

2016



**PARENT & STUDENT
HANDBOOK**

ABOUT ALTA-1 COLLEGE

Alta-1 is a multi-sited Christian school that provides an alternative education program designed to engage community resources and groups to train, support and equip participants who are marginalized by mainstream education. By addressing their socio-emotional and spiritual needs in a supportive community setting, participants receive educational services and workplace learning options that can assist them achieve high school graduation as well as receive training from a vast number of sources, opening opportunities for employment and further education.

The Alta-1 educational program has a *recovery* as distinct from a *remedial* emphasis. It is designed to lead participants through a socio-emotional developmental process involving the following stages:

- *Belonging*. The student is integrated into a caring community that allows him/her to become connected.
- *Healing*. The units of study facilitate a process whereby the student needs to face the issues that are impeding his/her personal development.
- *Restoration*. The student has the opportunity to re-build his/her life and become a better person.
- *Identity Formation*. The student develops a new understanding of his/her self-worth and relationship to family, church and the wider community.
- *Purpose-Driven*. The adoption of a beliefs and values system and the development of identity provide reasons and motivation to engage in life.

While students are never forced to adopt a particular belief and value system, the Alta-1 program is delivered from a predominantly Christian perspective. Consequently, all Alta-1 staff members are committed Christians, living lives consistent with their faith, having a passion for and commitment to seeing broken young lives transformed through the vehicle of education.

Alta-1 College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of students and as such we have implemented a comprehensive child and youth risk management strategy, details of which can be found in this handbook.

We are pleased to extend a welcome to you as part of our learning community.

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ALTA-1 STATEMENT OF VALUES

- a) We are committed to a journey that will practise Jesus' priority to demonstrate God's Kingdom here on earth through both practical and supernatural means. (Acts 10:38)
- b) We are committed to a journey that will practise the value that people matter to God. (John 3:16)
- c) We are committed to a journey that will practise a Gospel that is seen and proven by showing justice and kindness towards 'the least of these', 'the poor & broken', through practical means. (Mat 25:35-40)
- d) We are committed to a journey that will practise the restoration of all things, the reconciliation of humanity through Jesus Christ and the redemption of the earth. (Acts 3:21; Rev 21:5)
- e) We are committed to a journey that will practise the value of Jesus' church, the gathering of disciples, the sharing of our lives. (Heb 10:25)
- f) We are committed to a journey that will practise the equipping of the saints, the making of disciples, the teaching and preaching of the Word of God in our communities of faith. (Eph 4:8-16).
- g) We are committed to a life's practice that bears witness of God's plan to Redeem, Transform, Empower and Influence people in every area of life through the power and work of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:8)

ALTA-1 PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Alta-1 implements a recovery based social/emotional model of teaching in which students are challenged and supported to confront the need for personal change. The majority of the curriculum that the students are engaged with and the methods by which staff interact with students are based on the therapeutic model developed by the Alta-1 Senior Psychologist.
- Alta-1 endorses a firm but friendly style of discipline. This ensures that relationships are built, successes are celebrated and boundaries are clear. Students are confronted with the reality that choices have consequences.
- Alta-1 encourages a relational teaching style, whereby teachers are not just actively involved with the academic progress of students but also with their social/emotional well being.
- Alta-1 promotes a supportive environment that values student centred teaching where the needs, backgrounds, perspectives and interests of students are reflected in the learning program. We believe that this approach to teaching eliminates frustration for both the teacher and the student and in turn fosters a culture of achievement and success.
- Alta-1 requires teachers to model through their deportment in the classroom the biblical Christian values, positive attitudes and ethical behaviours which we challenge our students to embrace.

TERM DATES

Term 1	Wednesday 27 Jan – Thurs 24 Mar
Term 2	Monday 11 Apr – Friday 24 June
Term 3	Monday 11 July – Friday 16 Sep
Term 4	Wednesday 5 Oct – Friday 2 Dec

ATTENDANCE

For most young people, attendance at school is a legal requirement. Likewise, schools are obliged to keep accurate records of student attendance and absences.

Consequently, if a student is going to be absent on any occasion the school needs to be advised by telephone or email by 9:00am on the day. Contact can be made either with the relevant site or central administration. Alternatively a note from parent/guardian explaining the absence can be presented to the teacher on the day that attendance is resumed.

CURRICULUM

The Alta-1 **senior school curriculum** is structured to meet three broad goals:

1. To enable students to achieve access to mainstream education through to school graduation, with entry to TAFE or other tertiary institutions, so that they can live productive lives as Australian citizens.
2. To assist students to address personal issues that hinder emotional, social, behavioural and educational development.
3. To provide the opportunity for students to evaluate various belief and value systems, making decisions that give them purpose and direction for their lives.

Whilst the curriculum is delivered in an alternative way, there are still two distinct stages equivalent to Years 11 and 12.

Stage 1: Year 11

There is no specific time limit on completion of this phase of the course, but there is an expectation that it would be completed inside two years. The course includes:

- English (Foundation level units 1 & 2)
- Mathematics (Foundation level units 1 & 2)
- Religion and Life (General level units 1 & 2)
- Personal Recovery
- Workplace Learning
- Certificate II

Stage 2: Year 12

When participants are deemed ready and capable, they are required to complete in one calendar year a course that leads to completion of the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE), articulating to further training or a bridging course to a number of universities. They are placed on a program which is comprised of:

- English (General level units 3 & 4)
- Mathematics (General level units 3 & 4)
- Religion and Life (General level units 3 & 4)
- Workplace Learning

COLLEGE RULES

Alta-1 College is in essence a relationship-based school. As such, rules are intentionally kept to a minimum. The following, however, are those considered necessary to facilitate the care of one another and achieve Alta-1 goals.

- Bullying will not be tolerated.
- Illegal and recreational drugs, including alcohol, may never be brought onto school premises.
- Clothing is to be modest and non-revealing. Items of clothing displaying offensive language and/or symbols such as profanity, blasphemy, drug references, sexual connotations and racist slurs are not to be worn.
- Smoking cigarettes and tobacco products is not permitted on school premises. While discouraged, smoking may be permitted upon written consent from a parent/guardian. Students given permission to smoke must do so only in designated out-of-school areas at specified times. Being allowed to smoke during the school day is a privilege and is not to be abused.
- Music is not allowed during school. It may be allowed if deemed appropriate by the teacher at the time but students must have head phones. (This is to prevent too much extra noise.)
- The use of personal mobile electronic devices at school is a privilege. Students bringing such devices to school do so at their own risk. Mobile phones must be switched to silent mode during class times, placed out of sight or given to the teacher, and used only with specific teacher permission. They may not be used for calls, texts or social media during class time.
- Use of offensive language will incur a consequence.
- No student is permitted to leave the school grounds without staff member consent.
- Students who have their driver's licence are not permitted to have other students in their vehicle unless written permission is given by parents/guardians of both parties.
- Students who drive vehicles to school must submit the ignition keys to their teacher on arrival. The keys will be returned at the conclusion of the school day.
- Computers, including those with internet access, are provided for school-based educational purposes only. Misuse of this privilege will result in access being withdrawn.

