



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This policy outlines the board's commitment to child protection and recognises the important role and responsibility of all our staff in the protection of children. It includes the board's expectations when child abuse is reported or suspected by us.

All staff members (including contractors and volunteers) are expected to be familiar with this policy, its associated procedures and protocols and abide by them.

The board of trustees has an obligation to ensure the wellbeing of children in our care so they thrive, belong and achieve. We are committed to the prevention of child abuse and neglect and to the protection of all children. The safety and wellbeing of the child is our top priority. Advice will be sought through appropriate agencies in all cases of suspected or alleged abuse.

In line with section 15 of the Children, Young Person and Their Families Act, any person in our school/kura who believes that any child or young person has been, or is likely to be, harmed (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually) ill-treated, abused, neglected, or deprived must follow school procedures and may also report the matter to a social worker or the local police.

Although ultimate accountability sits with the board, the board delegates responsibility to the principal to ensure that all child safety procedures are implemented and available to all staff, contractors, volunteers and parents. Therefore, the principal must:

1. **Develop appropriate procedures** to meet child safety requirements as required and appropriate to the school
2. Comply with relevant legislative requirements and responsibilities
3. Make this policy **available on the school's internet site** or available on request
4. Ensure that every contract, or funding arrangement, that the school enters into requires the adoption of child protection policies where required
5. Ensure the interests and protection of the child are paramount in all circumstances
6. Recognise the rights of family/whanau to participate in the decision-making about their children
7. Ensure that all **staff are able to identify the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect, deal with disclosures** by children and allegations against staff members and are able to take appropriate action in response
8. Support all staff to work in accordance with this policy, to work with **partner agencies** and organisations to ensure child protection policies are understood and implemented
9. **Promote a culture** where staff feel confident they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal
10. 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 with the board or designated person

11. Seek **advice as necessary from NZSTA** advisors on employment matters and other relevant agencies where child safety issues arise
12. **Make available professional development, resources and/or advice** to ensure all staff can carry out their roles in terms of this policy
13. Ensure that this policy forms part of the initial **staff induction programme** for each staff member

Review schedule: Within 3 years

Related documentation and information

- **Ouruhia School procedures:** Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect in Schools (attached)
- Ouruhia School **Health & Safety Policy**, including a list of procedures we have in place for the health and safety of our children and staff (attached)

- Further information including frequently asked questions (FAQ's) are available on the NZSTA website www.nzsta.org.nz
- Ministry of Education website www.education.govt.nz
- [Vulnerable Children Act 2014](#)
- Further information and sample child protection templates are available in the Children's Action Plan guideline Safer Organisations, Safer Children: <http://www.childrensactionplan.govt.nz/assets/CAP-Uploads/childrens-workforce/Safer-Organisations-safer-children.pdf>



REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT IN SCHOOLS

RATIONALE:

These procedures acknowledge that boards of trustees have particular responsibilities under legislation as well as through social expectations to provide a safe environment that caters for the physical and emotional well-being of its students. Such an environment should aim to ensure that all children and young people are treated with dignity.

PURPOSE:

The recommended procedures on reporting child abuse and neglect in schools will be successfully implemented with:

1. an emphasis that the paramount consideration in such a policy is the welfare and interests of the child or young person (CYP&F Act (56))
2. the provision of guidelines and training for teachers and others working with children and young people in the school environment.
3. a commitment to ensure that children and young people are provided with preventative education to enhance their safety and awareness.
4. the development of procedures for dealing with cases of current or historical abuse.
5. the identification of which external agencies should be used, what services they provide, what liaison is required along with appropriate referral procedures.

GUIDELINES:

It is expected that boards will need to facilitate training for all staff to help them to identify suspected abuse and/or neglect and to be able to respond appropriately. It is recommended that training needs be identified and planned to coincide with teaching Keeping Ourselves Safe every second year.

To assist with the implementation of a training policy, individual boards and/or principals should liaise with Child, Youth & Family (CYF) and New Zealand Police.

