



**Nga Tawa Diocesan School Board of Trustees Policy**

# **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY & PROCEDURE**

Review Date: February 2028

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## SECTION ONE: Introduction

### 1. Purpose

1.1 Nga Tawa is committed to the prevention of abuse and to the wellbeing of children and young people. The most effective way to safeguard young people is to have a comprehensive and effective with robust practices and guidelines.

1.2 The purpose of this policy is to provide Nga Tawa staff guidelines by which to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of abuse and neglect, and to understand their role to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of abuse and neglect, and to understand their role in keeping children safe.

1.3 Nga Tawa recognises that all staff and Trustees have a full and active part to play in protecting students from harm. Overall responsibility and implementation of this policy rests with the Principal of Nga Tawa.

### 2. Principles

2.1 This policy is written under the principle that young people attending Nga Tawa Diocesan School have a right to feel safe and comfortable in that care, contact and environment.

2.2 The Board has an obligation to ensure that children and young people in our care thrive, belong, and achieve. The Board is committed to the wellbeing of our students, prevention of child abuse, and the protection of all young people. The safety and wellbeing of students at Nga Tawa is our top priority.

2.3 The decisions and actions of Nga Tawa Diocesan School in response to any child protection concern will be guided by the principle of “the welfare and best interests of the child”.

2.4 This policy adheres to the school’s Special Character, Values, and Mission; the Principles of partnership, protection and participation, and the rights and responsibilities accorded by Te Tiriti o Waitangi; Oranga Tamariki practice standards and legislative requirements.

### 3. Scope

3.1 This policy covers all staff members of Nga Tawa paid or voluntary, employed directly by Nga Tawa as well as those professionals including contractors and volunteers, contracted or invited, are expected to be familiar with this policy, it’s associated procedures and abide by them. This includes teaching and non-teaching staff, as well as those who have direct or indirect contact with students.

3.2 For the purposes of this policy, “staff” includes the Board of Trustees of Nga Tawa Diocesan School.

### 4. Legislation

4.1 This policy has been written with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in mind and in accordance with legislative requirements, including, but not limited to the Children’s Act, 2014; Oranga Tamariki Act, 1989; Privacy Act, 2020

## 5. Definitions

5.1 For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

**Abuse** For the purpose of this policy, abuse includes harm (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), deprivation, ill-treatment, or neglect of Tamariki. It can involve ongoing, repeated or persistent abuse, or may arise from a single incident. Child Abuse may take many forms, but it can be categorised into four different types: Physical Abuse; Sexual Abuse; Emotional Abuse and Neglect.

**Young person**: Child means any person under the age of 18 years.

**Lead Person for Child Protection** is a person within the workplace who is responsible for the safeguarding of children. This person is responsible for ensuring that child protection is a key focus within Nga Tawa both at a strategic level and on a day-to-day basis.

**Oranga Tamariki**: formally known as Child Youth and Family. Oranga Tamariki is a Government Ministry dedicated to supporting children in New Zealand whose wellbeing is at significant risk of harm now, or in the future.

**Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's self-esteem and emotional development. This can include a pattern of rejecting, degrading, ignoring, isolating, corrupting, exploiting or terrorising a child. It may also include age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children and their social competence undermined or eroded over time. A child can also experience emotional abuse by being exposed to a dysfunctional environment which includes seeing or hearing the ill treatment of others, including but not limited to being exposed to domestic violence.

**Neglect** is characterised as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological need. This can occur through direct and deliberate action or by omission or deliberate inaction to care for and/or protect the child. It may also include neglect of a child's basic or emotional needs.

**Physical Abuse** is a non-accidental act that results in physical harm. This includes, but is not limited to, beating, hitting, shaking, burning, drowning, suffocating biting, poisoning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse also involves the fabrication or inducing of illness.

**Sexual Abuse** is an act or acts that result in the sexual exploitation of a child, whether consensual or not. Sexual abuse can be committed by a relative, a trusted friend, an associate, or someone unknown to the child. Sexual abuse includes situations where the adult seeks to have the child touch them for a sexual purpose, and where they involve the child in pornographic activities or prostitution.

**Family Violence** can take many forms and may include, but is not limited to, actual physical violence (to a person, pet or property), threats of physical violence (to a person, pet or property), psychological, economic or sexual abuse. Children are always affected either emotionally or physically where there is family violence even if they are not personally injured or physically present.

## SECTION TWO: Roles and Responsibilities

### 6. Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

6.1 Nga Tawa is responsible for ensuring that all staff understand and adhere to this policy and have undertaken the appropriate child protection training

6.2 Nga Tawa recognises that all staff have a full and active part to play in protecting young people at Nga Tawa from harm. It is the responsibility of all staff to understand our Child Protection Policy and related procedures and know how to seek advice and respond when abuse is suspected or identified. It is the primary responsibility of staff to be vigilant, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of neglect, potential or actual abuse and to report any concerns, suspicions or allegations of suspected abuse immediately and ensure that the concern is taken seriously.

