



CHILD ABUSE DISCLOSURE POLICY

RATIONALE

Matthew 19:14 clearly shows the love Jesus had for children. As part of CARE it is our intention for the students in this school to have their spiritual, social, physical and emotional needs met in a safe and supportive environment.

PURPOSES

- Inform all staff of actions which must be taken when they have cause to believe that a student is the subject of abuse.
- To provide teachers with information to assist them in identifying signs of abuse or neglect.

GUIDELINES

1. Procedures to be followed in cases of suspected child abuse, will differ in cases where there is:
 - a. An urgent safety need to such an extent that the child cannot return home that day; or
 - b. The need for a thorough, planned investigation when the child is not at immediate risk of further abuse.
2. Staff must bring all cases of suspected abuse of students to the attention of the Principal, who will then inform the Board of Trustees.
3. Teachers who have a disclosure made to them in class will accept the disclosure with little or no comment but will follow up with the Principal without delay.
4. After careful discussion with the reporting teacher, the principal will gather all information the school has about the child.
 - If urgent, as in (1a) above, the Principal/chairperson will first notify the Board Chair and the Board of Trustees will make an immediate referral to the police or social workers at the Oranga Tamariki.
 - The child's caregivers will be advised of any action taken, by the statutory agencies involved as required under the "Children, Young Persons and their Families Act".
 - If as in (1b) above, then the Principal will refer to statutory agencies after full consultation with staff and other professionals involved. The caregivers will be advised if any action is planned, by the agency taking the action.
5. If a staff member is implicated as being responsible for the abuse, the Principal shall contact the Board of Trustees' Chairperson immediately. The Board shall ensure that the interests of the staff member and those of the child are met.



IMPLEMENTATION

- Adults need to be receptive and sensitive to children so that they feel as if they have been listened to and believed.
- The school should select appropriate agencies for dealing with abuse.
- Keeping ourselves safe is part of the health programme.
- Parental support for a safe environment will be encouraged.
- Develop a reporting procedure based on the National Protocol of the Ministry of Education, School Trustees Association and Oranga Tamariki.

CONCLUSIONS

Any reporter of suspected child abuse is protected from any criminal, civil or disciplinary action by Section 16 'Children, Young Persons and their Families Act'. The prime concern of the school will be to refer to persons with the statutory obligation to investigate, and if necessary, act to protect the child. The teacher's primary concern then, is to support the student in any subsequent action.



PRINCIPAL

2/2/2022

DATE



CHAIRPERSON

02/02/2022

DATE

RATIFIED BY BOARD: 02/02/2022

NEXT REVIEW DATE: FEB 2025