



School

**Dunedin Rudolf Steiner**

Learning with head, heart and hands

## **Child Protection Procedures:**

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

1. Allegations, disclosures and suspicions of 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. Any person, in good faith, may directly report suspected abuse to an outside agency.
5. Suspected abuse should usually be reported by the Principal to the appropriate outside agency.
6. Where a teacher suspects abuse or inappropriate behaviour (including neglect) they will discuss their concerns in the first instance with the Principal.
7. In the case of a report from a third party to the school, the first course of action will be to direct that party to a helping agency without becoming involved. The school may however, become involved subsequently.
8. In the case of a child disclosing abuse or inappropriate behaviour, the information will be passed promptly to the Principal who will refer the issue directly to the most appropriate agency and act on the advice of that agency. No promise of confidentiality can be made to the child.
9. If an allegation is made against an employee of the school, the Board's Presiding member will be informed promptly and involved in any follow-up action in consultation with the New Zealand Police and Oranga Tamariki. The Principal and Presiding Member 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 Board's role as employer through actions that are consistent with relevant employment contracts.
10. Parents will be informed of the incident and the referral except where the child's welfare is likely to be threatened by this action. The agency contacted may take responsibility for informing parents. The

decision of when and who contacts the child's parents will be made in consultation with the outside agency.

11. 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.

### **Child Protection**

1. 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
2. When an adult touches a child it has to be in manner that is appropriate and that respects human dignity
3. Safety checking of staff and others who may be alone with children is carried out in line with the Children's Act 2014.

See appendices below for more information  
Appendix A Rules of Safe Handling  
Appendix B Flowchart of reporting process  
Appendix C Definition of Terms

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_      Review Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix A**

### ***Rules of safe handling***

- Don't panic.
- Listen to the child.
- Remember that the safety and well-being of the child come before the interests of any other person.
- Write down what the child says.
- Reassure them that they did the right thing.
- Tell them that they will get help.
- Tell your manager or supervisor as soon as possible.
- Refer to Child, Youth and Family or the Police.
- After making the referral to Oranga Tamariki or the Police, look after yourself. Discuss the matter with your manager, supervisor or relevant person.

### ***Guiding principles***

- *Always give priority to the safety and well-being of the child or young person*
- *Report early*
- *Do not interview*
- *Call Oranga Tamariki or the Police*

Abuse and neglect are signals that intervention is necessary. Ignoring the signals or failing to intervene will usually result in ongoing or further harm to the child or young person. Some children and young people die from physical abuse and neglect. Some are permanently disabled or disfigured. Children and young people may suffer long-lasting emotional and/or psychological harm as a result of any form of abuse and neglect.

**The severity of a sign does not necessarily equate with the severity of the abuse.** Severe, potentially fatal injuries are not always visible. Severe emotional and/or psychological impacts of abuse may appear only in the longer term. It is essential to see and, if age-appropriate, talk to the child or young person. Be aware of explanations that do not match the signs. Those you speak to will not necessarily be truthful with you.

**It is essential to seek competent specialist advice, either medical, psychological or cultural.** If a situation appears to justify removing a child or young person to safety, it also justifies urgent specialist assessment. Collective discussion about emergency action is preferable to individual response.

**Neglect is as potentially fatal as physical abuse.** It may also be a precursor to, or go along with, other forms of abuse. It must be treated seriously.

**Child abuse and neglect are not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture.** Keep an open mind. All signs must be considered in the wider situational context of the child or young person and their family or whanau. Be sure you seek sound cultural advice. Culture is no excuse for abuse and neglect. The best people to challenge culturally unsound excuses for abuse are respected and authoritative members of that particular culture who have knowledge and skills in child protection.

**A child's or young person's behaviour is no excuse for abuse and neglect.** Children or young people may be described as difficult or hyperactive. However, abusive behaviour is the responsibility of the adult perpetrator regardless of the behaviour of the child or young person.

**A parent or caregiver's stress or deprivation is no excuse for abuse and neglect.** Such explanations may help to explain the context in which abuse and neglect occurred. However, abusive behaviour is the responsibility of the adult perpetrator. Beware of blaming, justification and rationalisation as excuses for abuse and neglect. Minimising is also a common dynamic.

**The aim of child protective services is to promote positive and enduring change in the lives of children, young people and their families.** All action taken with respect to children and young people must reflect the principles and objectives of the Children's Act 2014. Priority must be given to the safety and well-being of the child or young person.

## Appendix B – Reporting process

Child abuse is either suspected or disclosed.  
Ensure the young person is safe from immediate harm.

- Consult immediately with the principal or nominated person in charge, or other staff member if the allegation concerns the Principal.
- Physical/ behavioural observations and anything said by the child should be carefully documented (include date, time and who was present).
- The Principal, nominated person in charge, or person that received the information should call Oranga Tamariki 0508 326 456 or the local police.
- Follow recommendations of Oranga Tamariki or police.
- If advised to do so make a referral to Oranga Tamariki or the police.
- The Board's presiding member should be informed.

Alleged abuse by Board employee, including Principal

Alleged abuse by non- staff.  
The Principal or nominated person should:-

- Follow advice of Oranga Tamriki/ police
- Physical / behavioural observations and anything said by the child should be documented (include date, time, who was present)
- Inform Board presiding member
- Avoid further risks to child
- If there is media or community interest seek support from Ministry of Education Traumatic Incident coordinator.

