



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Criteria:

There is a written child protection policy that meets the requirements of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014. The policy contains provisions for the identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect, and information about how the service will keep children safe from abuse and neglect, and how it will respond to suspected child abuse and neglect.

The policy must be reviewed every three years.

Documentation required:

1. *A written child protection policy that contains:
 - a) provisions for service's identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect
 - b) information about the practices the service employs to keep children safe from abuse and neglect; and
 - c) information about how the service will respond to suspected child abuse and neglect*
2. *A procedure that sets out how the service will identify and respond to suspected child abuse and/or neglect*

Intent:

Child protection policies support children's workers to identify and respond to vulnerability, including possible abuse and neglect.

HS (31)

Purpose:

The staff of Michael Park Kindergarten are committed to the prevention of abuse and neglect of children. This commitment means that the interests and welfare of children are the prime considerations when any decision is made about suspected abuse.

Definitions:

A child or young person is "a person who is under the age of 18 years and is not married or in a civil union" Vulnerable Children Act 2014, Section 5

Child Abuse is "harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexuality), ill treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation of any child or young person" CYP&F Act 1989, Section 2

Child Protection: An activity or initiative or project designed to protect children from any form of harm, particularly arising from child abuse or neglect.

Vulnerable Children: Children who are particularly vulnerable to abuse, such as very young children or those with physical and mental disabilities, or vulnerable for other reasons.

Parent: the person (or people) responsible for having the role of providing day to day care for the child; and may include, legal guardian a biological or adoptive parent, stepparent, partner of a parent of a child.

Core Worker: Core workers are those employed or engaged by Michael Park School or kindergarten who have primary responsibility or authority for working with children. This includes all registered teachers, teaching assistants, eurythmist, kindergarten administrator, students on practicum, regular volunteers including parent volunteers.

Non-core workers: non-core workers are those employed or engaged by Michael Park School or kindergarten who hold a secondary responsibility such as kindergarten kuia, grounds staff, school staff, cleaners, external contractors, non-core workers do not have the responsibility or authority to work directly with children.

Staff: all employees of Michael Park Kindergarten

Teacher: a registered teacher employed by Michael Park.

Disclosure: Information given to a staff member by the child, parent, caregiver or third party in relation to abuse or neglect.

Notification, Referral, Reporting: Notification, referral and reporting are all terms used to describe making a report of concern to Oranga Tamariki or the Police.

Safer Recruitment: following good practice processes for pre-employment checking which help manage the risk of unsuitable persons entering the children's workforce.

Standard Safety Checking: The process of safer recruitment that is mandatory for organisations covered by the Children's Act 2014.

Safety Check: The safety check includes identity verification, Police vetting, interviewing the candidate, reference checking and risk assessment for the person's suitability to work with children. The safety checking process requires the employer to carry out identity verification with the teacher/person.

Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse occurs when a child's emotional, psychological or social well-being and sense of worth is continually battered. This includes confinement, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation, infantilisation, or any other treatment that may diminish the sense of identity, dignity, and self-worth. We also include exposure to Family Violence in this category.

Sexual Abuse: Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse may also include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Contact Abuse: 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.

Non-contact Abuse: such as grooming, exploitation, persuading children to perform sexual acts over the internet and flashing. exhibitionism, voyeurism, exposure to pornographic or sexual imagery, inappropriate photography, or depictions of sexual or suggestive behaviours or comments. It includes encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts; not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others.

Sexual Grooming: Refers to actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, in order to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for child sexual abuse.

Physical Abuse: May involve hitting, kicking, shaking, - biting, throwing a child, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child including fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing, ill health to a child. Physical abuse may also result from excessive or inappropriate discipline or violence within the family and is considered abuse regardless of whether or not it was intended to hurt the child. Physical abuse may be the result of a single episode or of a series of episodes.

Using Force: Using force for the purpose of disciplining a child is a criminal offence. Section 59, Crimes Act 1961. Section 59: substituted, on 21st June 2007, by section 5 of the Crimes (Substituted Section 59) Amendment Act 2007 No 18.

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet the child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or neglect of or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. Physical neglect (not providing food, clothing, housing). Emotional neglect (belittling child, not providing comfort, attention, and love).

