



Ruawai College

Next review: Term 3 2028

Safety Checking

This policy operates as a supporting policy under the **Child Protection** policy.

At Ruawai College, we have a responsibility to ensure the safety of our students under the Children's Act 2014, Education and Training Act 2020, and Health and Safety at Work Act 2015. One of the ways we meet this responsibility is by safety checking people to limit the risk of harm to students. Safety checking involves gathering information and doing a risk assessment of a person's suitability to have contact with students. All children's workers employed or engaged by the school are safety checked before their employment or engagement begins, and then every three years. We also safety check others as appropriate. We follow the safety checking procedure below, which is based on guidance in the Ministry of Education's Children's Act 2014 practical guide for schools (see **Resources** below).

Who we safety check

We safety check all ► **children's workers (core and non-core)** as required by the Children's Act. We may use our safety checking procedures for others employed or engaged by the school (even if not required by the Children's Act), including those we are required to police vet under the Education and Training Act 2020 (Schedule 4). Volunteers are not children's workers and are not legally required to be police vetted or safety checked, although the school may choose to do this.

When deciding who to safety check, we are guided by the Ministry of Education – see **Police vets and safety checks** 

How we safety check

The board or their delegate is responsible for completing the following safety checking within the required timeframes and before the person starts work at the school. The board remains accountable for decisions made about access and supervision.

When safety checking a person we explain the process (including how long their information will be kept for and why), and obtain their consent. Individuals cannot complete their own safety checking process, and we are mindful of potential or perceived conflicts of interest when carrying out safety checking.

Identity confirmation

We confirm identity according to the Children's (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) Regulations 2015 (s 5). For a list of approved identity documents see **Confirmation of identity**  (Schedule).

Police vetting

We receive information from the police that they consider relevant. This may include previous ► **criminal convictions**. We may also seek police certificates from other countries, or a statutory declaration, if the person has lived overseas. See **Police Vetting**.

Collecting other information

We gather details about work history and professional organisation membership, and verify licences, registrations, and qualifications. We interview the person and assess their working experiences and relationships with children, and carry out referee checks for children's workers.

Risk assessment

We evaluate all information gathered as part of safety checking to make a professional judgement about whether the person would pose any risk to the safety of students if they were employed as a children's worker. We consider relevant indicators in context and seek further evidence if necessary.

When assessing risk, we take into account Ministry of Education guidelines on conducting risk assessments as required by the Education and Training Act 2020 and Children's (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) Regulations 2015.

Our risk assessment takes into account:

- the safety and best interests of students
- the nature and seriousness of the information, and the relevance and risk to the role
- the length of time since relevant matters occurred
- the person's age at the time of relevant matters and their conduct since
- whether there is a pattern of similar information, and whether there are any other aggravating/mitigating factors.

See **Risk assessments after a Police vet**  (Ministry of Education).

Our risk assessments may involve further investigation and/or discussing any concerns with the person we are safety checking. For people currently employed or engaged by the school, any concerns raised in the police vet and risk assessment process are addressed using our concerns and complaints processes, and we may seek external advice (e.g. legal, NZSBA). See **Assessing and Responding to Concerns and Complaints**.

If the police vet shows that a core worker has been convicted of an offence specified in Schedule 2 of the Children's Act 2014, we follow the **►process** as required by the Act (s 28), rather than our usual concerns and complaints process.

Safety checks by others

In some instances, the school may choose to accept some or all of the components of a safety check carried out by other organisations (e.g. relieving agencies, teacher training providers, transport service providers) on behalf of the school, or as part of that organisation's own certifying, enrolment, or employment processes.

If we choose to rely on a safety check completed by another organisation we follow Ministry of Education guidance and:

- ensure the person being safety checked has given permission to share their information – permission may be obtained by us or whoever is completing the safety check
- confirm the other organisation or person is doing the check on our behalf, and get them to provide written confirmation that the check follows the standard set out in the Children's Act 2014
- complete our own identity checks and risk assessments
- keep records about the safety checking process.

We may choose not to rely on safety checking done by another organisation.

Keeping safety checks up to date

As required by the Children's Act, we safety check existing children's workers within three years of their last safety check. This includes confirmation of any name changes, police vetting,

and registration checks with professional organisations and authorities. The board or their delegate completes a risk assessment at the end of this process to determine whether the worker poses a risk to the safety of children.

If we accept safety checks from other organisations we confirm in writing that their safety checking occurs every three years.

If any concerns are raised within the three-year review period (outside of the safety checking process), we follow our concerns and complaints processes, which may include doing a further risk assessment. We seek external advice in these circumstances (e.g. legal advice, NZSBA). See [Assessing and Responding to Concerns and Complaints](#).

Record keeping

The school maintains a detailed record of all safety checks. All safety checking information is kept confidential and managed according to our privacy and records retention policies. See [Privacy Policy](#) and [School Records Retention and Disposal](#).

We keep the following information according to the Ministry of Education's School Records Retention and Disposal Schedule:

- a record of the person's name, the dates of their initial and most recent safety check, and when their next safety check is due
- all other safety checking information collected, including any actions taken, the dates, and the reasons for these actions – also see [Police Vetting](#)
- any assurances and risk assessment information for safety checks carried out by another organisation.

Safety checking records are kept securely for audit purposes for seven years from the date of the last action before being destroyed with permission from the board. If unsure, we consult NZSBA or seek legal advice before destroying records.

The principal assures the board that all children's workers employed or engaged by the school have been safety checked before their appointment. The principal confirms that all children's workers have been safety checked as required within 3 years of the previous check. See [Review Schedule and Board Assurances](#).

Related policies

- [Board Responsibilities](#)
- [Police Vetting](#)
- [Child Protection](#)
- [Teaching Staff](#)
- [Stages of Appointment](#)
- [Contractors Working at School](#)
- [Volunteer Involvement](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [School Records Retention and Disposal](#)
- [Visitors](#)

Legislation

- Children's Act 2014
- Children's (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) Regulations 2015
- Education and Training Act 2020
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

- Privacy Act 2020

Resources

- Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga:
 - [Child protection in schools](#) 
 - [Who needs to be safety checked at school](#) 
 - [Risk assessments after a Police vet](#) 
 - [Children's Act 2014: A practical guide for early childhood services, Ngā Kōhanga Reo, playgroups, schools and kura](#) 
 - [Police vets and safety checks](#) 
- NZSBA | Te Whakarōputanga Kaitiaki Kura o Aotearoa: [Safety checking and police vetting](#) 

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