Student Hostel Accommodation Policy - Duty of Care for Students
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1. **Purpose**

To ensure school hostel accommodation services are compliant with the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission) and the principles of the Duty of Care for students on Departmental Education Site Procedures (Duty of Care); and to clarify that all responsibilities and policies for school and college students apply when they are residents of school hostels.

2. **Policy objective**

To ensure that school hostel accommodation services are covered by the Department of Education (DoE) policies that relate to Child Safe Standards and Duty of Care including induction material and advice to students and parents.

3. **Key information**

The Royal Commission final report provides a recommendation (Rec 13.5) that “boarding hostels for children and young people should implement the Child Safe Standards identified in the report and that State and Territory independent oversight authorities should monitor and enforce the Child Safe Standards in these institutions. These Standards are;

- **Standard 1**: Child safety is embedded in institutional leadership, governance and culture;
- **Standard 2**: Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously;
- **Standard 3**: Families and communities are informed and involved;
- **Standard 4**: Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account;
- **Standard 5**: People working with children are suitable and supported;
- **Standard 6**: Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse are child focused;
- **Standard 7**: Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training;
- **Standard 8**: Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur;
- **Standard 9**: Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved;
- **Standard 10**: Policies and procedures document how the institution is child safe.

DoE have a number of policies that cover schools and college duty of care for student’s obligations. These policies cover students in hostel accommodation.

These policies are listed in section 6 of this policy.

The information contained within this policy will be given to all students and the students’ parents as part of the process undertaken when the students enrol in a hostel at the start of the school year.

4. **Requirements**

This policy does not cover students in hostels who attend non-government schools, TasTafe or the University of Tasmania.

The Deputy Secretary - Learning will determine the designated principal as referred to in section 5 of this policy.

5. **Roles and responsibilities**

It is essential that a point of contact is established for all DoE students who reside in hostel accommodation within the school system. Parents and students will be advised of the point of contact.

The point of contact for each cohort of DoE students in an individual hostel will be a designated principal (or delegate of that principal).
This point of contact will also be the point of contact for the hostel supervisors in the event that the first point of contact for a complaint dealing with potential duty of care issues (issue) is made to the hostel supervisor by the student or the student’s parent.

The responsibility of the principal or delegate is limited to instances that are covered by the Child Safe Standards and does not include issues with the hostels themselves (maintenance, food standards etc) or requests by students or their parents to undertake activities outside hostels.

Facilities Services will continue to be responsible for matters that relate to infrastructure issues.

Once the principal or delegate establishes that the issue raised needs to be actioned they will involve the necessary services from DoE such as counselling, legal services or other ancillary services to determine the course of action to be undertaken. The principle or delegate may include the principal from the students host school or college in determining the course of action so that the resources from the host school that would deal with the matter had it occurred at that school can be accessed to deal with the issue.

Should an issue be raised by an international student the contact officer will also inform the Manager of Government Education and Training International (GETI) which is located within the Department. GETI exercises the parental responsibility for all international students under the age of 18 within the government education system.

All issues raised with the principal or delegate MUST be reported to the Director Operations in their region. The Director Operations are to record all issues raised with the principal or delegate.

All records associated with an issue MUST be dealt with in accordance with existing DoE procedures.

If the issue involves alleged sexual abuse by adults it MUST be dealt with in accordance with the process that has been established by the DoE with respect to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

6. Associated Documents and Materials

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse—Tasmanian Action Plan

Education Act 2016 - Principles

Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy

Respectful Schools Respectful Behaviour

Respectful Schools and Workplaces Framework

National Safe Schools Framework

Duty of Care for Students on Departmental Educational Sites Procedures

Conduct and Behaviour Standards Conduct in the workplace

Respectful Relationships Education—Parents and Community

Diversity in Tasmanian Government Schools

Good Teaching Inclusive Teaching for Students with Disability

Tasmania’s Aboriginal Education Framework

Mandatory Reporting Procedures

Cyber Safety Resources made available to Parents and Carers online

Grievances Guidelines for Parents and the Community
7. Flowchart

- Deputy Secretary Learning nominates a responsible Principal or delegate for each Hostel site.

- Provision of contact information to each DoE student in hostels of their relevant principal as part of their induction or upon enrolling in the hostel.

- Contact from either the student or the hostel supervisor when an issue arises to the principal or delegate.

- Principal or delegate devises appropriate action plan to deal with issue using whatever departmental resources required e.g. counselling services, application of policy procedures such as bullying and harassment policy etc in conjunction with the student and the student’s home school principal and the hostel supervisor if appropriate. If the student is an international student the Manager of Government Education and Training International needs to be informed.

- These actions are the same that would be used if the incident or issue arose during the normal school day on a campus.

- Regular meetings with the student to ensure issue is being resolved in line with DoE duty of care responsibilities.

- All issues raised by students are to be notified to the relevant Director Operations.

- The Director Operations to keep a record of all issues raised.

- Note that all allegations involving sexual abuse by an adult must be dealt with in accordance with the departmental process that has been instituted as a result of the adoption of the Royal Commission recommendations.
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