may make a report if they have a reason to suspect a child is experiencing harm or is at risk of experiencing harm. In such cases contact should be made with the appropriate Child Safety Service Centre during normal business hours. (Details are available from: <https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/about-us/contact-us>)

If **Blue Dog Training** personnel are not sure who to call, or for assistance to locate their nearest Child Safety Service Centre, they should contact the Child Safety Services Enquiries Unit on 1800 811 810.

For emergencies outside of working hours contact can be made with the Child Safety after Hours Service Centre on 1800 177 135 or (07) 3235 9999. The service operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Blue Dog Training personnel can also report their concerns to Child Safety by completing an online form available at: <https://secure.communities.qld.gov.au/cbir/home/ChildSafety>.

If **Blue Dog Training** personnel believe a child is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, they should contact the Queensland Police Service immediately by dialing 000. Queensland Police Service has a number of child protection and investigation units across Queensland.

Queensland - Mandatory reporting

The Child Protection Act 1999 requires certain professionals, referred to as 'mandatory reporters', to make a report to Child Safety, if they 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, and may not have a parent able and willing to protect them.

Teachers are one of the categories of 'mandatory reporters'. A definition of Teacher from the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 is to be found in Attachment 3.

Queensland - Student Protection Procedure (State Schools)

All **Blue Dog Training** personnel operating within a Queensland government school are required to be aware of and where appropriate follow the Student Protection Procedure available at:

<http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/education/community/Pages/StudentProtection.aspx>

New South Wales procedures

Blue Dog Training personnel providing services in NSW need to be aware of the support/procedures available in that state. Mandatory reporters in NSW should use the Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) if they have concerns that a child or young person is at risk of being neglected or physically, sexually or emotionally abused.

The MRG supports mandatory reporters to:

- ✓ Determine whether a report to the Child Protection Helpline is needed for concerns about possible abuse or neglect of a child (including unborn) or young person
- ✓ Identify alternative ways to support vulnerable children, young people and their families where a mandatory reporter's response is better served outside the statutory child protection system

The Mandatory Reporter Guide is available at: <https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/>

b) **Blue Dog Training Child Safety Policy – Reporting Instructions**

Blue Dog Training personnel will follow the Critical Actions outlined in **Attachment 2** of this policy at any time they become aware of an instance or risk of abuse.

If **Blue Dog Training** personnel believe that a child is not subject to abuse, but still hold significant concerns for their wellbeing they must still act.

c) **Privacy**

Blue Dog Training will ensure all personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be personnel, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety.

Blue Dog Training has safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. **Blue Dog Training** will record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using a **Blue Dog Training** Incident Reporting Form (**Attachment 4**) including investigation updates. All records will be securely stored.

d) **Fair procedures for personnel**

While the safety and wellbeing of children is the primary concern for **Blue Dog Training** it is acknowledged that personnel must also be treated in a fair and just manner. The decisions made by **Blue Dog Training** when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

All **Blue Dog Training** personnel who have the potential to work with and provide services to Queensland students, under eighteen (18) years of age, are required to hold a Queensland Blue Card. This requirement is a component of **Blue Dog Training** recruitment processes.

Obtaining a Queensland Blue Card involves a National Criminal History Check. As this takes place as part of the Blue Card application and screening process a separate National Criminal Check is not required. National criminal checks must be renewed every three years.

More information is available at: www.nationalcrimecheck.com..

Like the Queensland Blue Card each state and Territory has its own jurisdictional checks which apply to individuals working with children. [Blue Dog Training](#) personnel providing services to students in NSW are required to undertake a National Criminal History Check as well as NSW jurisdictional check identified in the table below

Jurisdiction	Requirements
Australian Capital Territory	All personnel providing services in the Australian Capital Territory must undertake registration with the Statutory Screening Unit in line with the <i>Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT)</i> . Checks are valid for three years. https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/1804/kw/working%20with%20children%20check&!tabs-1
New South Wales	All personnel providing services in New South Wales must undertake screening in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)</i> . Checks are valid for five years. http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check
Northern Territory	All personnel providing services in Northern Territory must undertake a Working with Children Check know as a 'Clearance Notice' as per the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act 2014 (NT)</i> . Checks are valid for two years. https://nt.gov.au/emergency/community-safety/apply-for-a-working-with-children-clearance
Queensland	All personnel providing services in Queensland must obtain a Suitability Card or blue card in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 (QLD)</i> . Checks are valid for two years. http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/
South Australia	All personnel providing services in South Australia must undertake screening in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993 (SA)</i> . Checks are valid for three years. http://screening.dcsi.sa.gov.au/
Tasmania	All personnel providing services in Tasmania must undertake screening in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (TAS)</i> . Checks are valid for three years. http://www.justice.tas.gov.au/working_with_children
Victoria	All personnel providing services in Victoria must undertake a Victorian "Working with Children" check as a component of the recruitment process, in line with the <i>Working with Children Act 2005 (VIC)</i> . Checks are valid for five years. http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/
Western Australia	All personnel providing services in Western Australia must undertake a Working with Children Check by the Working with Children Screening Unit of the Western Australian Department of Community Development in accordance with the <i>Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004 (WA)</i> . Checks are valid for three years. https://workingwithchildren.wa.gov.au/

It is the responsibility of each individual to register for and obtain the required check(s). Potential personnel with adverse findings in these checks undertaken at the time of recruitment may not be offered employment with [Blue Dog Training](#).