Neglectful supervision (leaving children without someone safe looking after them). Medical neglect (not taking care of health needs). Educational neglect (allowing chronic truancy, failure to enroll in education or inattention to education needs).

Family Violence: Violence and abuse against any person whom that person is, or has been, in a domestic relationship with. This can include sibling against sibling, child against adult, adult against child and violence by an intimate partner against the other.

Oranga Tamariki: New Zealand statutory agency responsible for investigating and responding to suspected abuse and neglect, and for providing a statutory response to children found to be in need of care and protection.

New Zealand Police: The agency responsible for responding to situations where a child is in immediate danger and for working with Oranga Tamariki in child protection work, including investigating cases of abuse or neglect where an offence may have occurred.

Responsibility of the Kindergarten Manager:

The kindergarten manager will undertake to implement the requirements of Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 56, 57 and 58 and Licensing Criteria HS34 & HS24 (as amended Jan 2021) to ensure children are protected from ill-treatment and their health and safety is maintained.

The kindergarten manager will undertake to implement the requirements of The Children's Act 2014 to ensure all employees, contractors and people interacting with children in their environment will undergo a seven-point safety check process which includes a police VET.

The kindergarten manager will undertake to implement the requirements of The Privacy Act 2020 and the Children's Act 2014 to keep children safe when abuse or suspected abuse is reported or investigated.

Parent Consultation

- This policy will be available on the Michael Park website, in the parent handbook, and on request from the kindergarten manager.
- Parents and staff will have the opportunity to contribute to the review of this policy
- The RSST will be responsible for reviewing this policy every 2 years.

Ratified by the Rudolf Steiner Schools Trust

12th December 2022

Date

Darren Rawlins (Chair)

Name of Trustee

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Rawlins', written over a horizontal line.

Signature of Trustee

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURE

SAFETY CHECKING

All children's workers who have access to children will be safety checked in accordance with the Children's Act 2014.

Safety checks must be undertaken, and the results obtained before the worker has access to children.

The results of the safety checks must be recorded, and the record kept as long as the person is employed or engaged by the at the service.

The Service will employ staff only after an interview and thorough checking on the applicant's work history. This will include making contact both with referees and past employers. This will be done with the applicant's consent.

All Core Workers and non-core workers with access to children will have been passed through a 7 Point Safety Check including:

- Verification of identity (including previous identities)
- An interview
- Information about work history
- Referee information
- Information from any relevant professional organisation or registration body
- A New Zealand Police Vet will be carried out upon initial employment and every three years thereafter
- A risk assessment

All Core Workers will have a periodical four-point safety check performed on them every three years including:

- Verification of identity (including previous identities)
- Information from any relevant professional organisation or registration body
- A New Zealand Police Vet will be carried out every three years
- A risk assessment

Safety checks may be carried out by the employer or another person or organization acting on their behalf.

The kindergarten manager will ensure when selecting staff that they have the skills and attributes to ensure the safety of children.

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

No staff member may

- physically ill-treat or abuse a child
- commit a crime against a child
- in guiding or controlling a child, subject a child to solitary confinement, immobilisation, or deprive a child of food, drink, warmth, shelter, or protection. (reg 56)

Physical restraint will not be used except as necessary to ensure a child's safety or that of others, and then only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation.

Specific expectations of all staff are outlined in the Michael Park Code of Conduct. All staff must sign the Code of Conduct as part of induction.

VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS ON PRACTICUM

- Regular volunteer's and students on practicum will be welcome into the kindergarten subject to safety checking
- At no times will a volunteer or student on practicum be left alone with a child.
- A volunteer and or student on practicum may not change children clothing, do any intimate caregiving, be involved with nappy changing or toileting, administer medicines or first aid. They may help to wash hands.
- Where we rely on a Tertiary Providers to carry out the safety check for students on our behalf, and we will obtain a letter from the Tertiary provider confirming this. If any components of the safety check have not been completed by the Tertiary provider, we are responsible for completing these.

SUPERVISION AND SAFE WORKING PRACTICES

A supervision plan will be put in place outlining safe working and supervision practices.