6.3 It is the responsibility of staff to understand Nga Tawa's Child Protection Policy and related procedures and know how to seek advice and respond when abuse is suspected or identified.

6.4 Each member of staff must:

- Be aware of, and alert to, potential indicators of abuse or neglect.
- Record a factual account of any concerns they have, or that are brought to their attention.
- Appropriately seek advice and support from their Designated Person for Child Protection who will then contact external agencies if appropriate.
- Work in co-operation with the parents and caregivers, unless this compromises the safety of the child.

6.5 The statutory responsibility to investigate allegations of child abuse rests with Oranga Tamariki and the NZ Police. No member of Nga Tawa, including staff, the Board of Trustees, the Principal, and the Lead Person for Child Protection, are permitted or mandated to investigate allegations of abuse.

### 7. Role of Principal

7.1 The overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the Principal of Nga Tawa Diocesan School.

7.2 The Board requires the Principal to:

- Develop appropriate procedures to meet child safety requirements as appropriate to the school;
- Comply with relevant legislative requirements and responsibilities.
- Ensure that all staff are recruited and employed in accordance with the guidelines identified in the Employment Policy to identify those people safe to work with children.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of, and have access to, full copies of the procedures for reporting child abuse, and to make this policy available to any other person upon request.
- To make available professional development, resources and/or advice to ensure all staff can carry out their roles in terms of this policy.
- To ensure that this policy forms part of the initial staff induction programme for each staff member.

- Ensure that the name of the Lead Person and the nominated staff member are well known to all staff.
- Ensure that every contract or funding arrangement the school enters into includes child protection provisions as appropriate.
- Ensure that the interests of children and young people are paramount in all circumstances.
- Recognise the rights of the family to participate in decision-making about their child.
- Ensure that all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect, deal with disclosures and/or allegations against staff members, and are able to take the appropriate action.
- Support all staff to work in accordance with this policy and promote a culture where staff feel confident, they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal.
- 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.
- Ensure that all allegations are managed appropriately and ensure that there is no internal investigation without appropriate consultation and a decision whether a response from Oranga Tamariki or the Police is required.
- Make any referrals to the Social Worker in School or Oranga Tamariki or the NZ Police as appropriate.
- Seek advice as necessary from NZSTA advisers on employment matters and other relevant agencies where child safety issues arise.
- Ensure that allegations or complaints are appropriately referred to the Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (EDUCANZ).

**The Principal of Nga Tawa Diocesan School is:**

Lesley Carter

## **8. Role of Lead Child Protection Person**

8.1 A Designated Person for Child Protection is responsible for ensuring that child protection is a key focus within Nga Tawa and that appropriate protocols, procedures, and training are in place.

8.2 Nga Tawa must ensure that a Lead Person for Child Protection is appointed. The Designated Person for Child Protection must:

- Be available and accessible to staff.
- Be a senior member of staff.
- Have the authority to carry out the duties of the Designated Person for Child Protection role.
- Be capable of directing other staff if appropriate.
- Be given comprehensive training and/or have experience of child protection.

8.3 The role of the Designated Person for Child Protection is to:

- Ensure that the needs and rights of children come first as the safety and wellbeing of each child is the paramount consideration in all circumstances.
- Ensure and safeguard clear, confidential, detailed and dated records on all child protection cases. These must contain all available information relating to the cause for concern and any subsequent action taken, including when it has been decided not to make a notification to Oranga Tamariki or the Police. These records will be kept separate from student's records for the purpose of confidentiality.
- Establish a close link and work closely and effectively with the relevant local agencies to ensure clear and effective communication, ensuring information is appropriately shared to effectively safeguard the child.
- Ensure that all staff are supported appropriately when dealing with child protection concerns.
- Maintain a current awareness of the young people identified at risk.
- Consult with the Principal regarding all child protection concerns.

**The Designated Lead Person for Child Protection for Nga Tawa is**  
The Director of Wellbeing

## **9. Role of the Board of Trustees**

9.1 The role of the Board of Trustees is to:

- Ensure that the needs and rights of children come first as the safety and wellbeing of each child is the paramount consideration in all circumstances.
- Support the Principal and the Designated Lead Person for Child Protection to ensure that all allegations are managed appropriately.
- Ensure that no investigation occurs without appropriate consultation and a decision whether a response from Oranga Tamariki or the Police is required.
- Support the Principal to ensure that allegations or complaints are appropriately referred to the Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (EDUCANZ).
- Inform the Principal immediately should any member of the Board of Trustees be aware of a concern for the wellbeing and safety of a child who attends Nga Tawa.
- The Chair of the Board of Trustees will be directly informed of any allegations of abuse against the Principal.

**The Chair of the Diocesan Trust Board – *Hayden Trotter***  
**The Chair of the Nga Tawa School Board of Trustees – *Heidi Hitchman***

## **SECTION THREE: Child Protection Procedures**

The procedures set out in section three of this policy provide staff guidelines to assist in identifying and responding appropriately to concerns of abuse and neglect, and to understand their role in keeping children safe. The procedures set out below will help staff with:

- The identification of abuse.
- Handling disclosures, whether verbal or behavioural, from a child.