[Blue Dog Training](#) maintains a register of staff required to hold Blue Cards and/or Working with Children Checks.

Code of Conduct for Working with Children



All **Blue Dog Training** personnel are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children and are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- ✓ Adhering at all times to the **Blue Dog Training** Child Safe Policy.
- ✓ Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse.
- ✓ Listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another child.
- ✓ Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children.
- ✓ Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- ✓ Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability.
- ✓ Ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child.
- ✓ Reporting any allegations of child abuse to the **Blue Dog Training** Child Safety Officer (CEO) and **Blue Dog Training** management and ensure any allegation to reported to the police or child protection.
- ✓ Reporting any child safety concerns to the **Blue Dog Training** Child Safety Officer (CEO) and **Blue Dog Training** management.
- ✓ If an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe.
- ✓ Encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them.

Blue Dog Training personnel must not:

- ✓ Develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism.
- ✓ Exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical.
- ✓ Put children at risk of abuse.
- ✓ Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves.
- ✓ Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children.
- ✓ Use inappropriate language in the presence of children.
- ✓ Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children.
- ✓ Discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability.
- ✓ Have organised contact with a child or their family outside of our organisation without our child safety officer's knowledge and/or consent.
- ✓ Have any inappropriate online contact with a child or their family.
- ✓ Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

By observing these standards all personnel acknowledge individual responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to the **Blue Dog Training Child Safety Officer and **Blue Dog Training** management.**

Blue Dog Training - Child Safety Reporting Instructions

Blue Dog Training personnel play a critical role in protecting children in our care.

Blue Dog Training personnel must follow the four (4) Critical Actions below, as soon as you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused.

Blue Dog Training personnel must act if they form a suspicion/reasonable belief, even if you are unsure and have not directly observed child abuse (e.g. if the victim or another person tells you about the abuse).

Blue Dog Training personnel must use an incident reporting form to keep clear and comprehensive notes.

ACTION 1: Responding to an emergency

If there is no risk of immediate harm go to ACTION 2.

If a child is at immediate risk of harm you must ensure their safety by:

- ✓ Separating alleged victims and others involved
- ✓ Administering first aid
- ✓ Calling 000 for urgent medical and/or police assistance to respond to immediate health or safety concerns
- ✓ Identifying a contact person in your organisation for future liaison with Police.

Where necessary you may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve evidence.

If the incident happens in a school environment all suspicions of harm or risk to the student must be discussed with the Principal. When the suspicions/incident relates to the Principal contact must be made with the Regional Director, Department of Education.

Action 2: Reporting to authorities

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed you must report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures of child abuse as soon as possible. Failure to report physical and sexual child abuse may amount to a criminal offence.

You must report all instances of suspected child abuse or suspected sexual abuse (including grooming) to Police.

You must also report internally to the **Blue Dog Training** Child Safety Officer (CEO) and **Blue Dog Training** management.

If the source of suspected abuse is from within the family or community, you must report the suspected abuse to the relevant Child Protection Authority in the State or Territory jurisdiction.

This includes if a child is considered to be:

- ✓ In need of protection from child abuse
- ✓ At risk of being harmed (or has been harmed) and the harm has had, or is likely to have, a serious impact on the child's safety, stability or development.

If the incident happens in a school environment all suspicions of harm or risk to the student must be discussed with the Principal. When the suspicions/incident relates to the Principal contact must be made with the Regional Director, Department of Education.

Action 3: Contacting parents / carers

The **Blue Dog Training** Child Safety Officer (CEO) and **Blue Dog Training** management must consult with Child Protection and / or Police to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers. They may advise:

- ✓ Not to contact the parents/carers (e.g. in circumstances where the parents are alleged to have engaged in the abuse, or the child is a mature minor and does not wish for their parents/carers to be contacted); or
- ✓ To contact the parents/carers and provide agreed information (this must be done as soon as possible, preferably on the same day of the incident, disclosure or suspicion).

Action 4: Providing ongoing support

Blue Dog Training must provide support for children impacted by abuse. This includes the development of a Student Support Plan developed in consultation with wellbeing professional and/or counselling staff.

Strategies may include development of a safety plan, direct support and referral to wellbeing professionals.

Definition of a teacher from the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005

Teacher

1. Means:

(a) A person who undertakes duties in a school including any of the following:

- ✓ Delivering an educational program
- ✓ Assessing student participation in an educational program;
- ✓ Otherwise administering or providing consistent and substantial educational leadership to an educational program;


or

(b) A person who undertakes duties, other than in a school, for an educational program prescribed under a regulation, including any of the following:

- ✓ Delivering the program;
- ✓ Assessing student participation in the program;
- ✓ Otherwise administering or providing consistent and substantial educational leadership to the program

and

2. Does not include a teacher's aide, a teacher's assistant or a student teacher.

<h2 style="text-align: center;">Incident Reporting Form</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(Blue Dog Training Child Safety Policy)</i></p>		
Name/s of the person or people involved in the incident:		
Description of the incident		
Date incident occurred:		
Time incident occurred:		
Location where incident occurred:		
Immediate action taken:		
If no action taken provide reason:		
Name of person completing this form:		
Contact telephone number:		
Signature:		
Date		
Time		
Authority disclosure reported to (eg Police/Child Safety Centre)		
Name of person reported to:		