The most important requirements, however, are these:

- An expressed desire and willingness for change.
- Commitment to regular attendance.
- A preparedness to undergo medically supervised testing for illegal substances if and/or when required by an Alta-1 teacher or the Principal.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY

The underlying values of the Alta-1 behaviour management system are that classroom management must be fair, firm and friendly, but that there must be appropriate consequences for non-compliance with a reasonable request from an Alta-1 staff member. Alta-1 staff members will use their own methods to deal with minor breaches within the program. If minor breaches continue, or there is deliberate defiance or disobedience, the staff member will initiate the Behaviour Management System.

This entails:

That an initial verbal warning be given and measures taken to help the student manage their issue.

Continuing misbehaviour will result in the student being withdrawn to a private place to discuss the behaviour with a staff member and to be issued a final warning.

If the student does not respond and take responsibility for his/her behaviour or deliberately sabotaging the efforts to assist change, he/she will be placed into isolation and the parent contacted to remove the student.

A staff member will fill out an Unacceptable Behaviour Form (UBF).

Upon receipt of the first UBF, the student enters the Alta-1 Discipline System which escalates through the following levels:

Step 1

At this level the student receives a one day out of school suspension, and parents and relevant support agencies are contacted, informed of the situation and asked to bring the child in for a re-engagement interview. A contract is completed specifying the nature of the infringement, targets for the student to address and a review timeframe developed.

If a student acts in an inappropriate way not listed in the contract then the above process is enacted again.

If a student is acting in a way that is likely to breach their contract, all reasonable reminders and steps need to be taken to assist the student in their personal behaviour management. **If then a student breaches their contract they move up to the next level.**

Step 2

A case meeting is convened to discuss the individual case. The discussion to make clear:

Is the student making change in any area outlined in the Contract; personal life or academic studies?

Is the students' presence in the program impacting on the group in a positive or negative manner?

How many times has the above cycle been repeated and is another attempt at addressing the issue in the current context/situation, in the students' best interest.

Are there any steps that will help the student? E.g. changing peer groups, different work experience days.

Step 3

If the student is making change then a Step 1 contract **will** be set in motion and the whole process re-engaged with.

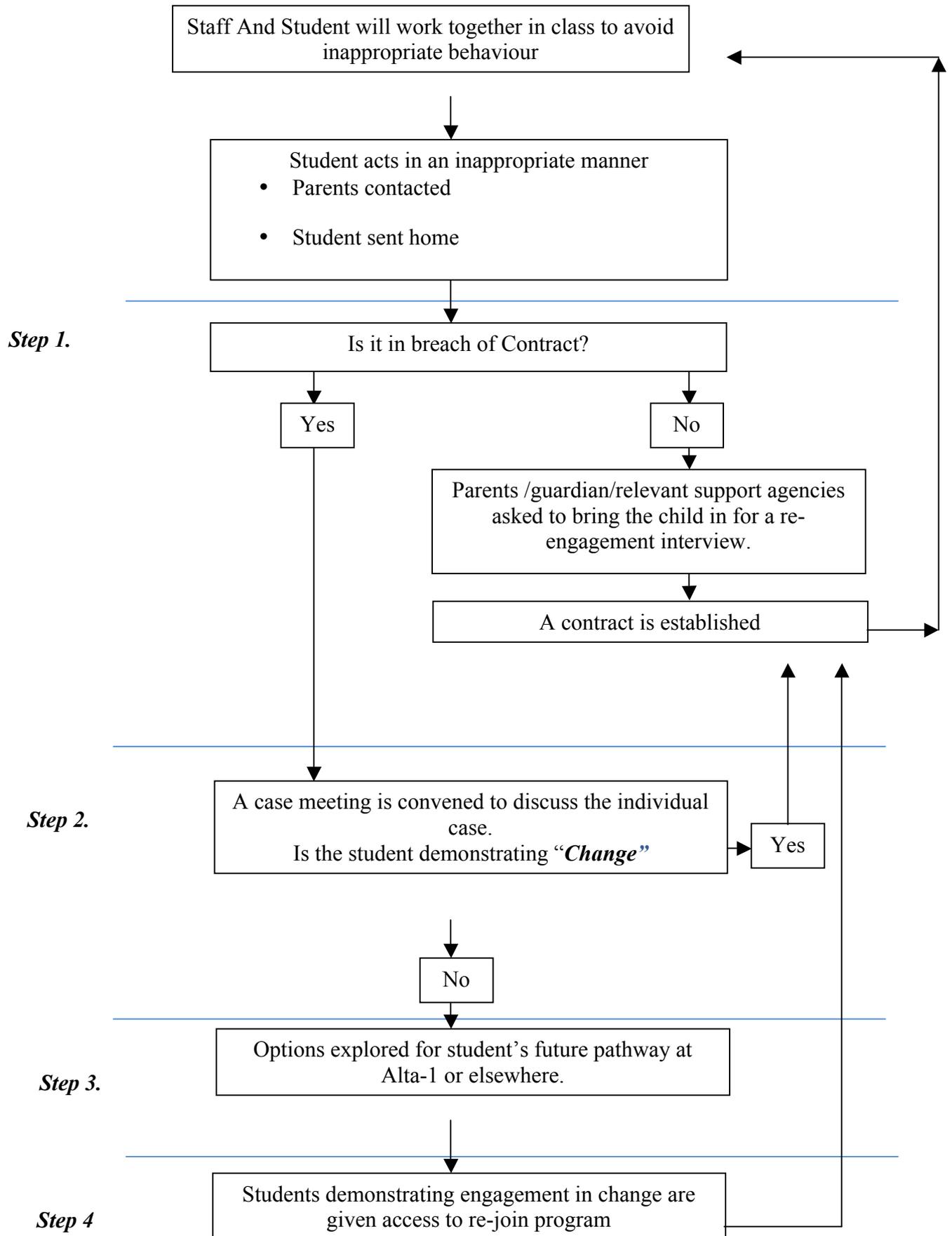
If a student is not engaging in "change" then options need to be explored, that assist the student in their future pathway. Options may include changing sites, re-entering a transition group, looking at different education providers.