- Bathrooms, most foyers and kindergarten office have glass doors to support effective supervision.
- We have an open-door approach for spaces where intimate care taking of children may be required, e.g., changing clothes, toileting, nappy changing, sleeping
- Rostering will always ensure a minimum of 2 registered teacher per duplex. If this is not possible groups will be merged.
- Staff should not be left alone with children in a closed space with doors closed e.g., staff room, pantry area, cleaners' cupboard.
- Teaching staff will organize the garden and indoor play spaces to ensure that children and other staff are as visible as possible to each other.
- If teaching staff are in a secluded area in the kindergarten or it is necessary to withdraw a child teaching staff should inform another teaching staff member if they enter those areas,

when children are present.

- The care of children involves physical contact; this is normal, natural, and desirable. It is natural to touch them to show affection, to comfort, to reassure them, and to give them praise, as well as taking care of some of their physical needs. It is not appropriate to force unwanted affection or touching on a child.
- Physical contact of children during changing or cleansing must be for the purpose of that task only, and no more than is necessary giving regard to children's age and development. Wherever possible children will be supported to change their own clothes.
- For the protection of teaching staff who, through the course of their work, are caring for children's bodily needs the following should be noted. All details of care given in respect to children's genital areas must be recorded with date, time and action taken, as soon as possible after the event. This includes washing genitals (toileting sheet), applying medication to genitals (medicine register), inspection of genital areas if soreness, itching, or injury is suspected (accident/incident book).
- When teaching staff are toileting or changing children, other teaching staff should be made aware that they are carrying out these duties.
- Procedures for changing wet or soiled tamariki will be displayed in the bathroom area. A record will be kept of every child who is changed by teaching staff. This will include date, time, and signature of the staff member changing the child. Whenever possible, tamariki will be supported to change their own clothes.
- Relievers will be allowed to change or toilet children at the discretion of the registered teachers.
- Teaching staff must always follow the excursion guidance and not leave the kindergarten with a child.
- Specific written consent from parents will be required for children to have individual 1 to 1 eurythmy on the school site.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

- The kindergarten has an open-door policy where parents are welcome to visit and be involved as much as possible.
- Visitors including parents cannot be involved with any intimate caregiving, nappy changing or toileting, changing children's clothing, administering medicines, first aid with another person's child. They may help with hand washing.
- Visitors including parents are encouraged to report any child protection concerns directly to kindergarten manager Karen Affleck who will determine next steps.
- Any person may contact Oranga Tamariki or police for advice or to make a report of concern at any time if they feel this process may not be effective and there still remains concerns for the child.
- Visitors including parents cannot take photographs or videos of children in the kindergarten or on outings. Photographs taken by staff may only be used for the purposes intended as per

the enrolment agreement.

- Trips to a private home (Home Visit) is to be undertaken only when a parent/caregiver is present and arranged with the parent.

COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

- Parents are expected to provide up to date consents for who can collect their child.
- A child cannot leave the kindergarten without written consent from Parents, (Reg58), except in an emergency, for example a civil defense emergency.
- Parents are expected to update the pickup consent for regularly.
- If a person not known to teaching staff arrives to pick up a child, they will
 - check the consent to pick up folder
 - If their name is listed ask to see ID to confirm identity before releasing the child
 - If their name is not listed advise them, they cannot pick up the child
 - place the child under safe supervision
 - ask them to wait away from the child or leave the kindergarten grounds
 - If they refuse to do so and are acting in a threatening or intimidating manner initiate a lock down and call the police.
 - contact the parents to arrange an alternative pick up arrangement or complete the consent to pick up form.
- If a person breaches a court order or will not leave the kindergarten grounds or acts in manner that is threatening or intimidating toward staff or children, the police will be called.
- A child cannot be collected by a person subject to a court order limiting or preventing access. Parents are expected to provide updated court order to the kindergarten and abide by these.
- If a person subject to such a court order attempts to remove a child from the kindergarten the teaching staff, they will seek immediate support from another staff member:
 - explain they cannot remove the child without breaching the court order
 - advise them that the police will be called if they breach a court order
 - ask them to leave the kindergarten grounds
- All best steps will be taken to inform the custodial parent before the child leaves the kindergarten.

EXCLUSION FROM THE KINDERGARTEN

- If the kindergarten manager has reasonable grounds to believe that a person employed or engaged in the service, or any other person, may have physically ill-treated or abused a child or committed a crime against children; or in guiding or controlling a child, has subjected the child to solitary confinement, immobilisation, or deprivation of food, drink, warmth, shelter,

or protection they must prevent them from coming into contact with any children in the kindergarten and may exclude them from the kindergarten (Reg. 56).