- Reporting procedures.

## **10. Identification of Abuse**

10.1 Any member of staff may directly witness child abuse or have allegations, made by a child or an adult, relayed to them. There may also be disclosures of abuse that have occurred prior to attending Nga Tawa. Sustained abuse and neglect of children, wherever it occurs, can have major long-term effects on all aspects of children's health, development and well-being and their ability to sustain stable and meaningful relationships in the future.

10.2 Staff should be alert and aware of the fact that child abuse can occur in many different settings and forms and may come to light in a variety of different ways. These can include, but are not limited to:

- Direct or indirect disclosure by the child.
- Direct or indirect disclosure from someone known to the child.
- Suspicions of abuse by those involved with the child.
- Allegations and/or direct observations or signs displayed in the child's physical or emotional behaviour.
- Direct witnessing of abuse.

10.3 The signs and indicators of abuse to a child may not be immediately obvious or identifiable. *Appendix One* of this policy sets out a non-exhaustive list of signs and indicators to help identify abuse.

10.4 If a member of staff is unsure if they ought to report an incident or if they are unsure about what might constitute child abuse, they should ask for advice and guidance from the Lead Person for Child Protection. If the Lead Person for Child Protection is unavailable for advice and guidance, then staff should consult with the Principal. At any time, staff may seek advice from Oranga Tamariki (0508 326 459) regarding child protection concerns.

## **11. Responding to Allegations**

11.1 Everything must be done to ensure the ongoing safety of the child or young person concerned, along with the ongoing safety of any other child who is in close connection to the alleged offender. The young person is the primary concern, and all other concerns (including the guilt or innocence of the alleged offender) must be secondary. This does not mean that the alleged offender is to be considered guilty without due investigation, but that the child's concerns, and safety, come first. In no way must any child be left in a harmful, or potentially harmful, situation.

## **12. Handling of Disclosures from a Child**

12.1 Disclosure of abuse may come directly from the child. In such circumstances it is important to respond in a calm, caring and sensitive manner. It is important that staff take what the child says seriously. This applies irrespective of the setting, or the member of staff's own opinion on what the child is saying. The child is never to blame in situations of abuse and should be reassured they have done nothing wrong, either in relation to the abuse itself or in reporting it.

12.2 Children need to know that staff are listening and taking seriously the information divulged. Children need staff to respond positively to ensure their future protection. It is important to record what is said at the time, if appropriate, or as soon as possible following the disclosure. It may not be appropriate to enquire



into further details at this stage. The child also needs information and an explanation of what will, or is likely to, happen next.

12.3 If a child discloses information regarding actual or suspected child abuse staff must:

- Stay calm.
- Listen and hear.
- Give time to the child to say what they want.
- Reassure them that it was right to tell.
- Tell the child that they are being taken seriously and that they are not to blame.
- Explain that they have to pass on what the child has told them as soon as they are aware that the child is making a disclosure.
- Give an age-appropriate explanation to the child of what the child can expect to happen next.
- Record in writing what was said as soon as possible, using the child's own words where possible.

12.4 Staff must not:

- Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily.
- Promise to keep secrets.
- Enquire into the details of the alleged abuse.
- Ask leading questions.

12.5 Under no circumstances should a member of staff attempt to conduct an investigation or deal with concerns of abuse by themselves.

### **13. Child-on-Child Harmful Behaviours**

13.1 It is important to be aware that children can harm other children. These behaviours are outside of what may be considered the normal range, and can extend to bullying, violence or sexual assault. Therefore, when a child alleges inappropriate harmful behaviour by another child then the child protection procedures outlined in this policy must be considered for both the children.

### **14. Suicidal Concerns of Self-Harm Behaviours**

14.1 It is important to be aware that young persons can harm themselves or attempt suicide. When a child identifies thoughts of suicide, or self-harming behaviour, this must be taken seriously and the Director of Wellbeing notified immediately. If an immediate response is required to ensure the child's safety, contact:

*Maternal, Infant, Child and Adolescent Mental and Addiction Service (MICAMHAS) Whanganui*  
**0800 653 358.**

14.2 If a staff member is aware of suicide or self-harm risk, please refer to the relevant procedure stored All Staff Teams -Child Protection.

## SECTION FOUR: Reporting Procedures

### 15. Child Protection Procedures

15.1 All concerns of potential, suspected or alleged abuse must be brought to the attention of the Lead Person for Child Protection. If the Lead Person is unavailable, then consultation should occur with the Principal. A decision will be made as to whether to notify Oranga Tamariki. If an immediate response is required to ensure the child's safety, staff should contact Oranga Tamariki and/or the NZ Police directly.

15.2 If a student makes a verbal disclosure to a member of staff it is important that staff take what the student says seriously.

15.3 Staff are to listen carefully to what the student is saying and are not to interview them or ask too many questions, ask the very basics i.e. who/when? Never promise confidentiality to a student.