If a student is unwilling to engage in the process of self change he/she could be asked to seek an alternative education provider.

Step 4

When a student seeking alternatives to the program can demonstrate a willingness to take ownership for change in their life, then they will be given access to the program again.

Behaviour Management Flow Chart



SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

Rationale

Within the context of a school that enrolls students who may have a history of substance abuse, the purpose of this policy is to address drug use at Alta-1 with fairness and in accordance with the law.

Principles

1. The underlying belief of Alta-1 and the basis for this policy is an attitude of minimal tolerance towards drugs as defined below, based on the attitude of protecting the student body.
2. Because Alta-1 believes in procedural fairness, each case will be reviewed on its merits.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the term, “drugs” will refer to physiological and/or mind-altering substances that are available over the counter, by prescription, as well as substances available deemed illegal by the criminal code of Queensland. It also includes any substance that is misused from its original/intended purpose to induce a physiological/mind altering state. It specifically includes alcohol.

Procedures

If a student comes to school under the apparent influence of drugs, a parent will be contacted and arrangements made for the child to be returned home.

If at school a student is found to be in possession of drugs, or using drugs, or supplying drugs to others, they will immediately have the drugs removed, a parent will be contacted to collect the student and an enrolment review will be initiated by the Principal. In determining the outcome of the review, each situation will be considered on its merits.

Note:

Previous Violation of this policy. No matter what the previous level of violation of this policy any student who violates this policy in terms of possession twice will be permanently expelled from Alta-1 with no option of appeal.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ACTIVITY POLICY

Alta-1 supports the right of all students and staff to study and work in an environment free from sexual harassment and inappropriate sexual activity.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any form of sexual attention that is uninvited, unwelcome or unreciprocated and which makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. It can be a single incident or a persistent pattern of behaviour. It may be intentional or unintentional and is not confined to gender.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not restricted to:

- uninvited touching;
- uninvited kisses or embraces;
- smutty jokes or comments;
- making promises or threats in return for sexual favours;
- displays of sexually graphic material including posters, pin-ups, cartoons, graffiti or messages left on notice boards, desks or lockers;
- repeated invitations to go out, especially after prior refusal;
- 'flashing' or sexual gestures;
- sex based insults, taunts, teasing or name-calling;
- staring or leering at a person or at parts of their body;
- unwelcome physical contact such as massaging a person without invitation or deliberately brushing up against them;
- touching or fiddling with a person's clothing e.g. lifting up skirts, flicking bra straps, 'dakking', 'wedgieing';
- requests for sex;
- sexually explicit conversation;
- persistent questions or insinuations about a person's private life;
- offensive phone calls or letters;
- stalking;
- sexual insults or taunting;
- offensive e-mail messages or computer screen savers;
- suggestive comments or innuendoes about a person's physical appearance

A person (staff member or student) can be sexually harassed by a:

- staff member
- student
- contractor
- visitor to the school
- service provider
- parent

Sexual harassment can occur in any school activity, on or off the campus.

The aim of dealing with sexual harassment is to acknowledge what has happened, to work towards conciliation between the parties where possible, and to bring about change in behaviour.

Depending on the severity of the case, consequences could include:

- counselling;
- disciplinary action against the harasser (e.g. formal warnings placed on file, demotion, detention, suspension, probation or dismissal/expulsion);
- disciplinary action against the complainant if there is strong evidence that the complaint was vexatious or malicious;
- a written apology;
- conciliation/mediation conducted by an impartial third party where parties agree on a mutually acceptable resolution;

Retaliation or reprisals will not be tolerated, and disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who victimises a person for complaining of sexual harassment.

Student Sexual Activity

No form of sexual activity between students will be tolerated on school property and at school events, including camps, excursions and extended trips.

Sexual activity includes, but is not restricted to, consensual:

- sexual kissing
- touching genitals
- sexual intercourse

Students found to be acting in breach of this policy will enter the behaviour management system, leading to parental contact and disciplinary consequences.

MEDICATION AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Staff cannot administer medication without express parental request and permission, and will never take responsibility for the administration of any medication by injection. If students are on antibiotics or other medication they should remain at home until the course of medication is finished. The best place for students who are unwell is at home. Students should not have medication of any kind in their bags.

At the time of enrolment, through the enrolment form, the school is to be informed of any medical issues or particular needs of each student.

When a need is identified (eg asthma, allergy), the parent/guardian is to present the school with a specific management plan, usually developed in consultation with a medical practitioner. The plan will be communicated to all relevant staff and a copy displayed at the relevant site.

Parents of students who are on any other regular preventative medicine need to discuss the management of their child's needs with the site teacher.

The following is some useful information relating to common ailments:

CHICKEN POX

Transmission: Airborne or droplet infection; direct contact with the fluid from a vesicle of an infected person. Once the scabs are dry they are no longer infectious.

Incubation Period: 13 to 17 days.

Period of communicability: From 2 days before rash until all blisters have crusted.

Exclusion: Exclude until at least 5 days after the eruption first appears. Some remaining scabs do not justify exclusion.

Contacts: Any student with an immune deficiency (e.g. leukemia); or receiving chemotherapy, should be excluded for their own protection.

CONJUNCTIVITIS

Transmission: Direct or indirect contact with secretion from infected eyes.

Incubation Period: 1 to 3 days.

Period of communicability: While eye discharge is present.

Exclusion: Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased. **Contacts:** Not excluded.

DIARRHOEA, e.g. *Campylobacter*, *Giardia*, *Rotavirus*, *Salmonella*, *Shigella*

Transmission: Many modes of transmission, depending on causative organism, usually through contaminated hands, food or drink.

Incubation Period: Hours to days.

Period of Communicability: Days to weeks.

Exclusion: Exclude until diarrhoea has ceased. **Contacts:** Not excluded.

HEAD LICE

Head lice are extremely contagious. If a student is found to have head lice or nits, a parent or guardian will be contacted to pick the student up from school.

Transmission: Close contact with an infected person

Incubation Period: The eggs usually hatch in 7 to 10 days. Once hatched the lice are capable of laying eggs in 10 days.

Period of Communicability: Until lice and nits (eggs) are destroyed.

Exclusion: Exclude until treatment has commenced. **Contacts:** Not excluded.

IMPETIGO (SCHOOL SORES)

Transmission: Direct contact with an infected person.