- If the kindergarten manager has reasonable grounds to believe that a person employed or engaged in the service, or any other person may be in a state of physical or mental health that presents any risk of danger to children they must prevent them from coming into contact with any children in the kindergarten and may exclude them from the kindergarten (Reg. 57).
- If teaching staff are concerned that a person present in the kindergarten or collecting a child may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs or in a mental state that may present any risk of danger to children, they will seek support from another staff member and: ask the person if anyone can be contacted to take them home. In the case where a satisfactory solution is not offered and the safety of children and/or staff is at risk, the Police will be informed
- If a child's behaviour poses a serious risk to the child, other children or staff the kindergarten manager has the right to and may exclude the child from attending kindergarten.
- The kindergarten manager and teaching staff will make every effort to involve parents, MOE Learning Support and outside agencies as appropriate with a view to supporting the child toward developing social competence and understanding of appropriate behaviour (Licensing Criteria 2008: C10)

PROFESSIONALISM PROCEDURES

- The kindergarten manager will encourage staff to keep their personal and professional lives separate. Confidentiality is to be maintained at all times.
- All new staff will familiarise themselves with this policy during induction.
- The kindergarten manager is committed to ensuring teaching staff are familiar with this policy, and are aware of how to prevent, recognise and respond to abuse.
- At least once each year, the Child Protection Policy will be discussed at a teachers meeting to ensure teaching staff are familiar with the policy and are continually reminded of their responsibilities.
- If parents have concerns about the treatment of a children by our staff, they are encouraged to make this known to the Kindergarten Manager, who will ensure that the matter is investigated and acted on immediately as per the Complaints Procedure.

PREVENTATIVE EDUCATION

- All teaching staff follow the Guiding Social Competence Policy, which promotes positive guidance of children's behaviour.
- Teaching staff work as a team to ensure they can support each other in managing children challenging behaviours. If teaching staff are feeling stressed by the behaviour of children they

should immediately communicate this to another member of the teaching team.

- Education of children, parents and whanau is important in the prevention of child abuse. We encourage parents to use programmes organised by agencies in the community. Resources, support and agencies will be listed at the end of this policy
- Information is provided on the prevention and recognition of child abuse and procedures on how to respond in the event of allegations or recognition of abuse as set in Oranga Tamariki in this procedure.

USING PREVENTATIVE AGENCIES

- If children are identified by staff as being vulnerable, staff must inform the kindergarten manager of their concerns so that they can assess the situation and decide if parents should be referred onto any relevant agencies.
- The kindergarten manager and teaching staff will be aware of the professional agencies to contact in the case of suspected child abuse. The teaching staff may contact the Care and Protection division of Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children, In a serious case the staff may have contact with the Police. The Ministry of Education will also be informed.
- In the effort to establish and maintain a culture of child protection, the kindergarten manager and teaching staff will be aware of the various local professional agencies that can wrap support services around vulnerable children.
- If it is not clear which agency to refer the parents onto, a referral should be sent through to the local children's team, who will assess the needs and decide whether they need to engage with the children's team or be referred onto another service.
- Teaching staff will seek permission from parents before making any referrals and maintain a record of referrals in the child's individual file.
- Staff should not assume responsibility beyond their level of expertise, and management should contact a professional agency for support where necessary.

PROTECTION FROM EXPOSURE TO INAPPROPRIATE MATERIAL

- Children should not be exposed to anything of an explicitly sexual or violent nature. Parents are expected to choose clothing, bags and resources/toys coming to kindergarten carefully.
- Teaching staff will be responsible for checking suitability of resources purchased, donated, and brought into the kindergarten.
- Staff will be made aware of cyber safety practices

IDENTIFYING, RESPONDING AND REPORTING PROCEDURE

IDENTIFYING POSSIBLE ABUSE OR NEGLECT

RISK FACTORS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

- Maternal mental health
- Substance abuse of parent or another caregiver
- Antisocial & criminal behaviour
- Loss of income
- Poverty
- Poor quality/unstable housing
- Exposure to family violence
- Blended family
- Young parents
- Solo parents
- Child minders/babysitters
- Transient families
- Isolation from extended family

Risk factors do not always = abuse

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Good Parental Attachment (to one parent or another adult)
- Positive Parenting
- Cultural Identity
- Social Support
- High Quality Early Childhood Education
- Family Belief Systems
- Confident Communication Skills

The kindergarten has a role in enhancing protective factors that reduce the likelihood of child abuse through curriculum provision and working with parents, whānau and community.

