



## Ruawai College: Operational Policy 8 Health and Safety: Child Protection Policy

### **Purpose:**

This policy outlines the board's commitment to child protection and recognises the important role and responsibility of all 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 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 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.

### **Aims and Responsibilities:**

#### **Objective:**

The safety of the child is our prime consideration at all times.

## Related Documents:

The child protection policy is to be used in conjunction with the following existing policies:

- Complaints Policy
- School Health and Safety Policy

This child protection policy adheres to the following Acts:

- Vulnerable Children's Act 2014
- Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989
- Health and Disability Commissioner Act 1994
- Privacy Act 1993
- Human Rights Act 1993
- Education Act 1989/1998
- Care of Children Act 2004
- Employment Relations Act 2000

## Scope:

- This policy applies to all children who are clients of this organisation, and to those with whom personnel came into contact in the course of their work with Ruawai College.
- It applies to staff and volunteers of the college.
- It also applies to any contracted personnel providing support services to families or family members, and to those providing support services to staff.

## Definitions:

- A "**child**" is defined as anyone under the age of 18.
- "**Staff**" is defined as those who are employed directly by or volunteer for Ruawai College as well as staff and volunteers of partner organisations whilst they are working with children and young people in the care or supervision of the college.
- A "**contractor**" is defined as anyone contracted to Ruawai College to carry out work in support of school sanctioned activities, while working with children, young people and staff.

## Responsibilities:

The Principal holds the responsibility for child protection at Ruawai College.

## Review:

The Child Protection Policy and all associated sub-policies and procedures, will be reviewed annually.

Chairperson:  \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed: 08 / 06 / 2017

Next Review Date: \_\_\_ / 06 / 2018