Incubation Period: 1 to 3 days.

Period of Communicability: Until sores are healed.

Exclusion: Exclude until treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces may be covered with a dressing. **Contacts:** Not excluded.

INFLUENZA

Transmission: Airborne or droplet infection or direct contact with contaminated nose or throat secretions.

Incubation Period: Usually 1 to 3 days.

Period of Communicability: Usually 3 to 7 days.

Exclusion: Exclude until well. **Contacts:** Not excluded.

MEASLES

Transmission: Airborne or droplet infection, or direct contact with contaminated nose or throat secretions.

Incubation: 7 to 18 days.

Period of Communicability: About 4 to 5 days before rash begins until 4th day after rash appears.

Exclusion: Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash. **Contacts:** Immunised contacts should be excluded until 14 days after the first appearance of rash in the last case. If unimmunised contacts are vaccinated within 72 hours of their first contact with the first case they may return to school.

Immunisation: Measles/mumps/rubella vaccine is recommended at 12 months and 4 years.

MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS INFECTION

Transmission: Direct contact with contaminated nose and throat secretions.

Incubation Period: 3 to 4 days.

Period of Communicability: Until *N. meningitis* is no longer present in nasal and throat secretions.

Exclusion: Exclude until well. **Contacts:** Not excluded. Public health authorities may arrange for close contacts to be given a course of antibiotics.

MUMPS

Transmission: Airborne or droplet infection, or direct contact with saliva of an infected person.

Incubation Period: 12 to 21 days. Usually 18 days.

Period Communicability: From 5 days before to 9 days after the onset of swelling.

Exclusion: Exclude for at least 9 days after onset of symptoms. **Contacts:** Do not exclude. Recommend immunisations if not vaccinated.

Immunisation: Measles/mumps/rubella vaccine is recommended at 12 months and after the 4th birthday.

RINGWORM, e.g. Tinea

Transmission: Direct contact with infected person, contaminated articles or animals.

Incubation Period: 4 to 14 days.

Period Communicability: As long as lesions are present and viable spores persist on contaminated materials. **Exclusion:** Exclude until the day after treatment has commenced.

RUBELLA, GERMAN MEASLES

Transmission: Airborne or droplet infection, or direct contact with contaminated nose or throat secretions.

Incubation Period: 14 to 23 day. Usually 16 to 18 days.

Period of Communicability: From 7 days before to at least 4 days after the onset of the rash.

Exclusion: Exclude until at least 4 days after the onset of the rash. **Contacts:** Not excluded.

Immunisation: Measles/mumps/rubella vaccine is recommended at 12 months and again at the 4th birthday.

SCABIES (ITCH MITE)

Transmission: Skin contact with infected person or contact with infected clothing, towels or bedding.

Incubation Period: 2 to 6 weeks before onset of itching in individuals not previously infected. Those individuals who have been previously infected develop itch 1 – 4 days after re-exposure

Period of Communicability: Until mites and eggs are destroyed

Exclusion: Exclude until the day after treatment has commenced. **Contacts:** Not excluded. Family contacts will probably be infested and should be treated.

FOR THE MEDICAL SAFETY OF ALL STUDENTS, PLEASE NOTIFY THE SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY IF YOUR CHILD HAS A CONTAGIOUS DISEASE.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide written processes about the health and safety of Alta-1 College staff and students and about the appropriate conduct of College staff and students to comply with accreditation requirements.

This policy applies to students and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements at Alta-1 College and covers information about the reporting of harm and abuse.

Definitions

- **Section 9 of the *Child Protection Act 1999* - “Harm”**, to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child’s physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.
 1. It is immaterial how the harm is caused.
 2. Harm can be caused by—
 - a) physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or
 - b) sexual abuse or exploitation.
 3. Harm can be caused by—
 - a) a single act, omission or circumstance; or
 - b) a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.
- **Section 10 of the *Child Protection Act 1999* - A “child in need of protection”** is a student who—
 - a) has suffered significant harm, is suffering significant harm, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm; and
 - b) does not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.
- **Section 364 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* - “Sexual abuse”**, in relation to a relevant person, includes sexual behaviour involving the relevant person and another person in the following circumstances –
 - (a) the other person bribes, coerces, exploits, threatens or is violent toward the relevant person;
 - (b) the relevant person has less power than the other person;
 - (c) there is a significant disparity between the relevant person and the other person in intellectual capacity or maturity

Health and Safety

The school has written policies in place about the health and safety of its staff and students in accordance with relevant workplace health and safety legislation¹.

Responding to Reports of Harm

When the school receives any information alleging 'harm'² to a student (other than harm arising from physical or sexual abuse) it will deal with the situation

¹ *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld) s.10(1)*

compassionately and fairly so as to minimise any likely harm to the extent it reasonably can. This is set out in the College's *Responding to Disclosures or Suspicions of Harm*. Information relating to physical or sexual abuse is handled under obligations to report set out in this policy³.

Conduct of Staff and Students

All staff, contractors and volunteers must ensure that their behaviour towards and relationships with students reflect proper standards of care for students. Staff, contractors and volunteers also must not cause harm to students⁴.

Reporting Inappropriate Behaviour

If a student considers the behaviour of a staff member to be inappropriate, the student should report the behaviour to:-

- (a) a Teacher; or
- (b) the Principal⁵.

Inappropriate behaviour also includes 'grooming' children or young people. The term 'grooming' refers to actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and influencing a child, and in some circumstances members of the child's family, for the purpose of sexual activity with the child. These actions are designed to establish an emotional connection in order to lower the child's inhibitions and gain access to the intended victim. In this respect grooming involves psychological manipulation that is usually very subtle, drawn out, calculated, controlling and premeditated' (Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Handling of Child Sexual Abuse by Religious and Other Non-Government Organisations, 2013). Some techniques used to groom and entrap children and young people include:

- gaining trust and being a friend (e.g. sometimes favouritism);
- gaining trust of family and other members of the child's community;
- giving gifts (e.g. often as bribes);
- giving attention (e.g. to help build the idea of an exclusive relationship);
- isolation (e.g. finding opportunities to be alone with the child);
- coercion through flattery;
- shaming and blackmail;
- sexual desensitization (e.g. inappropriate sexual talk);
- invading personal space (e.g. inappropriate touch which is sometimes 'accidental'); and
- threats.

The more these techniques are present, the higher likelihood the behaviour represents grooming or entrapment.

Reference: Bennett, N. and O'Donohue, W. (2014). The Construct of Grooming in Child Sexual Abuse: Conceptual and Measurement Issues. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*. 23, (8). Pages 957-976.)

² Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld) s.10(8): the definition of 'harm' for this regulation is the same as in section 9 of the *Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)*

³ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld) s.10(2)

⁴ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld) s.10(2)

⁵ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld) s.10(3) and s.10(4)

Dealing with a Report of Inappropriate Behaviour

A staff member who receives a report of inappropriate behaviour must report it to the Principal. Where the Principal is the subject of the report of inappropriate behaviour, the staff member must inform a member of the College Board⁶.

The College Board must advise the board of Alta-1 Australia in writing if a report of inappropriate behaviour of a worker has been received.

Reporting Sexual Abuse⁷

Section 366 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* states that if a staff member becomes aware, or reasonably suspects in the course of their employment at the school, that any of the following has been **sexually abused** by another person:

- a) a student under 18 years attending the school;
- b) a pre-preparatory aged child registered in a pre-preparatory learning program at the school;
- c) a person with a disability who:-
 - i. under section 420(2) of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* is being provided with special education at the school; and
 - ii. is not enrolled in the preparatory year at the school

then the staff member must give a **written report** about the abuse or suspected abuse **to the Principal or to a director of the College board** immediately.

If the staff member who becomes aware or reasonably suspects sexual abuse is the College Principal, the Principal must give a written report about the abuse, or suspected abuse to Police immediately and must also give a copy of the report to a director of the school's governing body.

A report under this section must include the following particulars:-

- a) the name of the person giving the report (the **first person**);
- b) the student's name and gender;
- c) details of the basis for the first person becoming aware, or reasonably suspecting, that the student has been sexually abused by another person;
- d) details of the abuse or suspected abuse;
- e) any of the following information of which the first person is aware:-
 - i. the student's age;
 - ii. the identity of the person who has abused, or is suspected to have abused, the student;
 - iii. the identity of anyone else who may have information about the abuse or suspected abuse⁸.

Reporting Likely Sexual Abuse⁹

Section 366A of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* states that if a staff member becomes aware, or reasonably suspects in the course of their employment at the school, that any of the following is likely to be sexually abused by another person:-

⁶ *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld) s.10(3)*

⁷ *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld) s.10(5)(a)*

⁸ *Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2006 (Qld) s.68*

⁹ *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld) s.10(5)(a)*

- a) a student under 18 years attending the school;
- b) a pre-preparatory aged child registered in a pre-preparatory learning program at the school;
- c) a person with a disability who:-
 - i. under section 420(2) of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* is being provided with special education at the school; and
 - ii. is not enrolled in the preparatory year at the school

then the staff member must give a written report about the suspicion to the Principal or to a director of the College board immediately.

If the staff member who becomes aware or reasonably suspects likely sexual abuse is the school's Principal, the Principal must give a written report about the suspicion to a police officer immediately and must also give a copy of the report to a director of the school's governing body.

A report under this section must include the following particulars:-

- a) the name of the person giving the report (the ***first person***);
- b) the student's name and sex;
- c) details of the basis for the first person reasonably suspecting that the student is likely to be sexually abused by another person;
- d) any of the following information of which the first person is aware:-
 - i. the student's age;
 - ii. the identity of the person who has abused, or is suspected to be likely to abuse, the student;
 - iii. the identity of anyone else who may have information about suspected likelihood of abuse¹⁰.

Reporting Physical and Sexual Abuse

Under Section 13E (3) of the *Child Protection Act 1999*, if a doctor, a registered nurse or a teacher forms a 'reportable suspicion' about a child in the course of their engagement in their profession, they must make a written report.

A **reportable suspicion** about a child is a reasonable suspicion that the child: -

- a) has suffered, is suffering, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse; and
- b) may not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.

The doctor, nurse or teacher must give a **written report to the Chief Executive of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services** (or other department administering the *Child Protection Act 1999*). The doctor, nurse or teacher should give a copy of the report to the Principal.

A report under this section must include the following particulars:-

- a) state the basis on which the person has formed the reportable suspicion; and
- b) include the information prescribed by regulation, to the extent of the person's knowledge¹¹.

¹⁰ *Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2006 (Qld) s.68A*

¹¹ *Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld) s.13G (2)*. There is no such regulation at 12 December 2014.

Awareness

The school will inform staff, students and parents of its processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students in communications to them and it will publish these processes on its website¹².

Training

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 every two years¹³ or earlier if deemed necessary by staff or the Board.

Implementing the Processes

The school will ensure it is implementing processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students by auditing compliance with the processes annually¹⁴.

Accessibility of Processes

Processes relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students are accessible on the College website and will be available on request from College administration¹⁵.

Complaints Procedure

Suggestions of non-compliance with the College's processes may be submitted as a complaint under Alta-1 College's *Breaches of the Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy or Complaints Policy and Procedures*¹⁶

Delegation of board directors' functions

Under section 366B of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, the directors of a school's governing body may delegate the directors' function under section 366A to an appropriately qualified individual (this cannot be the Principal or any other staff member of the school). Directors should ensure they are well briefed about the requirements of section 366B before delegating this function.

¹² Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld) s.10(6)

¹³ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld) s.10(6)

¹⁴ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld) s.10(6)

¹⁵ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld) s.10(6)

¹⁶ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld) s.10(7) and s.10(7A)

THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

Information for Parents

During the period of his or her enrolment at Alta-1 College, your child may be referred by his/her teacher or chaplain, or he/she may request, to speak to a psychologist or counsellor. This document outlines the services that will be provided to your child, as agreed to by you upon his/her enrolment.

Procedures

Student Therapeutic Support can only be accessed if a student has a current Mental Health Care Plan in place. This can be obtained, either by seeing a GP of choice. Your child will be provided with therapy that will address his/her social, emotional and educational wellbeing. The therapists providing the service have specialised in either psychology or counselling. These therapists are also supported and supervised by experienced psychologists/counsellors. Therapy sessions will be an opportunity for your child to talk about issues that might be concerning him/her in a confidential and supportive environment. The length of treatment will vary according to the student's individual needs.

In addition to this, if deemed necessary, we may request diagnostic assessments done by a service provider we deem appropriate, irrespective of whether a Mental Health Care Plan is in place. Parent/guardian consent will be sought prior to any assessments taking place.

Please note that our services are provided to your child as an individual and his/her emotional health and wellbeing are our priority. Also note that as a service we are unable to provide crisis/emergency services.