15.4 Once the basics have been ascertained no further questions are to be asked. What the student has said is to be documented. Effective documentation, including referrals and notifications, must include:

- A record of facts, including observations, with times and dates.
- What was said and by whom, using the person's words.
- What action has been taken, by whom and when.

15.5 Without further discussion with any person the documented information will be passed on to the Lead Person for Child Protection as soon as possible.

15.6 The Lead Person will consult with the nominated staff member and advise Oranga Tamariki and, if applicable, the Police promptly when a disclosure is made.

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

15.8 All decisions, including if the concern does not require notifying Oranga Tamariki or the Police, must be recorded in writing and kept securely in a Child Protection file with the reasons clearly identified and explained.

### 16. Keeping the Child's Family Informed and Involved

16.1 Although the parent or caregiver of the child will usually be informed of concerns, there may be times when those with parental responsibility may not be initially informed. This will be agreed with the lead person and principals' agreement and may happen when:

- The parent or caregiver is the alleged offender.
- It is possible that the child may be intimidated into silence.
- There is a strong likelihood that evidence will be destroyed
- The child does not want their parent or caregiver involved and they are of an age when they are competent to make that decision.

## **17. Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

17.1 The safety of a child is paramount. At times a child is unable to speak for or protect themselves. Therefore, Nga Tawa has a greater responsibility to know when and how to share appropriate information with external agencies to protect the safety and wellbeing of children.

17.2 Under the Privacy Act 2020, the giving of information to protect children is not a breach of confidentiality. Wherever possible the family/whanau should be kept informed of what information has been shared and to which agency, and for what purpose.

17.3 Under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, if a member of staff raises a legitimate concern in good faith about suspected child abuse, which proves to be unfounded on investigation, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against that staff member.

17.4 Should Nga Tawa be contacted with a request for information or access to interview a child then the following procedure will be followed:

- Confirm identity and credentials of person requesting information.
- Notify the Principal and the Lead Person for Child Protection.
- Identify specific information required and purpose.
- Check that Nga Tawa holds the information requested.
- The Principal is to identify a way forward and provide permission to share information.
- Depending on the reason for the request, and risk to children as judged case by case, inform the family/whanau that information has been requested, by whom and seek permission. If this is a child protection issue, permission from the family/whanau is not required.
- Document all steps in the process. Ensure that all documentation is placed on the child's child protection file.

## **SECTION FIVE: Staff Recruitment & Training**

### **18. Safe Recruitment of Staff**

18.1 Nga Tawa is committed to applying employment and selection processes which emphasise the importance of child protection, regardless of whether this position is paid or voluntary, permanent, part time or casual.

18.2 All appointments will be conditional on the completion and outcome of safety checks, including a Police check.

### **19. Child Protection Training of Staff**

19.1 All staff will receive child protection training at the level appropriate to their role. All staff and volunteers who work with, or who have contact in the course of their work with, children will be given appropriate training covering basic awareness of child protection. This will include an overview of signs and indicators of abuse, as well as the procedure for responding to actual or suspected abuse. This training will include:

- Roles and responsibility of staff regarding child protection.

- Recognising and responding to the signs and indicators of actual or suspected abuse.
- Ensuring staff receive a copy this Policy, can understand it, and can follow the Procedures for reporting a concern.

19.2 All new staff will receive child protection training, and will be given a copy of this policy, as part of the induction process.

19.3 All other staff, including the Lead Person for Child Protection, will receive updated child protection training every three years as a minimum.

## SECTION SIX: Safe Working Practices

### 20. Safe Working Practices

**All staff are expected to behave in a manner consistent with the Nga Tawa Code of Conduct.**

20.1 Relationship between an adult and a young person cannot be a relationship between equals. There is a potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people. Adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

20.2 Staff should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. Staff who work with young people must therefore act in a way that is considered to be safe practice.

20.3 It is imperative that in all dealings with young persons, a balance is struck between the rights of the child and the need for intervention. When physical contact is made with a child this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Staff should always use their professional judgement, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the child or young person for the minimum amount of time necessary.

20.4 Communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phone, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, webcams, websites, social networking and blogs. Staff should not share any personal information with a child or young person. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Staff should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

20.5 Any sexual activity between staff and a child will be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action.

## SECTION SEVEN: Allegations Against Members of Staff

### 21. Dealing with Allegations Against Staff

**Any internal disciplinary investigation should be conducted separately from Section Six of this policy. Any internal disciplinary action should not contradict Section Six of this policy**

21.1 Nga Tawa has a duty of care to the young persons it provides services to. A failure to report a significant concern about a child is a breach of that child's human rights.

21.2 Allegations, suspicions, or complaints of abuse against staff, volunteers, or representatives of other agencies must be taken seriously and reported to the Principal who will deal with them immediately, sensitively, and expediently within the procedures outlined in this Section.

21.3 It is not the responsibility of the staff to investigate allegations of child abuse.

21.4 If the Police decide to undertake a criminal investigation, then the member of staff may be suspended, without prejudice, as a precautionary measure. It is important that no internal investigation is undertaken and no evidence gathered that might prejudice the criminal investigation.

