



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY - NAG 5

Rationale

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

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

The School Board has an obligation to ensure the well-being 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.

Guidelines

In line with the [Vulnerable Children Act 2014](#), any person in our school 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 the appropriate government agency and/or the Police.

Although ultimate accountability sits with the School Board, the School 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:

1. Develop appropriate procedures to meet child safety requirements as required and appropriate to the school
2. Comply with relevant legislative requirements and responsibilities
3. Make this policy available on the school's internet site or available on request
4. Ensure that every contract, or funding arrangement, that the school enters into requires the adoption of child protection policies where required
5. Ensure the interests and protection of the child are paramount in all circumstances
6. Recognise the rights of family/whanau to participate in the decision-making about their children
7. Ensure that all staff are aware of 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
8. 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
9. Promote a culture where staff feel confident they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal
10. 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 School Board or designated person
11. Seek advice as necessary from NZSTA advisors on employment matters and other relevant agencies where child safety issues arise
12. Make available professional development, resources and/or advice to ensure all staff can carry out their roles in terms of this policy
13. Ensure that this policy forms part of the initial staff and worker induction programme
14. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Procedure for Disclosure of Child Abuse

Procedure for Disclosure or Suspicion of Child Abuse and/or Neglect

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure the physical and emotional safety of children when disclosing child abuse. Child abuse is a situation in which a child is growing up under conditions that threaten his/her emotional and physical survival.

Should a staff member be concerned or suspect that a child in their care is experiencing child abuse and/or neglect (CAN), that teacher should have an initial

discussion with either a Team Leader or a member of the SLT. The SLT will ask for more details on the basis of the concern, and this will progress to further decision-making being made. Should the concern need further investigation, follow the relevant procedures below.

The Principal, staff and administrators want to recognise and eliminate any forms of abuse to the children of our school by following the guidelines to handle abuse disclosures. This procedure aims to ensure adults within the school have knowledge of different forms of abuse and neglect and know the appropriate responses.

Procedures

1. Listen to the child and reassure them, but do not make any promises or commitments.
2. Keep in mind the following:
 - Stay calm.
 - Remember that the safety and well-being of the child come before the interests of any other person.
 - Listen to the child and accept what the child says.
3. Look at the child directly, but do not appear shocked, remain calm.
4. Don't seek help while the child is talking to you.
5. Reassure them that they did the right thing by telling someone.
6. Assure them that it is not their fault and you will do your best to help.
7. Let them know that you need to tell someone else.
8. Let them know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
9. Be aware that the child may have been threatened.
10. Write down what the child says in their own words – record what you have seen and heard. Do not interview them or ask them leading questions.
11. The child's safety should always be the paramount consideration in the notification process.
12. No decisions or actions in respect of suspected or actual child abuse or neglect are to be made by any staff member in isolation unless there are concerns for the immediate safety of the child.
13. Consultation is essential to ensure the safety of the child and the staff member. Staff must discuss their concerns with the Principal or nominated person/advocate. Where applicable, follow the School Board's complaint policy.
14. Decisions about informing parents or caregivers should be made after consultation between the Principal or School Board and Oranga Tamariki, Ministry for Children.
15. Make a referral to Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children. For an urgent referral, call the Contact Centre 0508 EDASSIST (0508 332 774), or the Police.

16. After making the referral, get support for yourself from appropriate persons, if needed.

Contacts

- [Oranga Tamariki](#) 0508 EDASSIST (0508 332 774)
- Te Puaruruhau - Starship Child Protection Team 021 492 365

Related documentation and information

- Further information including frequently asked questions (FAQ's) are available on the NZSTA website www.nzsta.org.nz
- Ministry of Education website www.education.govt.nz
- [Vulnerable Children Act 2014](#)
- Further information and sample child protection templates are available in the Children's Action Plan guideline Safer Organisations, Safer Children: <http://www.childrensactionplan.govt.nz/assets/CAP-Uploads/childrens-workforce/Safer-Organisations-safer-children.pdf>
- Children, Young Person and their Families Act 1989
- Children, Young Person and their Families Amendment Act 2008
- Children, Young Person and their Families Amendment Act (No2) 2011
- Care of Children Act 2004
- Education Act 1989
- MOE CYF Protocol for reporting actual or suspected child abuse
 - <https://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/School/Traumatic-incidents-and-emergencies/MoE-STA-CYFProtocolForReportingActualOrSuspectedChildAbuseNov09Amendment-3-2015.pdf>
- MOE Child Protection Policy
 - <https://www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/publications/child-protection-policy/>

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