IDENTIFICATION OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse is a non-accidental act which results in physical harm to a child

Some signs, symptoms and behaviours to look out for:

Kindergarten Policy Reviewed 2022

HS 31, HS 32, HS 34. HS 27

NELP: Ensure places of learning are safe, inclusive and free from racism, discrimination and bullying. Have high aspirations for every learner/ākonga, and support these by partnering with their whānau and communities to design and deliver education that responds to their needs, and sustains their identities, languages and cultures. Reduce barriers to education for all, including for Māori and Pacific learners/ākonga, disabled learners/ākonga and those with learning support needs.

- Bruises and welts in places that we would not normally see them
- Bruises lacerations,
- Swelling
- Scolds and burns (including cigarette burns, or object burns)
- Fractures and sprains
- Missing hair
- Unusual injuries, not consistent with developmental age or stages
- Unexplained injuries or explanations that 'don't fit'
- Many injuries in various stages of healing
- Complaints of soreness or uncomfortable movement
- Clothing that is inappropriate for the weather
- Child might be withdrawn
- Child might show aggressive behaviour
- Mistrust of adults
- Anxious
- Difficulty forming relationships
- Strangulation
- Suffocation
- Poisoning

Signs to look out for are:

- Unexplained bruises, welts, cuts and abrasions – particularly in unusual places like the face, on their back or tummy, buttocks, or the backs of their legs. Also look out for the regularity of these injuries to see if there is a pattern forming.
- Unexplained fractures or dislocations – many children are active resulting in bumps and breaks, but people need to be thinking about how and why these injuries happen. Especially worrying are fractures to the head or face and hip or shoulder dislocations.
- Burn marks – anywhere on the body are concerning, and if not easily explained need to be notified. Be mindful of burns in the shape of an object like a stove ring or iron, cigarette marks or rope burn.
- The child or their parent – can't recall how the injuries occurred – or their explanations change or don't make sense.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Any act where an adult or a more powerful person, uses a child or a young person for a sexual purpose. This may be consensual or not and can happen within or outside the family. Most sexual abuse is done by someone the child knows and trusts.

There are two different types of child sexual abuse. These are called contact abuse and non-contact

abuse.

- Contact abuse involves touching activities where an abuser makes physical contact with a child, including penetration. It includes sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child's wearing clothes or not, rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus, forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity, making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals, or masturbate.
- Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities, such as grooming, exploitation, persuading children to perform sexual acts over the internet and flashing. It includes: encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts, not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others, meeting a child following sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them, online abuse – including making, viewing or distributing child abuse images, allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images, showing pornography to a child, sexually exploiting a child for money, power or status (child exploitation).

Some signs, symptoms and behaviours to look out for:

- Unusual or excessive itching in the genital area or odour
- Pain experienced when toileting, or blood in urine or stools
- Age-inappropriate sexual play or interest – and other unusual behaviour like sexually explicit drawings, descriptions and talk about sex can indicate this type of abuse.
- Also be concerned and ask questions if there is ever blood in a child's urine or faeces. It's painful for them to get to the toilet
- Sexually explicit drawings, descriptions and talk about sex
- Fear of particular people, places, or activities
- Nightmares or sleep disturbances
- Regression to earlier behaviours such as bed wetting or stranger anxiety
- Unusually quiet or withdrawn
- None of these

NEGLECT

Neglect may consist of; physical neglect, neglectful supervision, emotional neglect, educational neglect, medical neglect, abandonment, refusal to accept parental responsibility

Some signs, symptoms and behaviours to look out for:

- Malnourished
- Failure to thrive

- Dirty and unkempt or body odour
- Severe nappy rash or other persistent skin disorders resulting from lack of hygiene, impetigo
- Not receiving adequate medical or dental care
- Left unattended frequently or picked up late often
- Left in the care of an inappropriate caregiver
- Indiscriminate attachment to adults
- Frequent absences
- Inappropriate clothing for the season
- Withdrawn or clingy
- Socially isolated
- Low attendance – sometimes coupled with poor speech and social skills or other developmental delays

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is a pattern of behaviour by parents or caregivers that can seriously interfere with a child's cognitive, emotional, psychological, or social development. Emotional abuse of a child is also referred to as psychological maltreatment.

