

Child Protection Policy

This policy outlines the board's commitment to child protection and recognises the important role and responsibility of all our staff in the protection of children. It includes the board's expectations when child abuse is reported or suspected by us.

All staff members (including contractors and volunteers) are expected to be familiar with this policy, its associated procedures and protocols and abide by them.

The board of trustees has an obligation to ensure the wellbeing of children in our care so they thrive, belong and achieve. We are committed to the prevention of child abuse and neglect and to the protection of all children. The safety and wellbeing of the child is our top priority. Advice will be sought through appropriate agencies in all cases of suspected or alleged abuse.

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In line with Section 15 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, any person in our school/kura who believes that any child or young person has been or is likely to be harmed (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived must follow school procedures and may also report the matter to a social worker or the local Police.

Although ultimate accountability sits with the board, the board delegates responsibility to the principal to ensure that all child safety procedures are implemented and available to all staff, contractors, volunteers and parents.

Therefore, the principal must:

- Develop appropriate procedures to meet child safety requirements as required and appropriate to the school
- Review policy and procedure with staff on an annual basis.
- Comply with relevant legislative requirements and responsibilities
- Make this policy available on the school's internet site or available on request
- Ensure that every contract, or funding arrangement, that the school enters into requires the adoption of child protection policies where required
- Ensure the interests and protection of the child are paramount in all circumstances
- Recognise the rights of family/whanau to participate in the decision-making about their children
- Ensure that all staff are able to identify the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect, deal with disclosures by children and allegations against staff members and are able to take appropriate action in response
- Support all staff to work in accordance with this policy, to work with partner agencies and organisations to ensure child protection policies are understood and implemented
- Promote a culture where staff feel confident they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal
- Consult, discuss and share relevant information, in line with our commitment to confidentiality and information sharing protocols, in a timely way regarding any concerns about an individual child with the board or designated person
- Seek advice as necessary from NZSTA advisors on employment matters and other relevant agencies where child safety issues arise
- Make available professional development, resources and/or advice to ensure all staff can carry out their roles in terms of this policy



- Ensure that this policy forms part of the initial staff induction programme for each staff member
- Ensure that relevant safety checking of all core and non-core personal as well as parent helpers is completed as required.

Guidelines

It is expected that boards will need to facilitate training for all staff to help them to identify suspected abuser and/or neglect and to be able to respond appropriately. It is recommended that training needs be identified and planned regularly in consultation with staff.

To assist with the implementation of a training policy, individual boards and/or principals should liaise with Oranga Tamariki on 0508 FAMILY, or 0508 ED ASSIST or New Zealand Police.

Further support can be provided by:

- guidance counselors
- visiting teachers
- education psychologists attached to Special Educational Services (SES)
- personnel who can provide further assistance to students.

Schools are able to provide preventative education in their delivery of the Health and Physical Education national curriculum statement. Students should have access to information about child abuse and appropriate responses to it through the relevant parts of this curriculum.

A useful way of managing suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect is for a staff member to be nominated as a safety advocate for the child or young person.

The vital role of cultural groups and local support agencies in supporting the draft policy should be recognized by schools/principals in their ongoing communication and liaison with their wider community. Similarly, the role of relevant statutory agencies should be recognized in the consultative process.

Decisions about informing parents or caregivers should be made after consultation between the school and the statutory child protection service called in by them.

The Board of Trustees will take all steps necessary to employ safe staff by:

- Employing registered teachers
- Completing referees checks,
- Police vetting employees, refer Appointment Policy.
- Police vetting EOTC volunteers for overnight stays or when required.
- Police vetting of contractors

BoT Chairperson

Signed.....

Date.....