21.5 All staff have a responsibility to understand what constitutes appropriate behaviour in relation to children. All staff have a responsibility to maintain appropriate standards of behaviour and to report lapses in these standards by others.

21.6 Anyone who has reason to make a complaint will be made aware of the Nga Tawa complaint process. There is potential that an issue raised as a complaint may also constitute an allegation of abuse. Any such complaint that raises a child protection issue will be referred directly to the Principal.

21.7 Making a disclosure or a complaint against someone in a position of power and authority is difficult and it must be clearly communicated with the complainant, whether that be the young person themselves, a member of staff, or any other person, that their concern is being taken seriously and will be responded to in accordance with this policy

21.8 Allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against staff, volunteers or representatives of other agencies must be taken seriously and reported to the Principal who will deal with them immediately, sensitively and expediently within the procedures outlined in this policy. Concerns may be raised a number of ways e.g.:

- Directly by staff hearing or observing issues of concern or behaviour of concern.
- Direct disclosure by the child.
- Indirect disclosure e.g. through written or artwork or through friends.
- Complaint from a parent or caregiver or whanau member.
- Reports by other colleagues or agencies.
- As an anonymous report.

21.9 If the allegation is against the Principal, then this must be reported directly to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

21.10 It is **NOT** the responsibility of staff to investigate allegations of child abuse. Allegations against staff will be discussed with the Board of Trustees where a decision will be made if a notification to Oranga

Tamariki and/or the Police is appropriate. All concerns or allegations of sexual abuse must be reported to Oranga Tamariki and /or the NZ Police.

21.11 In all child protection cases Nga Tawa will co-operate fully with both Oranga Tamariki and the Police in their investigations and assessments.

21.12 If the Police decide to undertake a criminal investigation, then the member of staff may be suspended. It is important that no internal investigation is undertaken, and no evidence gathered that might prejudice an official Police or Oranga Tamariki investigation.

21.13 Even if there is insufficient evidence to pursue a criminal prosecution, then an internal disciplinary investigation may still be undertaken subject to internal disciplinary procedures.

21.14 Where the allegation is against a teacher the school will advise the Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (EDUCANZ) as per Section 394, Education Act 1989 – Mandatory reporting of possible serious misconduct as soon as possible.

21.15 A person tendering his or her resignation, or ceasing to provide their services, will not prevent an allegation of abuse against a child being followed up in accordance with these procedures.

## REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE

The Child Protection Policy and associated process and guidelines will be reviewed **every three years** at a minimum, or when necessary, including after a significant event or in line with changes in legislation and associated policies.

## RATIFICATION

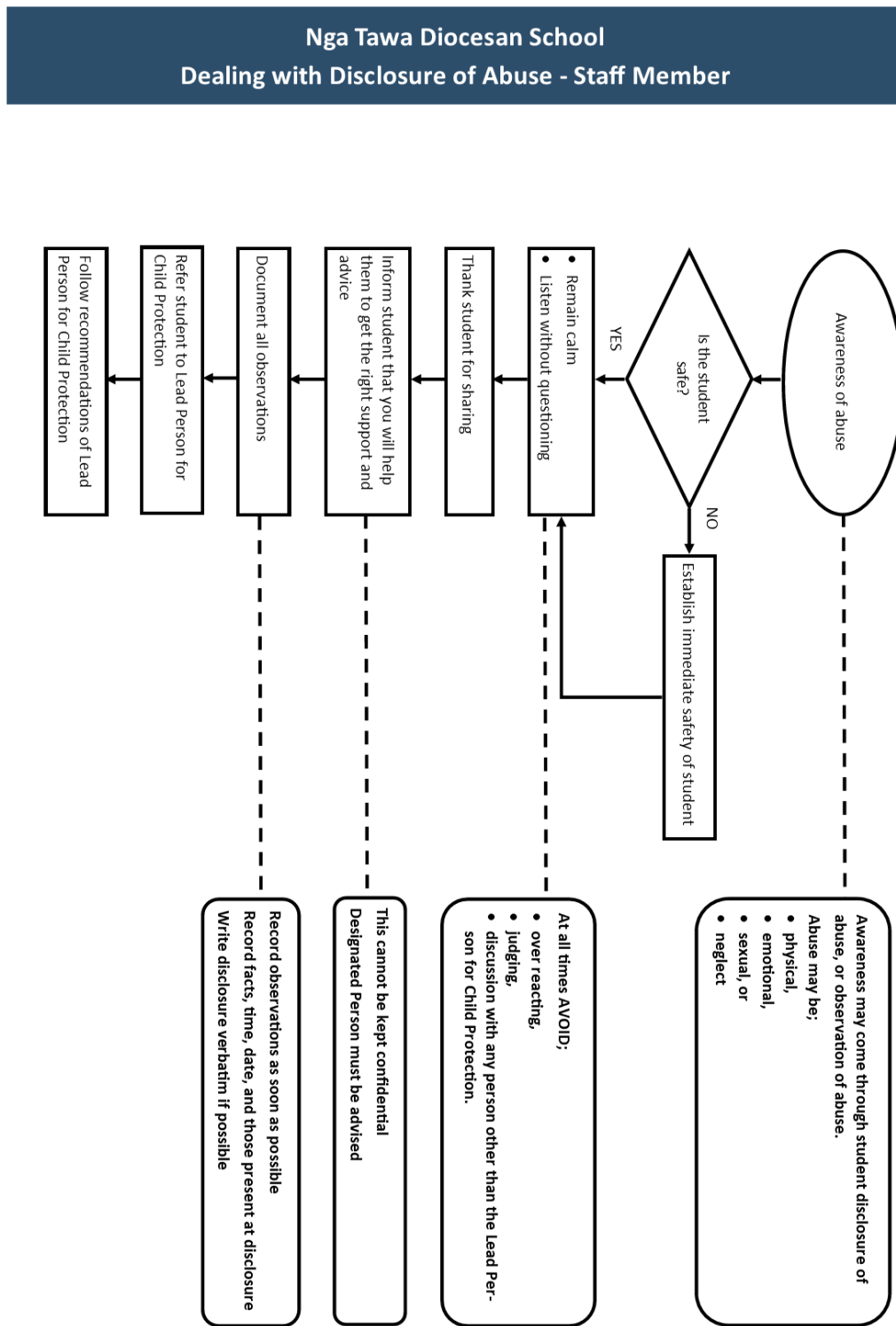
Ratified by Nga Tawa Board of Trustees and Nga Tawa Diocesan Board – 2 April 2025

