Changes to Student Protection in 2015:
Information for Parents and care-providers

2015 sees some new changes to the legislation in Queensland governing the protection of children, and consequently there have been some changes to the student protection processes in our schools.

What has not changed, is our commitment to maintaining safe school environments for all of our students, and to responding to all concerns of abuse of harm.

From 19 January 2015, teachers will be mandated to submit a report to Child Safety Services where they have 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 the child from the harm. In order to ensure consistency across our schools and to meet the safety needs of our students, we have broadened this reporting requirement to apply to all of our school staff members, and to all forms of abuse.

We will continue to report all reasonable suspicions that a student has been sexually abused, or is likely to be sexually abused, to the police.

We will respond to concerns of student self-harm by ensuring that the medical and psychological needs of students are met, and will work in partnership with the student’s family or care-provider to ensure the best possible supports are in place.

We will respond to allegations of significant harm between students through each school’s behaviour management and bullying guidelines in order to ensure both the safety of all students, and that the behaviours of students reflects the values of respect and dignity. Where the concern involves a possible criminal matter, should any parent or care-provider wish to refer a matter of harm to a student to Police, they are entitled to do so. Our schools will cooperate fully with any police investigation.

Any allegations against staff members or volunteers within our Catholic Education schools are treated seriously, with the wellbeing of the student as the utmost priority. Where the allegation is of sexual abuse, likely sexual abuse or significant harm to a student, the matter will be reported to police, and the Catholic Education Office will ensure that the appropriate action is taken from an employment perspective in all circumstances.

New services are being established in our community to support students and families – notably the new Family and Child Connect Services, and Intensive Family Support Services. We look forward to working collaboratively with these new organisations in 2015, and will promote these services through our schools.

The safety of our students is our highest priority, and we can best achieve this by working in partnership with you. Our policies and procedures are publically available on our website: www.twb.catholic.edu.au and we ask that you raise any issues, questions or ideas around student safety through the school Principal.

“student protection is everyone’s responsibility”