



Atlantis Beach Baptist College

Child Abduction Policy

Title of Policy/Procedure	Child Abduction Policy
Endorsed by	Principal
Reviewed	October 2022
Next review date	October 2025
To whom issued	College staff and community

In response to attempted abductions of children or suspicious adults approaching students near or on school sites the following response plan has been adopted.

Other college policies linked to this response plan:

- Child Protection Policy
- Emergency and Critical Incidents Management Plan

Process

This plan is initiated by a child reporting an incident to his or her teacher or parent. The following would be the typical flow of information:

Child makes a report. Reports may be of an attempted abduction, attempted assault or actual assault, stalking behaviour (with or without a camera), or behaviour of a sexual nature such as an adult exposing themselves to the child/children.

Teacher - The teacher who receives the report should immediately inform the Principal, passing on all information reported by the child/children. The information would include (i) what actually happened, and (ii) descriptions of any persons involved. Teachers who believe that a matter is sexual in nature may also need to submit a formal Mandatory Report. Teachers are requested to not speak with the Media or with any people not directly associated with the issue.

Principal - the Principal should as soon as is practicable, call the Police (131 444) to lodge a formal report. The Principal would then contact the parents if they have not already been informed. The Chair of the Board will also be advised of the situation.

To assist and support prevention of potential occurrences in others schools, the incident should be reported to Niki Preston the Personal Assistant to the Executive Director of AISWA, her email is npreston@ais.wa.edu.au. A Psychologist from the Non-Government Schools Psychology Service (NGSPS) will be available to assist the child/children and families concerned. The Principal may also need to advise the School Community of the incident by letter – sample attached.

AISWA - AISWA will contact the Principals of other AISWA schools in the area, the Catholic Education Office and the regional office of the Department of Education. The Department of Education will advise Police Media. AISWA will assist with any calls to the Association by the Media or will, if requested, provide assistance to the School.

Media

The college will not contact the media without the approval of the Board and the support of AISWA.

Contacting Parents

A letter will be sent to all children's homes in the event of the attempted or successful abduction of a child by email and hard copy (with students at end of day) based on the format recommended by WA Police (see below) containing protective behaviours messages. Whilst not wanting to raise unnecessary alarm, the college will be sensitive to the effect this information may have on students and parents in the college. As such the letter will contain only known facts i.e. a child reporting that they were approached by a stranger does not necessarily mean there was an attempted abduction. This interpretation may be incorrect and cause unnecessary alarm and fear amongst the community.

The decision to send a letter, following an attempted abduction event, is considered to be good practice by WAPOL as it keeps parents and caregivers informed, however, it is the college's decision as to whether or not their community requires notice of an event. The Principal may not wish to send a letter home if recent events have been such that the letter would serve no real benefit and perhaps cause unnecessary fear in the school community. For example, if other similar letters have been sent home in the recent past a second letter may not only cause unnecessary fear but also the reporting by students of all "strangers" and slowly moving vehicles as attempted abductions (even vehicles travelling at the required 40km/h near a school).

The Principal will liaise with the investigating Police, once they have spoken to the child/children, before sending a letter to the school community.

Record Keeping

Along with all notes taken by the teacher and Principal, the school will record the name/s, contact numbers and incident report number given when the Police attend.

Contacts

Fire / Police / Ambulance	000
Instructions	Atlantis Beach Baptist College Breakwater Drive Two Rocks
Local Police Station	Yanchep Police Station 110 Yanchep Beach Road, Yanchep WA 6035 (08) 9562 9300

College Board: To be contact only by Principal or person delegated by Principal

Counselling and Support:

Non-Government Psychology Service	9251 1805
AISWA	9441 1600
DES	9441 1900

SAMPLE LETTER

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The safety and security of all students at Atlantis Beach Baptist College is of the utmost importance to me and therefore I endeavour to keep parents informed of anything that may impact on your child's safety.

Key phrases re the incident should be placed here:

- *"Today, or This morning, whilst walking to school"*
- *"a student has reported to have been followed/approached/spoken to"*
- *"a person was reported to (explain actions)" or "alleged to have occurred"- please use terms such as alleged rather than definitive terms.*
- *"Police are investigating this report"- this last line is crucial.*

In light of this incident, we urge all students to take care when travelling to and from school, and to report anything suspicious to parents, the School and the Police- call 131 444 to report an incident to the Police (only use 000 in an emergency) or 1800 333 000 to reach Crime Stoppers.

Here are some simple behaviours to help your child stay safe. Please discuss these with your child and ask your child to:

- *Always travel in company.*
- *Walk on the right hand side of the road so that he or she always faces oncoming traffic.*
- *Wherever possible, leave space between themselves and the roadway.*
- *Stay in areas that are well lit.*
- *Stay in view- avoid going into areas that are hidden from view (such as parkland bush or behind shopping centres) and plan trips to avoid such locations.*
- *Be alert- earphones and headphones can reduce their awareness considerably.*
- *If your child carries a mobile telephone, ensure that it is turned on and ready to dial an emergency number.*
- *If a passing vehicle stops nearby, never get too close.*
- *Do not hesitate to run from a situation in which they feel at risk.*
- *Provide the same advice to younger siblings and watch out for them wherever possible.*
- *Always report suspicious behaviour to parents, the School and the Police, noting number plates of cars/vehicles and or clothing and distinguishing features of individuals.*

If you have any queries regarding this matter, do not hesitate to contact the college or discuss your concerns with your child's Head of Year.

Yours faithfully

Principal

RESPONSE FLOW CHART