Chairperson Board of Trustees – Heidi Hitchman

Chairman of the Diocesan Trust Board - Hayden Trotter

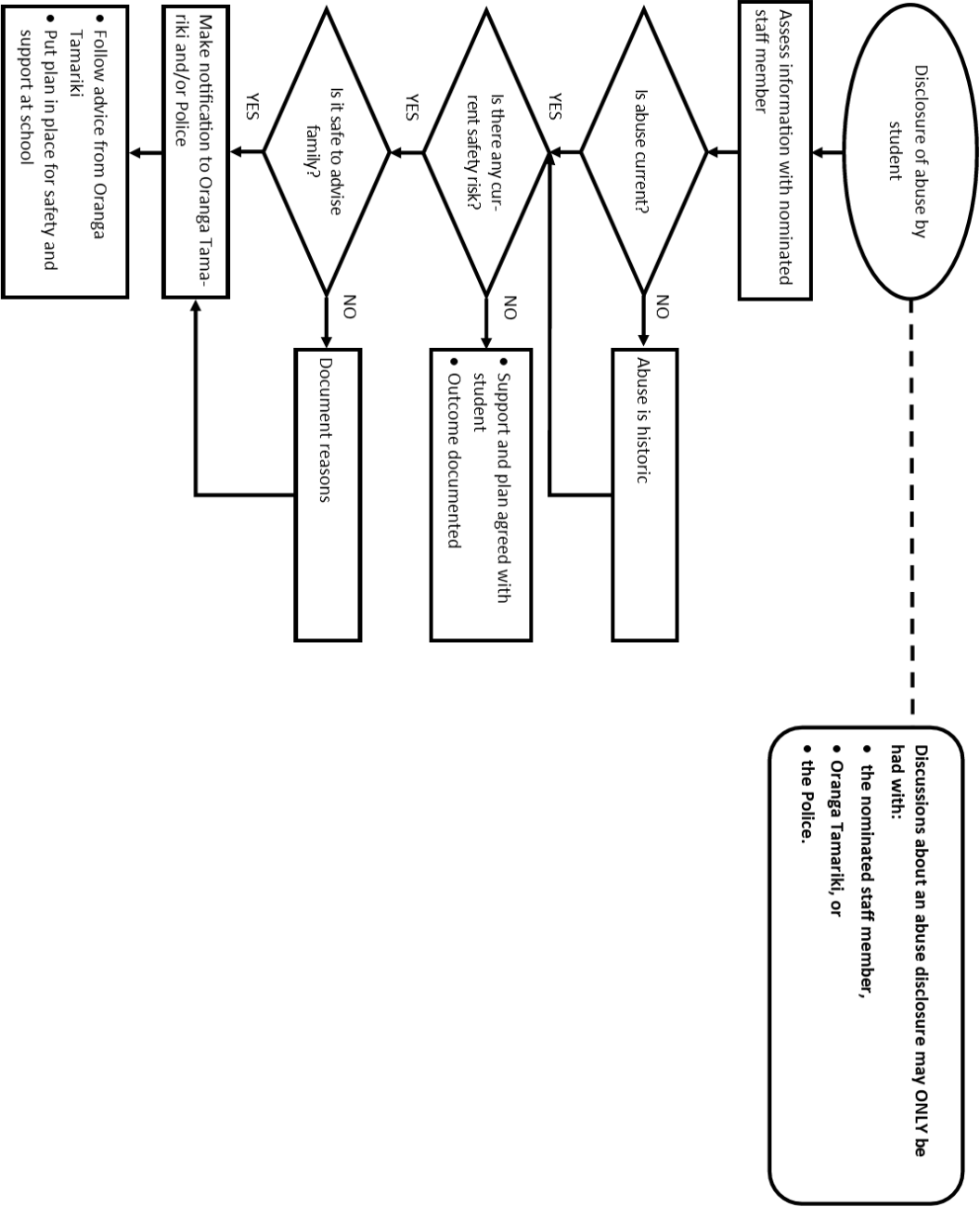
<b>Policy developed by:</b> The Director of Wellbeing
<b>Date reviewed and adopted:</b> 2 April 2025
<b>Due date for Policy Review:</b> April 2028
<b>File location:</b> All Staff Documents Team Drive – Child Protection