Some signs, symptoms, and behaviours to look out for:

- Parent ignores, rejects, isolates, verbally insults, threatens or shames the child (these behaviours are constant and ongoing)
- Treated differently to other siblings
- Sleep problems
- Bed wetting and soiling
- Frequent physical complaints
- Anxious
- Extreme attention seeking behaviours
- Overly compliant
- Helplessness and low self-esteem
- This may also include cyber bullying perpetuated by media networks, games and mobile phones

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Some signs, symptoms and behaviours to look out for:

- Talking or describing violent behaviours
- Aggressive behaviour including yelling, hitting, biting, kicking and pulling other children's hair. Disclosures of and/or describes violent or emotionally abusive acts.
- Threats and/or harming of animals.

- Very distressed when witnessing violence.
- Physical injuries consistent with the indicators of Physical Abuse

Complaints of headaches or stomach aches with no apparent medical reason

Fearful or submissive

Severely shy, low self-esteem

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR RESPONDING TO SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

- Believe what the child tells you and what you see.
- Always take action in the short term to ensure the immediate safety of the child. This may mean contacting Oranga Tamariki and/or NZ Police if you think there is an immediate risk of the child being abused.
- Act on your concerns. Don't leave it to someone else or hope it won't happen again. If you have told the person, you believe is responsible for taking action and they do not act, take further action yourself.
- Do not make decisions alone, consult with the kindergarten manager or delegated person in the kindergarten manager's absence. If there is no short-term risk, take time to consult thoroughly to make well-informed decisions.
- Where suspected abuse may have been perpetrated by a family member or someone close to the family, do not initially inform the family, but ensure that the appropriate person informs them at the appropriate time under guidance from Oranga Tamariki.
- Record clear concerns and observations, factual statements with dates.
- Seek support for yourself. The tasks and situation may be stressful.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO DISCLOSURE

- Ensure the child's immediate safety.
- Do not alert the suspected abuser.
- Remain calm, yet confident.
- Keep voice low and gentle.
- Refrain from interviewing a child, instead limit to "how come?" and "tell me more".
- Don't ask further questions.
- Don't be quick to fill the silences.
- Allow them to tell only as much as they want.
- Don't put words in the child's mouth.
- Thank the child for sharing with you and say you are there to help them.

- Don't make "a promise statement".
- Re-engage the child into play.
- Record the disclosure.

RESPONDING AND REPORTING PROCEDURE

- If Karen Affleck is absent from the kindergarten contact Sally Russell and in her absence Stacey McManus.
- Responses to concerns should be proportionate to the level of need, risk and vulnerability of children, and actions taken decided in collaboration with the kindergarten manager or delegated person, and or the appropriate agencies.
- If there is no clear evidence or reasonable cause to believe an instance of child abuse has taken place but there is a concern/incident, make a record and discuss with the kindergarten manager to determine next steps
- If there is clear evidence or reasonable cause to believe an instance of child abuse has taken place and the child is in immediate danger call the police on 111 and follow police advice.
- If there is clear evidence or reasonable cause to believe an instance of child abuse has taken place but is not in immediate danger the kindergarten manager or delegated person will notify Oranga Tamariki: Oranga Tamariki: 0508 326 459 or edassist@ot.govt.nz
- If unsure Oranga Tamariki will be contacted to ask for guidance.
- It is essential to maintain accurate records. Teachers will record the concern and the actions taken on the Recording a Disclosure, Observation, Incident, Concern form – paper copies in the forms filing cabinet.
 - Make notes as soon as possible
 - Include date, time, place and who was present
 - Include what lead up to the disclosure
 - Record what you have heard or saw – keep notes factual
 - Use the child's words wherever possible
 - Include what you said to the child
- If marks are visible on the child e.g., bruises draw these on the Disclosures Body Map form. Do not photograph the child.
- If a report of concern is advised by Oranga Tamariki complete the Oranga Tamariki Report of Concern (form in HS/child protection/HS31) and send to contact@ot.govt.nz or edassist@ot.govt.nz
- The kindergarten manager will call Oranga Tamariki if no response has been received from them within 3 working days.
- The kindergarten manager and/or teacher will discuss the concern with parents unless there may be the possibility of increased risk to the child. Where this is uncertain Oranga Tamariki will be contacted for advice before speaking to Parents.