Further support can be provided by:

- ❖ guidance counsellors
- ❖ education psychologists attached to Group Special Education (MOE)
- ❖ personnel who can provide further assistance to students

Schools are able to provide preventative education in their delivery of the Health and Physical Education national curriculum statement. Student should have access to information about child abuse and appropriate responses to it through the relevant parts of this curriculum.

A useful way of managing suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect is for a staff member to be nominated as a safety advocate for the child or young person.

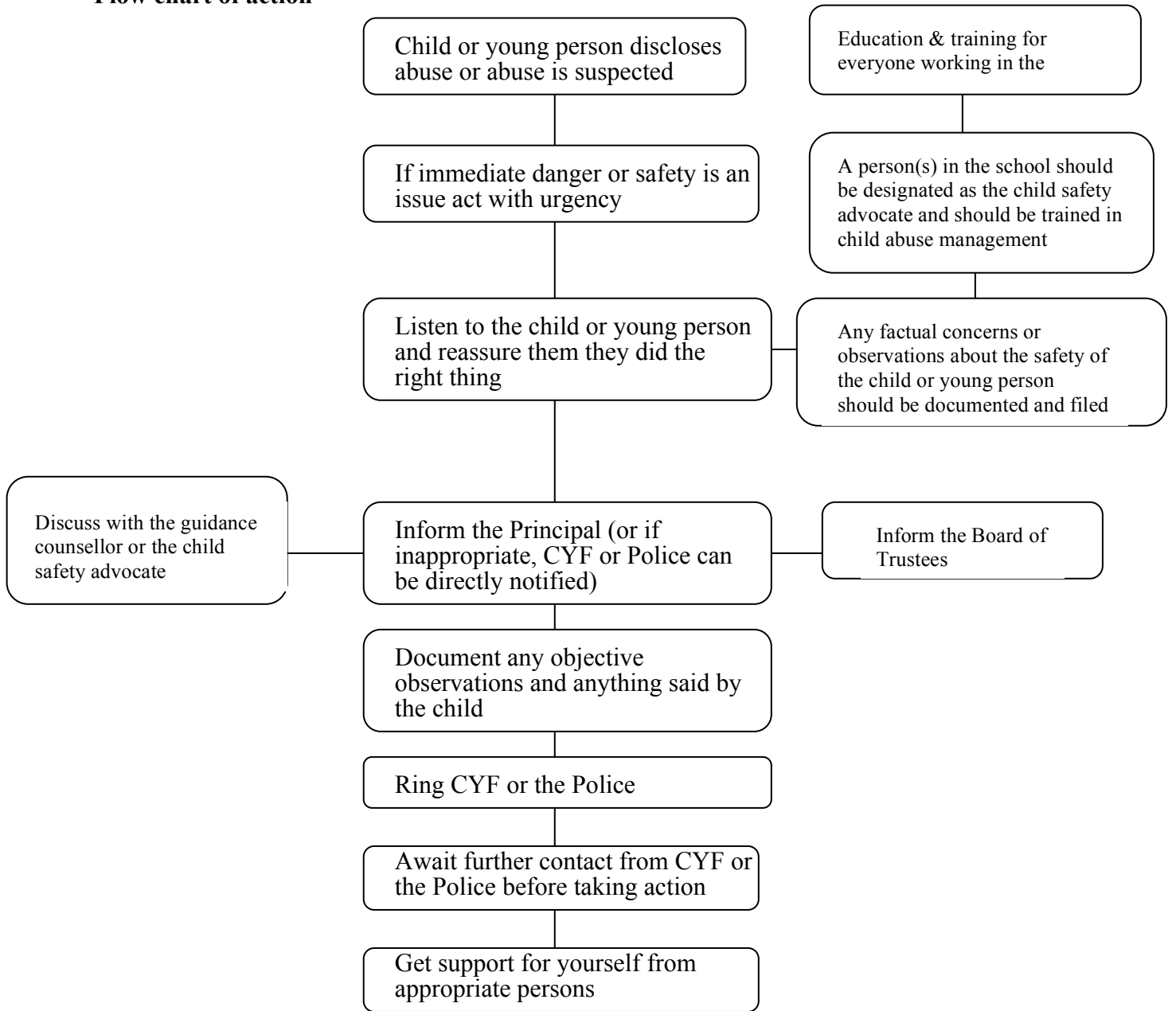
The vital role of cultural groups and local support agencies in supporting this policy should be recognised by schools/principals in their ongoing communication and liaison with their wider community. Similarly, the role of relevant statutory agencies should be recognised in the consultative process.

