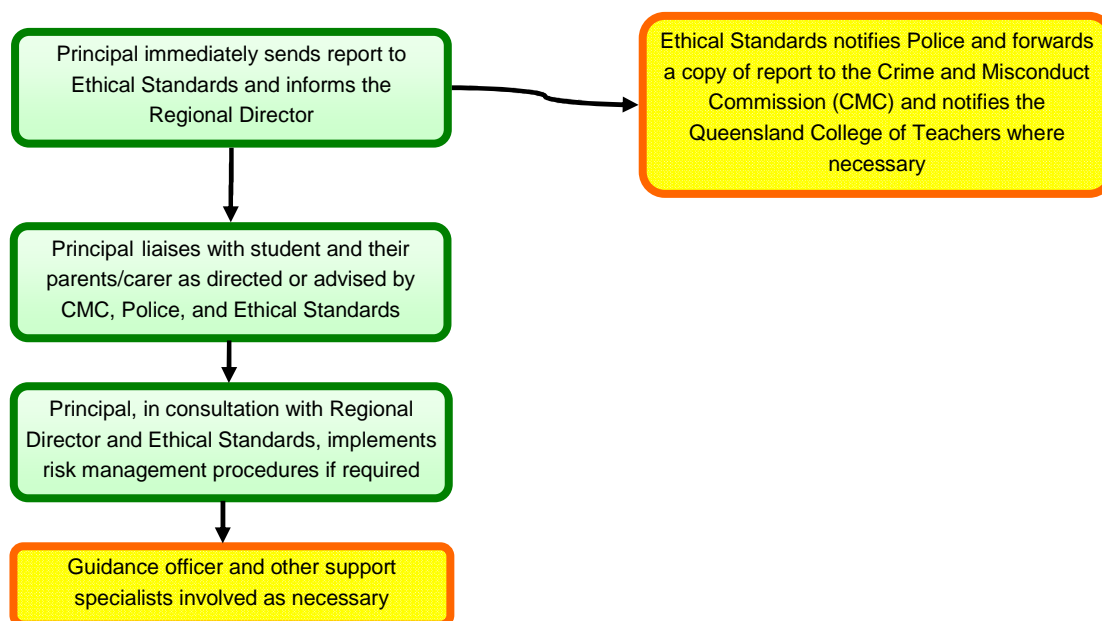United in our pursuit of excellence

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What happens when…
a student is sexually abused by a school employee?

Education Queensland is committed to providing safe, supportive and disciplined learning environments for all students. All staff complete student protection training and are required to report suspicions of harm or risk of harm to the principal (or the Regional Director where the suspicion relates to the principal).

Sexual abuse is a criminal offence. It refers to any sexual dealing with a student under 16 (or under 18 where the dealing involves sodomy) and in state schools includes any employee involvement with a student aged under the age of 18 years in sexual activity, consensual or otherwise. Such activity can include among other things, exhibitionism, exposing students to pornographic images or text, fondling, oral sex and intercourse.

When a principal (or Regional Director) becomes aware that a student has been sexually abused by a school employee, the principal (or Regional Director) takes the following actions:

Principal immediately sends report to Ethical Standards and informs the Regional Director

Ethical Standards notifies Police and forwards a copy of report to the Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) and notifies the Queensland College of Teachers where necessary

Principal liaises with student and their parents/carer as directed or advised by CMC, Police, and Ethical Standards

Principal, in consultation with Regional Director and Ethical Standards, implements risk management procedures if required

Guidance officer and other support specialists involved as necessary

A parent or community member who suspects that a student may have been sexually abused by a school employee can share their concerns with the principal (or Regional Director). Alternatively, they can make a report directly to the Queensland Police.

Further details in relation to incidents of suspected harm or risk of harm to a student involving an employee of Education Queensland can be found at http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/students/smspr042/index.html

There are processes and support structures in place to enable students and parents/carers to work through any issues they may have with the implementation of Education Queensland policies and procedures in schools.

A Making a complaint fact sheet is available on the department's website at
http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/about/pdfs/making_a_complaint.pdf

Queensland Government