- Follow advice of Oranga Tamriki/ police
- Advise the Board through the Presiding member
- If there is media or community interest seek support from Ministry of Education Traumatic Incident coordinator

### Process for employee investigation

- Initiate an initial employee investigation
- Maintain close liaison with police and avoid any action that may compromise an investigation
- Immediately seek advice from NZSTA or other approved advisor and inform insurer.
- It is important that no one person is responsible for dealing with both the reporting issues and the employment issues as there is potential for there to be tension between the two.
- Notify the employee of the allegation and advise of the potential consequences.
- Advise the employee of the right to seek support from union or other representatives
- The board need to determine whether they will defer their process while the police do the preliminary investigation or whether they will proceed. Criminal investigations are separate from this serious misconduct investigation that the employer will follow.
- Ensure records are kept of any comments by the student, complaints and/ or allegations, and follow up action taken.

**Deciding when and who will inform the parent(s) and / or caregiver(s) will be determined by Oranga Tamariki and Police in consultation with the school**

# Appendix C Definitions of Abuse

Type of abuse	Definition	Examples
<b>Physical abuse</b>	<p>Any acts that may result in the physical harm of a child or young person.</p> <p>Physical abuse covers harm that is deliberate, as well as unintentional harm that results from a deliberate action towards a child.</p>	<p>Physical abuse can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bruising, cutting, hitting, beating, biting, burning, strangling, suffocating, drowning, and poisoning.</li><li>• Physical abuse may also include a parent/caregiver exaggerating or deliberately causing symptoms of illness in a child, making a child think they are ill.</li></ul>
<b>Sexual abuse</b>	<p>Any acts that involve forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening.</p> <p>Sexual abuse may be categorised as <b>contact</b> and <b>non-contact abuse</b>:</p> <p>Contact abuse is defined as activity involving physical contact (e.g. unwanted touching).</p> <p>Non-contact abuse does not involve physical activity (e.g. exhibitionism, verbal harassment).</p>	<p>Sexual abuse can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Contact abuse:</b> Touching breasts, genital/anal fondling, masturbation, oral sex, penetrative or non-penetrative contact with the anus or genitals, encouraging the child to perform such acts on the perpetrator or another, involvement of the child in activities for the purposes of pornography or prostitution.</li><li>• <b>Non-contact abuse:</b> Exhibitionism, voyeurism, exposure to pornographic or sexual imagery, inappropriate photography, or depictions of sexual or suggestive behaviours or comments.</li></ul> <p>A precursor of sexual abuse may be grooming, which covers actions deliberately undertaken by an adult, adolescent, or child to befriend and influence a child (and in some circumstances members of the child's family) with the intention of achieving the criminal objective of sexual activity with children.</p> <p>Grooming behaviours can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sharing secrets with a child.</li><li>• Engaging inappropriately with a child on social media.</li><li>• Non-sexual touching, e.g. tickling, hugging, or rough play.</li><li>• Allowing the child to break rules.</li><li>• Spending time with the child away from protective adults.</li><li>• Favouritism through giving gifts or money.</li></ul>

**Emotional abuse** Any act or omission that results in adverse or impaired social, psychological, intellectual and/or emotional functioning/development. Emotional abuse may also be described as **psychological abuse**.

Emotional abuse can include:

- Patterns of isolation, degradation, constant criticism, or negative comparison to others. Isolating, corrupting, exploiting, or terrorising a child.
- Being threatened with harm, called derogatory names, being humiliated, witnessing others being abused (including pets or other animals).
- Exposure to **family violence** or **intimate partner violence**.

<b>Type of abuse Neglect</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Examples</b>
	Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, leading to adverse or impaired physical or emotional functioning/development. Neglect is the most common form of abuse.	Neglect can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical (not providing the necessities of life, like a warm house, food, and clothing).</li> <li>• Emotional (not providing comfort, attention, and love).</li> <li>• Neglectful supervision (leaving children without someone safe looking after them).</li> <li>• Medical neglect (not taking care of health needs).</li> <li>• Educational neglect (allowing chronic truancy, failure to enrol in education, or inattention to educational needs).</li> </ul>

<b>Family violence</b>	Family violence is abuse against any person whom that person is, or has been, in a domestic relationship with (i.e. someone who is part of the same household). Family violence covers a wide range of controlling behaviours, commonly of a physical, sexual and/or psychological nature. Family violence typically involves fear, intimidation, or emotional deprivation.	Family violence can occur within a variety of close interpersonal relationships, such as between partners, parents and children, siblings, and in other relationships where significant others are not part of the physical household but are part of the family and/or are fulfilling the function of family. It can include child against adult, adult against child, adult against adult, and violence by someone against their other partner (see below). Common forms of family violence include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spouse/Partner abuse (violence among adult partners).</li> <li>• Child abuse/neglect (abuse/neglect of a child by an adult).</li> <li>• Elder abuse/neglect (abuse/neglect of older people aged approximately 65 years and over, by a person with whom they have a relationship of trust).</li> <li>• Parental abuse (violence by a child against their parent)</li> </ul>
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- Sibling abuse (violence among siblings).

### **Intimate partner violence**

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a type of **family violence**. IPV refers to any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological, or sexual harm to those in the relationship.

IPV includes physical violence, sexual violence, psychological/emotional abuse, economic abuse, intimidation, harassment, damage to property, and threats of physical or sexual abuse towards an intimate partner.

IPV is particularly harmful for children as the parent/carer may be diminished in their ability to meet their child's needs. IPV is strongly linked to serious neglect and other direct abuse towards children, such as physical and sexual abuse.