- If a report of concern is lodged with Oranga Tamariki or police, the Ministry of Education will also be advised.
- Where appropriate the person making the allegations will be given a copy of this policy.
- The Kindergarten Manager will retain a secure record of any reporting in a locked file.
- Following an allegation or incident teachers will continue to monitor the child for some time. Review will consider any further necessary action, follow up or referrals.
- All staff must report all suspicions, observations of incidents or reports of incidents directly to kindergarten manager Karen Affleck as soon as possible, who will determine next steps.

PROCEDURE FOR DISCLOSURE OF SUSPECTED ABUSE OF CHILD

A child discloses they are being abused, or you see signs of possible abuse.

- Listen to the child
- Reassure the child
- DO NOT INTERVIEW THE CHILD
- Report to the kindergarten manager

If appropriate, and the child is safe from immediate danger, re-engage child in an activity. If they are distressed, stay with them until they are able to participate in play activities happily. Inform the kindergarten manager immediately.

If the child is **not in** immediate danger

Engage the child in an activity

Stay with the child if they are in immediate danger.
Have someone contact the kindergarten manager immediately and Police

AS SOON AS POSSIBLE PREPARE A WRITTEN RECORD

Record:

- Word for word, what the child said
- The date, time, location and the names of any staff/person that may be relevant.
- The factual concerns or observations that have led to the suspicion of abuse or neglect (e.g. any physical, behavioural or developmental concerns).
- The action taken by teacher.
- Any other information that may be relevant

Decision-making
Discuss any concern with the principal/kindergarten manager

Notification if there is a belief that a child has been, or is likely to be abused

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

- The Privacy Act 2020 allows information to be shared to keep children safe when abuse or suspected abuse is reported or investigated.
- Child protection information must be shared by the kindergarten manager as soon as possible with the child's new school or ECE. Best Practice: Inform parents of the child for whom abuse is suspected of your intention if it is safe to do so. However, parental consent is not required to transfer this information as it will be used to prevent harm to a child. Where parents object, the facts should be recorded and note the reasons for your decision to transfer information.

ALLEGATIONS ABOUT STAFF

- When there are suspicions or allegations of abuse by a Staff member, the Staff members will be suspended on full pay and removed from the environment to ensure that children and the Staff member are kept safe. The suspected individual will be excluded from all access to children pending the outcome of a full investigation.
- The complaints policy will be followed when investigating allegations or concerns about Staff. The investigation will be guided by the employment contract/collective employment contract and relevant statutory obligations.
- The investigation will seek to establish if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the person has physically ill-treated or abused a child or committed a crime against children; or in guiding or controlling a child, has subjected the child to solitary confinement, immobilisation, or deprivation of food, drink, warmth, shelter, or protection (Reg. 56).
- We recognise added stress to Staff in such situations and will ensure support is available and they are informed fully of their rights.
- Families, whanau, children, staff, and others involved in the investigation of the suspected child abuse should have support through organisations in the community, Oranga Tamariki and or other agencies.
- If the allegation is about the kindergarten manager, the concern must be reported to the principal.

Continue as per disclosure process, up to 'decision-making'.
Discuss your concern with the Kindergarten Manager or, if it is about the
Kindergarten Manager, discuss with Principal.



The Kindergarten Manager/Principal will work with the Oranga
Tamariki
and/or the Police



Kindergarten Manager/Principal to discuss and maintain any
contractual obligations subject to investigation of employee.
Employee will be advised of their right to seek support and advice
from union or legal representatives



Kindergarten Manager/Principal working with Children Oranga
Tamariki and Police will advise employee of investigation
outcomes and seek a response, (depending on outcomes of
discussions with statutory agencies).

PROTECTED DISCLOSURE

- The Protected Disclosures Act 2000 encourages employees to disclose and report information about serious wrongdoing in the workplace. This Act provides protection for these employees from criminal and legal retribution and outlines the internal procedure to be followed when investigating the matter.