## Appendix One: Child Protection Procedures Flow Chart



Nga Tawa Diocesan School

Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse - Lead Person fro Child Protection







## Appendix Two: Indicators of Abuse

The indicators for child abuse and neglect fall into three general categories:

**Physical indicators:** Injuries to a child that are severe, occur in a pattern or occur frequently. These injuries range from bruises to broken bones to burns or unusual lacerations and are often unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given.

**Behavioural indicators:** The child's actions, attitudes, and emotions can indicate the possibility of abuse or neglect. Behavioural indicators alone are much less reliable than physical indicators, as a child's behaviour may be the result of a variety of other problems or conditions. When observing changes in behaviour, look for the frequency and pattern of the new behaviour, as well as a child's age and stage of development. For example, it is normal for younger children to be wary of adults, as they may have been taught not to talk to strangers. Look for a combination of physical and behavioural indicators.

**Caregiver indicators:** Caregivers who abuse, neglect or exploit children are either unable or unwilling to provide care and protection in an appropriate way. Those who are unable to provide care and protection may be physically unable due to their own medical or health condition. They may be overly stressed, tired, or working under the influence of drugs or alcohol which limits their abilities. Caregivers who are unwilling to provide children with the appropriate level of care and protection are more aware that what they are doing is wrong but continue to act in that way. These caregivers may not view the child as someone who has feelings and emotions and often have the need to control others or have displaced aggression towards weaker persons.

The indicators alone do not prove child abuse or neglect. Likewise, the absence of indicators does not exclude the possibility that abuse is occurring. If you have any concerns about the wellbeing of a child or young persons, seek advice from your Designated Person for Child Protection, Principal or Oranga Tamariki.

### Emotional Abuse Indicators

- Physical Indicators
  - Bed wetting or bed soiling with no medical cause
  - Frequent psychosomatic complaints (e.g. headaches, nausea, abdominal pains)
  - Non-organic failure to thrive
  - Pale, emaciated
  - Prolonged vomiting and/or diarrhoea

- Malnutrition
- Dressed differently to other children in the family
- Behavioural Indicators:
  - Severe developmental lags with obvious physical cause
  - Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
  - Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
  - Overly compliant
  - Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
  - Running away from home, avoiding attending at school
  - Nightmares, poor sleeping patterns
  - Anti-social behaviours
  - Lack of self esteem
  - Obsessive behaviours
  - Eating disorders
- Caregiver Indicators:
  - Labels the child as inferior or publicly humiliates the child (e.g. name calling)
  - Treats the child differently from siblings or peers in ways that suggest dislike for the child
  - Actively refuses to help the child
  - Constantly threatens the child with physical harm or death
  - Locks the child in a closet or room for extended periods of time
  - Teaches or reinforces criminal behaviour
  - Withholds physical and verbal affection
  - Keeps the child at home in role of servant or surrogate parent
  - Has unrealistic expectations of child
  - Involves child in adult issues such as separation or disputes over child's care
  - Exposes child to situations of arguing and violence in the home

## **Neglect Indictors**

- Physical Indicators:
  - Dressed inappropriately for the season or the weather
  - Often extremely dirty and unwashed
  - Severe nappy rash or other persistent skin disorders
  - Inadequately supervised or left unattended frequently or for long periods
  - May be left in the care of an inappropriate adult
  - Does not receive adequate medical or dental care
  - Malnourished - this can be both underweight and overweight
  - Lacks adequate shelter
  - Non-organic failure to thrive
- Behavioural Indicators:
  - Severe developmental lags without an obvious physical cause
  - Lack of attachment to parents/caregivers
  - Indiscriminate attachment to other adults

- Poor school attendance and performance
  - Demanding of affection and attention
  - Engages in risk taking behaviour such as drug and alcohol abuse
  - May steal food
  - Poor social skills
  - No understanding of basic hygiene
- Caregiver Indicators:
    - Puts own need ahead of child's
    - Fails to provide child's basic needs
    - Demonstrates little or no interest in child's life - does not attend school activities, social events
    - Leaves the child alone or inappropriately supervised
    - Drug and alcohol use
    - Depression