Confidentiality

Your therapist will keep the information shared with him/her in strict confidence. There are some limitations to this confidentiality and it is important that you understand these:

- In some situations your therapist may request your consent and your child's consent to exchange information with a third party e.g. teacher, doctor or other professionals.
- In other situations, we may be required by law or by the guidelines of our profession to disclose information, whether or not we have your permission or your child's permission. We have listed these situations below.

Confidentiality cannot be maintained when:

1. There is suspected abuse (physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect);
2. There is a potentially high risk of suicide or self-harm;
3. There is a potentially high risk of harm to another; or
4. There is a court order and the therapist is requested to release records.

Every effort will be made to discuss the situation with you before any disclosure of information occurs.

Records

Information will be collected, recorded and stored so as to maintain confidentiality. The treating therapist is the only individual with access to this information. The information will be kept for a minimum of 7 years or until the student reaches the age of 25.

Participation

Please note that participation is voluntary and therefore you can withdraw your permission at any time. Refusal to participate will not result in any prejudice or discrimination. If necessary, you may be requested to support the therapeutic process by providing additional information. In the event that this occurs you will be provided sufficient notice to schedule an appropriate time.

Questions or Concerns

If you have any questions or concerns about any of these procedures, please discuss them with your therapist.

Cost

If required, your child may be referred to an external agency/agencies for additional support. In the event that this occurs we will discuss all options with you and provide you with information about the agency, their services and/or possible costs.

PRIVACY POLICY

Rationale

The College is bound by the Australian Privacy Principles contained in the Commonwealth Privacy Act. This policy sets out how the College manages personal information provided to or collected by it.

Collecting Information

The College collects and holds personal information about pupils, parent/guardians, job applicants, staff members, volunteers, contractors and other people who come into contact with the College.

This information is collected by:

- Personal information you provide through filling out forms, face to face meetings, interviews, emails and phone calls.
- Personal information provided by others such as former school records and medical professionals.

Using Information

The purposes for which the College uses personal information include:

Pupils and parent/guardians

- Informing through correspondence, newsletters and reports
- Administering the day to day functions of the College
- Caring for pupils' educational, social and medical wellbeing
- Discharging the College's duty of care

Job applicants, staff members and contractors

- Administering individual employment contracts
- Providing insurance cover
- Discharging the College's legal obligations

Disclosing Information

The College may disclose personal information held about an individual to:

- Another school
- Government departments
- Medical practitioners
- People providing services to the school such as counsellors
- Recipients of school publications
- Parent/guardians
- Anyone you authorise the College to disclose information to
- Anyone to whom the College is required to disclose information by law

Treating Sensitive Information

Sensitive information will be used and disclosed only for the purpose for which it was provided, unless you agree otherwise, or the use or disclosure is required by law.

Management and Security of Personal Information

The College's staff members are required to respect the confidentiality of pupils' and parent/guardians' personal information and privacy. They are required to use locked storage of paper records and password access rights to computerised records.

Access to Personal Information

Under the Commonwealth Privacy Act, an individual has the right to obtain access to any personal information held by the College about them and to advise the College of any perceived inaccuracy. To access this information, please apply to the Principal in writing.

Consent and Rights of Access to the Personal Information of Pupils

Generally, the College will refer any requests for consent and notices in relation to the personal information of a pupil to the pupil's parent/guardians. The College will treat consent given by parent/guardians as consent given on behalf of the pupil, and notice to parent/guardians as notice given to the pupil.

As noted above, parent/guardians may seek access to personal information held by the College about them or their child. However, there will be occasions when access is denied. Such occasions would include where release of the information would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of others, or where release may result in a breach of the College's duty of care to the pupil.

The College may, at its discretion, on the request of a pupil grant that pupil access to information held by the College about him/her, or allow a pupil to give or withhold consent to the use of their personal information, independently of his/her parents. This would be done only when the maturity of the pupil and/or the pupil's personal circumstances so warranted.

Complaints

The College will investigate any complaint and notify the complainant of a decision as soon as practical after it has been made.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Rationale

Alta-1 College values feedback from students, parents/carers and the wider community. Acting on constructive feedback and complaints demonstrates our commitment to provide high quality education and to contribute to the academic, personal and spiritual growth of students.

Concerns and complaints may emanate from a number of sources: parents/guardians, students, staff and members of the public. They may be directed towards the organisation as a whole, specific Alta-1 sites or particular individuals or groups of individuals. Processes, therefore, need to be in place to facilitate the resolution of such.

Principles

1. The right to lodge a complaint is acknowledged.
2. Complaints should be lodged in accordance with established procedures.
3. Complaints should be investigated and a report generated promptly.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy a *concern* is an issue which is typically resolved through informal discussion between the parties directly concerned whereas a *complaint* is a formal grievance requiring resolution through specified channels.

Matters to be dealt with by separately defined processes

1. Child Protection Policy – for matters relating to the suspected, likely or actual physical or sexual abuse of a child or young person and inappropriate conduct of workers.
2. Responding to Disclosures or Suspicions of Harm – responding to any form of harm.
3. Bullying, Discrimination or Sexual Harassment.
4. Responding to Breaches of the Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy.

Procedures

Usually concerns are resolved directly and informally between the people involved and no further action is required.

Unresolved concerns or serious grievances may lead to a complaint being lodged. Complaints need to be presented in writing either through the complainant sending a letter or email, or by the staff member receiving the complaint orally and completing a Complaint Form. If the complaint relates to a member of staff (except for matters listed above that are addressed by separate processes) the complaint is to be directed to the Principal; if about the Principal then the complaint should be directed to the Board; and if about a member of the Board then to the Board of Alta-1 Australia. The letter/form is filed and the complaint entered into the Complaints Register. A written

acknowledgement and initial response outlining how the school proposes to proceed, and by when, will be forwarded by the school to the complainant within five days of receipt.

Formal complaints will be investigated by a senior member of staff, a board member or an independent arbiter, depending on the circumstances, above. Following investigation a written response will be sent to the complainant by the date indicated in the initial acknowledgement. Successful resolution will be recorded and entered into the Complaints Register as such. The subject of the complaint will be advised in writing of the outcome within five days.

In issues not involving the Principal or a Board member, if a satisfactory resolution is not achieved at this stage the Principal will offer to refer the matter to the Alta-1 Board and record it in the Complaints Register. The Board will call for a report from the Principal and may convene a meeting with the complainant. Successful resolution will be acknowledged in writing, recorded and entered into the complaints register as such.

If still unresolved the matter may be referred to Alta-1 Australia board.