Decisions and informing parents or caregivers should be made after consultation between the school and the statutory child protection service called in by them.

RECOMMENDED REPORTING PROCEDURES AND FLOWCHART

- ❖ If the child or young person is in danger or unsafe, act immediately to ensure their safety.
- ❖ Listen to the child or young person and reassure them but do not make promises or commitments you cannot keep.
- ❖ Ensure that any information or disclosures by the child or young person are written down and check that comments and events surrounding the concern have also been recorded.
- ❖ Ensure that the child or young person has a responsible adult supporting them through and that the support role is clearly defined.
- ❖ Do not formally interview the child or young person. Obtain only necessary relevant facts if and when clarification is needed. (See CAP guidelines, attached)
- ❖ Anyone suspecting child abuse may make direct contact with the Police or CYF.
- ❖ Inform the Principal if this is appropriate
- ❖ Hold immediate discussion with guidance counsellor or child safety advocate.
- ❖ Agree on appropriate course of action.
- ❖ The principal ensures notification to CYF or the police. Await further contact before taking any action.
- ❖ After making sure the referral has gone to CYF or the police, get support for yourself from appropriate persons if needed.

Flow chart of action



Points to note:

- Documentation may subsequently be used in court as evidence for either side.
- Avoid making judgments simply record the facts.
- Interviewing of suspected abuse victims is a specialised procedure best left to those who are trained in such techniques.
- The child advocate should be responsible for ensuring that the child's welfare remains paramount.



HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Ouruhia School provides a safe, physical and emotional environment for students, employees, parents and visitors through complying with any legislation currently in force or that may be developed to ensure the safety of students, employees, parents and visitors.

In order to meet these requirements...

(a) The Board of Trustees develops and implements:

Procedures for:

- Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect
- Smokefree
- Sexual & Racial Harassment (*see Personnel procedures*)

(b) The Principal and Staff (*Management*) develop and implement:

Procedures for:

- Accidents and sick children
- Behaviour Management
- Wheels at School
- Transport – Bus and Car
- Emergency Preparedness (& Civil Defence)
- EOTC/ Risk Management (*See Curriculum procedures*)
- Internet Safety (*See Curriculum: Library Internet Acceptable Use*)
- Medication

(c) The BOT in conjunction with the Principal and Staff (management) develop and implement:

Procedures for:

- Blood-borne Viruses
- Bullying
- Crisis Management
- Harmful Substances
- Non-custodial parents procedure
- Playground Supervision
- Sun Smart
- Truancy Prevention

Other supporting documents related to Health & Safety

- (✓) Accident / Incident Register
- (✓) Behaviour Management folders
- (✓) Bullying Information for Parents
- (✓) Bullying Intervention Programme
- (✓) Bullying Surveys & Results
- () Civil Defence Guidelines/Box (*under development*)
- (✓) Emergency Evacuation Guidelines
- (✓) Evacuation Drill Log Book
- (✓) School Hazards Identification list / Health & Safety Check Reports
- (✓) School Emergency Ringing list
- (✓) Stand-down/ Suspension Record
- (✓) Water Tests (Drinking & Swimming Pool)

Through the development of these Health and Safety procedures and practice, Ouruhia School ensures a safe, physical and emotional environment for students, staff and visitors.

Policy reviewed by:
Mark Smith, Board

August 2004

Approved at Board meeting: May 2007

Next review date: 2016