### **Physical Abuse Indicators**

- Physical Indicators:
  - Bruises, welts, cuts and abrasions
  - Burns - small circular burns, immersion burns, rope burns etc
  - Fractures and dislocations - skull, facial bones, spinal fractures etc
  - Multiple fractures at different stages of healing
  - Fractures in very young children
- Behavioural Indicators:
  - Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
  - Wary of adults or a particular person
  - Vacant stare or frozen watchfulness
  - Cringing or flinching if touches unexpectedly
  - May be extremely compliant and eager to please
  - Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
  - Runs away from home or is afraid to go home
  - May regress (e.g. bedwetting)
  - May indicate general sadness
  - Could have vision or hearing delay
  - Is violent to other children or animals
- Caregiver Indicators:
  - Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
  - May appear unconcerned about child's wellbeing
  - May state the child is prone to injuries or lies about how they occur
  - Delays in seeking medical attention
  - May take the child to multiple medical appointments and seek medical treatment without an obvious need

## **Sexual Abuse Indicators**

- Physical Indicators:
  - Unusual or excessive itching or pain in the genital or anal area
  - Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
  - Bruises, lacerations, redness, swelling or bleeding in genital, vaginal or anal area
  - Blood in urine or stools
  - Sexually transmitted infections
  - Pregnancy
  - Discomfort in sitting or fidgeting as unable to sit comfortably
- Behavioural Indicators:
  - Age-inappropriate sexual play or language
  - Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge
  - Refuses to go home, or to a specific person's home, for no apparent reason
  - Fear of a certain person
  - Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
  - Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
  - Overly compliant
  - Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
  - Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
  - Eating disorders
  - Compulsive behaviours
- Caregiver Indicators:
  - May be unusually over-protective of the child
  - Accuses the child of being sexually provocative
  - Misuses alcohol or drugs
  - Invades the child's privacy (e.g. during dressing, in the bathroom)
  - May favour the victim over other children

## **Family Violence Indicators**

- Indicators in the Child:
  - Physical injuries consistent with the indicators of Physical Abuse
  - Absenteeism from school
  - Bullying or aggressive behaviour
  - Complaints of headaches or stomach aches with no apparent medical reason
  - Talking or describing violent behaviours
- Indicators in the Victim:
  - Physical Injuries including: bruising to chest and abdomen, injuries during pregnancy
  - Depression and/or anxiety
  - Inconsistent explanations for injuries
  - Fearful
  - Submissive

- Indicators in the Offender:
  - Isolates and controls partner and children
  - Threatens, criticises, intimidates, uses aggressive and physical abuse towards partner and children
  - Minimises and denies own behaviour, or blames victim for the perpetrators own behaviour

Appendix Three

**Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand**

**Criteria for Reporting Serious Misconduct**

**(Education Council Rules 2016)**

If a school believes a teacher could be guilty of serious misconduct, they have a legal obligation to report this to the Education Council. This is a mandatory report. The criteria for reporting serious misconduct are contained in the Education Council Rules 2016, in Rule 9, which is set out below:

Rule 9: Criteria for Reporting Serious Misconduct:

1. For the purposes of section 394 of the Education Act 1989, which imposes the general requirement that employers have to report serious misconduct, an employer of a teacher must immediately report to the Education Council if it has reason to believe that the teacher has engaged in any of the following kinds of serious misconduct:
  - (a) physical abuse of a child or young person (which includes physical abuse carried out under the direction, or with the connivance, of the teacher):
  - (b) sexual abuse of a child or young person (which includes sexual abuse carried out under the direction, or with the connivance, of the teacher):
  - (c) psychological abuse of a child or young person, which may include (but is not limited to) physical abuse of another person, or damage to property, inflicted in front of a child or young person, threats of physical or sexual abuse, and harassment:
  - (d) an inappropriate relationship with a person under the age of 16 years:
  - (e) an inappropriate relationship with a student with whom the teacher is, or was when the relationship commenced, in contact as a result of his or her position as a teacher:
  - (f) neglect or ill-treatment of a child or young person in the teacher's care:
  - (g) neglect or ill-treatment of an animal in the teacher's care:
  - (h) theft or fraud:
  - (i) manufacture of, cultivation of, supply of, dealing in, or use of controlled drugs:
  - (j) permitting, or acquiescing in, the manufacture of, cultivation of, supply of, dealing in, or use of controlled drugs by a child or young person:
  - (k) viewing, accessing, or possessing pornographic material while at a school or early childhood education service or engaged in the business of a school or early childhood education service:

(l) viewing, accessing, or possessing pornographic material that depicts children or young persons or that depicts animals engaged in sexual acts with humans:

(m) breaching the standards or rules of the school or early childhood education service concerning the use of alcohol at the school or while engaged in the business of the school or early childhood education service:

(n) any other act or omission that could be the subject of a prosecution for an offence punishable by imprisonment for a term of 3 months or more:

(o) any act or omission that brings, or is likely to bring, discredit to the teaching profession.

2. Physical, sexual, or psychological abuse is reportable whether it occurs as—

(a) a single act; or

(b) a number of acts forming part of a pattern of behaviour, even if some or all of those acts, viewed in isolation, are minor or trivial.