



Kindergarten

Dunedin Rudolf Steiner

Learning with head, heart and hands

Child Protection Procedures:

The Reporting of Neglect, Abuse or Inappropriate Behaviour (ref the Children's Act 2014)

1. Allegations, disclosures and suspicions of neglect, abuse or inappropriate behaviour will be taken seriously and responded to promptly.
2. All relevant observations and communications clearly documented and checked and signed by the person who has expressed the concern.
3. Refer to Appendix A: *Safe Handling*, from *Let's Stop Child Abuse Together* – Oranga Tamariki and to the Protocol for reporting of suspected or actual child abuse agreed between the Ministry of Education, the New Zealand School Trustees Association and Oranga Tamariki (as attached).
4. Suspected abuse should usually be reported by the Kindergarten Head Teacher to the appropriate outside agency. The Ministry of Education must also be notified at this time. However, any person, in good faith, may report suspected abuse to an outside agency
5. Where a teacher suspects abuse or inappropriate behaviour (including neglect) they will discuss their concerns in the first instance with the Kindergarten Head Teacher.
6. In the case of a report from a third party to the kindergarten, the first course of action will be to direct that party to a helping agency without becoming involved. The kindergarten may however, become involved subsequently.
7. In the case of a child disclosing neglect, abuse or inappropriate behaviour, the information will be passed promptly to the Kindergarten Head Teacher who will refer the issue directly to the most appropriate agency and act on the advice of that agency.
8. If an allegation is made against an employee of the Trust, the Chair of the Proprietors Trust will be informed promptly and involved in any follow-up action in consultation with the New Zealand Police and the Oranga Tamariki. The Management Team and Trust Chair have a dual responsibility in respect of both the child or young person and the employee in such an instance. They will ensure the child is not exposed to unnecessary risk as well as uphold the Trust's role as employer through actions that are consistent with relevant employment contracts.
9. Parents will be informed of this report to the kindergarten and of the referral except where the child's welfare is likely to be threatened by this. The agency contacted may contact parents. The decision of when and who contacts the child's parents will be made in consultation with the outside agency.

10. All personnel involved with an instance of child abuse will refer to the Protocol of the Ministry of Education, the New Zealand School Trustees Association and Oranga Tamariki as attached.
11. In a case where it is a child's behavior that has prompted the concern the Kindergarten will follow its Behaviour Management Procedure, which includes individual observations and an individual supervision plan if necessary.
12. To protect children from abuse or inappropriate behaviour, and to protect staff members from false allegations, a staff member or other adult should not be with a child alone while not in the sight of others
13. When an adult touches a child it has to be in manner that is appropriate and that respects human dignity.
14. If we suspect that a person is on the premises and under the influence of alcohol or drugs they are asked to leave, and children are protected until the person has left. (refer to our policy on Alcohol, Smoking, vaping and drugs)
15. No harmful material will be kept on the premises (including magazines, newspapers, access to digital media, radio or anything that could expose children to harmful material, for example of a pornographic or violent nature)

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

16. The Privacy Act 1993 and the Children's and Young People's Wellbeing Act 1989 (Oranga Tamariki Act 1989) allow information to be shared to keep children safe when abuse or suspected abuse is reported or investigated.
17. Generally, advice should be sought from Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police before information about an allegation that may identify an individual is shared with anyone, other than the appropriate supervisor/manager, designated person for child protection, Regional Managers, and/or Director of Education.
18. Under sections 15 and 16 of the Oranga Tamariki Act, any person who believes that a child has been, or is likely to be, harmed physically, emotionally or sexually, or ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived may report the matter to Oranga Tamariki or the Police and, provided the report is made in good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against **them**.

Identifying possible abuse or neglect

We understand that no situation is the same, and it is important that employees consider all available information about the child and their environment before reaching a conclusion. It is important therefore that all relevant factors are taken into account such as a divorce of parents, a new step parent and/or siblings, accidental injury, illness etc. It is not important to specifically identify the type of abuse, however it is important to notice when something is wrong and act upon this in the best interests and well-being of the child (always taking into consideration the risk of harm for the child).

Employees must take into consideration the "blurring of lines" when working with families. Employees must look for patterns occurring, or several signs that might suggest a cause for concern. For this reason, it is

important that the employee or team consult and request advice from the OTS. Employees should also be aware of the link between Intimate Partner Abuse and physical abuse of children.

Signs of possible abuse:

- Physical Signs (e.g. unexplained injuries, burns, fractures, unusual or excessive itching, genital injuries and odours).
 - Developmental delays (e.g. child is small for their age, cognitive delays, social skill concerns, poor speech).
 - Emotional abuse/neglect (e.g. sleep problems, low self-esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness/loneliness and evidence of self-harm).
 - Behavioural concerns(e.g. age inappropriate sexual interest or play, fear of a certain person or place, withdrawn, helplessness, aggression).
 - Disclosure(e.g. child talking about things that indicate abuse)
- Signs of possible neglect:
- Physical Signs(e.g. looking rough, dirty and uncared for, persistent skin disorders from lack of hygiene, without appropriate clothing for weather conditions, underweight/overweight, small for their age).
 - Emotional (e.g. low self-esteem, sad or aggressive, inability to cope in social situations).
 - Behavioural concerns (e.g. lack of attachment to parents, demanding of affection or attention, takes food, is always hungry or asking for food, poor self-help skills).
 - Medical concerns (e.g. persistent nappy rash or skin disorders that are left untreated, untreated asthma, general poor health of child with no medical help sought).
 - Supervision (e.g. child left in the care of another child, child home alone, parent not picking child up on time, parent with no form of contact for emergency).
 - Disclosures(e.g. child talks about situations at home or while in the care of others that indicate neglect).

19. Please also refer to the following policies and Procedures – Lockdown; Alcohol, Smoking, vaping and drugs)

Contact numbers

Oranga Tamariki	0508 326 459
Dunedin Police	471 4800
National Police	04 474 9499 – or if the Child is in immediate danger call 111
Ministry of Education	471 5200

Print Name Julie Macleod Position: Head Teacher

Signed: J Macleod

Dated: 8 / 8 / 2022 Review Date: 8 / 8 / 2025