MANDATORY REPORTING TO TEACHERS' COUNCIL

Employers must report to the Teaching Council when:

- A teacher is dismissed for any reason.
- A teacher resigns from a teaching position, if within the 12 months preceding the resignation the employer advised the teacher it was dissatisfied with, or intended to investigate, any aspect of the teacher's conduct or competence, or on the expiry of the teacher's fixed-term contract.
- A teacher ceases to be employed by the employer, and within the following 12 months the employer receives a complaint about the teacher's conduct or competence while he or she was an employee.
- An allegation has been made that the teacher has engaged in serious misconduct.
- The employer is satisfied that, despite completing competence procedures with the teacher, the teacher has not reached the required competence level.

RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

In 2021, the Ministry of Education launched a free digital child protection resource specifically for the early learning sector which we developed alongside Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand and Safeguarding Children.

The Ministry of Education strongly encourage staff working in the early learning sector to engage in this resource. It will help build awareness and confidence in recognising, responding to and reporting on suspected child abuse and neglect.

The digital resource can be accessed on the Ministry's Training Services website using your Education Sector Logon (ESL). [Learning Management System – Ministry of Education](#)

If you do not have an existing Logon, you can contact your organisation's ESL Delegated Authoriser to organise one. More information about getting an ESL Logon is available here: [How to get an education sector logon – Ministry of Education](#)

There are more links to other child protection resources available in the *Resources and Support* section on our website. [Child protection – Ministry of Education](#)

The Safer Organisations, Safer Children publication provides advice on good practice to help services draft high quality child protection policies and review their procedures. [Safer Organisations, Safer Children \[PDF, 1.05 MB\]](#)

Your child protection policy needs to be consistent with advice provided by Oranga Tamariki in their Working together to support tamariki, rangatahi and their family/whānau(external link) publication. [Working together interagency guide – Oranga Tamariki](#)

APPENDIX

FURTHER RESOURCES AND SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS AND WHANAU

AGENCY	PHONE NUMBER	INFORMATION
New Zealand Police	111	If you believe a child is in immediate danger, call NZ Police on 111.
Oranga Tamariki	0508 EDASSIST (0508 332 774) or email edassist@ot.govt.nz (this is the dedicated contact for schools and early learning services)	If you are worried about a child or want to discuss, report, or refer a concern, contact Oranga Tamariki.
Healthline	0800 61 11 16	Healthline can provide you with advice about a child who appears unwell or hurt, or has any symptoms of sickness.
Shine Helpline	0508 74 46 33	Shine can provide advice and support for anyone seeking information about family harm.
Crimestoppers	0800 55 51 11	If you have any concerns about reporting a potential case of family harm, Crimestoppers will support you to pass on key information anonymously.
Are You Ok	0800 456 450	Are You OK helpline will be able to provide information and advice on family violence. As well as referrals to local family violence services.
Safe to Talk	0800 044 334 or email support@safetotalk.nz	Safe to Talk helpline will be able to provide information and advice on sexual harm. As well as referrals to local sexual harm services.

LINK	INFORMATION
What to do if you think a child is in danger	Two short (~20-second) videos from the Privacy Commissioner.
Whether to share information about at-risk children	
Return to School Checklist for Educators	Five-minute video to help educators identify family harm indicators
Return to School Checklist for Educators	Two-page factsheet with information for educators
COVID-19 Report a concern	Short webpage with a contact address for reporting concerns to Oranga Tamariki

LINK	INFORMATION
Resources for whānau, communities and services during COVID-19	Links to a variety of pages and links about preventing and responding to whānau and sexual violence during COVID-19
Worried about a child?	Information about what to report to Oranga Tamariki
How can I tell? Recognising child abuse	Guidance for keeping children safe
Creating a safe organisation	A guidance document about developing child protection policies and safe working practices
Handling Disclosures of Child Abuse	A webpage with information on how to handle disclosures of child abuse
Indicators of Child Abuse	Webpage outlining indicators for different types of child abuse (emotional, neglect, physical, sexual)
Practical steps to safety	PDF document to help support whānau to keep children safe from abuse
Family violence and sexual violence prevention	COVID-19 webpage with links to different organisations to reach out to
Safeguarding Children	Website on child protection training and support
Child Matters	Website on child protection training and resources
Family Services Directory	The Family Services Directory provides information on various family support organisations across the country and the services they offer.
https://sexualabuse.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Childhood-Sexual-behaviours.pdf	Article on childhood sexual behaviours