Throughout the process confidentiality will be maintained by limiting knowledge of the issue only to those who genuinely need to know. Depending on the issue, and in accordance with other Alta-1 policies (Child Protection, Managing Reportable Criminal Offences, Breaches of the Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy), third parties outside the school may need to be contacted. Information on file will remain confidential.

Note: Staff members need to act professionally in the manner in which complaints are received. Follow the procedures, but under no circumstances take sides – for example, siding with a parent against a fellow staff member. The priority must be to protect the safety and wellbeing of the students and the integrity of the program and the team.

COMPLAINTS GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT ALTA-1

Alta-1 welcomes suggestions and comments from parents/guardians and takes seriously complaints and concerns that may be raised.

A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction that needs a response.

A complaint may be made if a parent/guardian thinks that the school has:

- Done something wrong
- Failed to do something it should have done, or
- Acted unfairly, unjustly or improperly

A complaint may be made about the school as a whole, about a specific site or about an individual staff member.

It is Alta-1's intent that complaints made by parents will be treated with respect and confidentiality.

"How should I complain?"

Try to resolve any problems yourself with those directly involved if you feel comfortable to do so. In some instances you may prefer to take the matter to the Principal who will help you to work out the issue.

When you contact the school, it is usually best to speak with the person most closely concerned with the issue e.g. Teacher. Be as clear as possible about what is troubling you. You may also send an email to the person concerned if you prefer.

"I don't want to complain as such, but something is bothering me"

The school is here for you and your child and we want to hear your views and ideas. Contact a member of staff as described above.

"I am not sure whether to complain or not"

If as a parent/guardian you have concerns, you are entitled to raise them. If in doubt you should contact Alta-1 as we are here to help.

"What will happen next?"

If you raise something face-to-face or by telephone, it may be possible to resolve the matter immediately and to your satisfaction.

If you have made a complaint or suggestion in writing, we will contact you within five working days to respond to your concerns and explain how we propose to proceed.

In some circumstances, the person you contact may need to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding. You will be advised if this is the case and you will also be given a date by which time you will receive a response.

If a detailed exploration of the issue is needed, a letter or report will be sent to you as quickly as possible. This will tell you of the outcome of your complaint. It will explain the conclusion, the reasons for it, and any action taken or proposed.

“What happens about confidentiality?”

Your complaint or concern will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to those who genuinely need to know. The Alta-1 College Board may also need to be informed in some circumstances.

In circumstances involving the safety and wellbeing of a student, we may be legally obligated to refer matters to a third party.

Information relating to specific complaints will be kept confidentially on file.

Action, which needed to be taken under staff disciplinary procedures as a result of complaints, would be handled confidentially within the school.

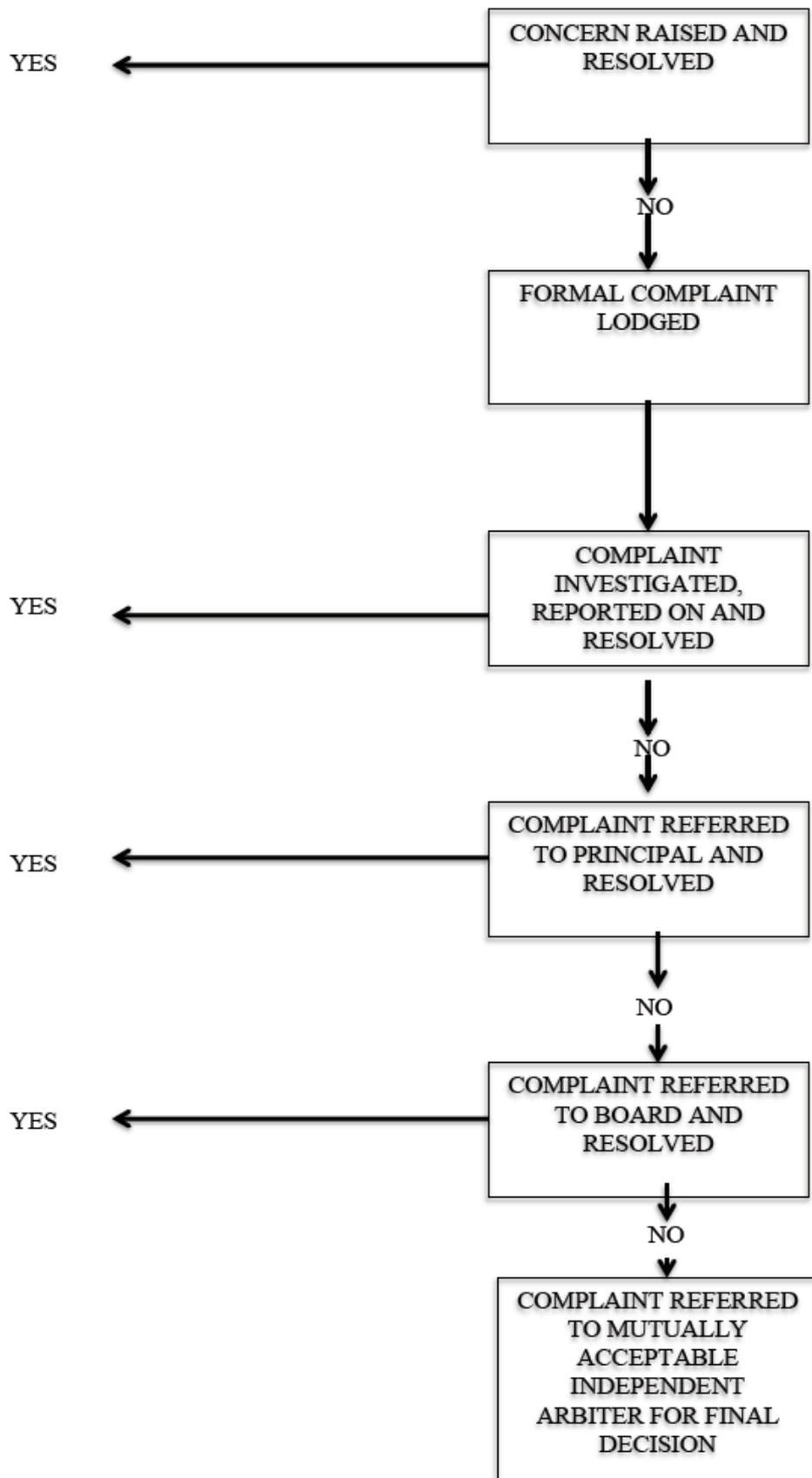
“What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?”

We hope that you will feel your concerns have been fully and fairly considered and a mutually satisfactory outcome has been agreed to.

If you are not satisfied, the Principal will offer to refer the matter to the Alta-1 College Board. Alternatively, you may wish to write directly to the Board. In this case, the Chairman will call for a full report from the Principal, and will examine matters thoroughly before responding.

If the response from the Alta-1 College Board does not bring about a resolution, the matter would be referred to the Alta-1 Australia Board. This Board will look at the issues in an impartial and confidential manner and may seek professional advice to ensure your concerns are responded to satisfactorily. Your confidentiality will be maintained throughout this process and if external advice is sought, your identifying information will not be disclosed.

COMPLAINTS FLOW CHART



GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK

If you are attending Alta-1 College and you are unhappy about something, then you have the right to complain about it. To do that you need to contact us so that we can try to put things right as soon as possible.

Here are some steps to follow if you'd like to make a complaint:

1. Talk to someone

The first step in sorting out a problem is to tell someone you know. Most of your problems can be sorted out once they have been shared.

You can talk to any staff member at Alta-1 or if you'd prefer you can speak directly to the Principal, Mr Matthew Vandeeper. He can help with your issue. His number is 0431 416 488 or email matt.v@alta-1.qld.edu.au or you can see him in person.

We will take your complaint seriously. You may contact us in any way you choose. You have a right to complain in the best way for you: by phone or face to face, text or by email. Remember that at any time you can have someone you trust to help you make the complaint.

Alta-1 expects staff at all times to conduct themselves in a way that creates an environment of respect, safety and care. If you feel a staff member is not behaving in this way, please share this with another staff member or the Principal.

Once you share your complaint with a staff member, s/he is required to talk with you about the best way to resolve the issue. The staff member will then make sure something happens to resolve the problem. That might mean talking with other staff or the Principal.

If you are worried about confidentiality talk it over with the staff member so s/he can let you know exactly who will need to know about the complaint.

If you feel the staff member has not resolved the issue to your satisfaction, you can contact the Principal.

2. Tell the Board Chairperson

If you're not happy about the way your complaint has been dealt with or if you feel you can't speak with a staff member or Principal, you have the right to tell the Alta-1 College board Chairperson. His name is Bill Fowles and you can contact him on 0421401458 or email kbfowles@bigpond.com. Bill will discuss your complaint with you and then discuss how the matter can be resolved to your satisfaction.

YOUR FEEDBACK MATTERS! IF YOU'RE NOT HAPPY, LET US KNOW.



Information for parents and carers

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION?

The Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (the national data collection) is an annual collection that counts the number of school students with disability and the level of reasonable educational adjustment they are provided with.

The national data collection will count students who have been identified as receiving an adjustment to address a disability under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (the DDA). The DDA can be accessed from the ComLaw website at www.comlaw.gov.au.

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT FOR MY CHILD?

The aim of the national data collection is to collect better information about school students with disability in Australia.

This information will help teachers, principals, education authorities and families to better support students with disability to take part in school on the same basis as students without disability.

The national data collection is an opportunity for schools to review their learning and support systems and processes to continually improve education outcomes for their students with disability.

WHY IS THIS DATA BEING COLLECTED?

All schools across Australia collect information about students with disability. But the type of information currently collected varies between each state and territory and across government, Catholic and independent school sectors.

When implementing the national data collection, every school in Australia will use the same method to collect information. Therefore, a government school in suburban Sydney will collect and report data in the same way as a Catholic school in country Victoria and an independent school in the Northern Territory.

The information provided through the national data collection will enable all Australian governments to better target support and resources to benefit students with disability. The data will help schools to better support students with disability so that they have the same opportunities for a high quality education as students without disability.

WHAT ARE SCHOOLS REQUIRED TO DO FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY?

All students are entitled to a quality learning experience at school.

Schools are required to make reasonable adjustments, where needed, to assist students with disability to access and participate in education free from discrimination and on the same basis as other students.

These responsibilities are outlined in the DDA and the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (the Standards). The Standards require educators, students, parents and others (e.g. allied health professionals) to work together so that students with disability can participate in education. The Standards can be accessed via the ComLaw website at www.comlaw.gov.au.

WHAT IS A REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT?

A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken to help a student with disability access and participate in education on the same basis as students without disability. Reasonable adjustments can be made across the whole school setting (e.g. ramps into school buildings), in the classroom (such as adapting class lessons) and at an individual student level (e.g. extra tuition for a student with learning difficulties).

WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE COLLECTED?

Every year your child's school will collect the following information for each student with a disability:

- the student's level of education (i.e. primary or secondary)
- the student's level of adjustment

The information collected by schools will be provided to all governments to inform policy and programme improvement for students with disability.

WHO WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION?

The definition of disability for the national data collection is based on the broad definition under the DDA. For the purposes of the national data collection, students with learning difficulties such as dyslexia or auditory processing disorder as well as chronic health conditions like epilepsy, diabetes or asthma, that require active monitoring by the school, may be included.

WHO WILL COLLECT INFORMATION FOR THE NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION?

Teachers and school staff will identify the number of students with disability in their school and the level of reasonable adjustment they are provided based on:

- consultation with parents and carers in the course of determining and providing reasonable adjustments
- the school team's observations and professional judgements
- any medical or other professional diagnosis
- other relevant information.

School principals are responsible for ensuring the information identified about each student is accurate.

HOW WILL MY CHILD'S PRIVACY BE PROTECTED?

Protecting the privacy and confidentiality of all students and their families is essential. Personal details such as student names or other identifying information will not be provided to local or federal education authorities.

Further information about privacy is available from www.education.gov.au/notices.

IS THE NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION COMPULSORY?

All education ministers agreed to full implementation of the national data collection from 2015. This means that all schools must now collect and report information annually on the number of students with disability in their care and the level of adjustment provided to them.

Information about the arrangements that may apply to your school in relation to this data collection is available from your child's school principal and the relevant education authority or association of independent schools.

Even if your child's information is not included in the national data collection, the school is still required to provide support to your child with education needs.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact your child's school if you have further questions about the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability and how it may involve your child.

You can also visit www.education.gov.au/nationally-consistent-collection-data-school-students-disability.

An e-learning resource about the Disability Standards for Education 2005 is freely available for the use of individuals, families and communities at <http://resource.dse.theeducationinstitute.edu.au/>.

We hope that the information contained in this handbook has been useful. Please remember that if you have any questions regarding the handbook you are welcome to speak to a member of staff who will do their best to assist you.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING TOGETHER WITH YOU
IN 2016**

