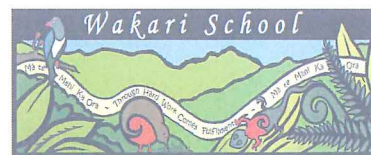


Wakari School Board of Trustees
CHILD ABUSE POLICY

Revised: October 2014



PURPOSE

To have effective procedures for ensuring the safety and well being of children under the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act along with Vulnerable Childrens Act.

OBJECTIVES

1. Any person has a right to report suspected cases of child abuse.
2. The safety of the child is paramount and if the child is in danger or in an unsafe situation, action needs to be taken quickly to secure his/her safety. The appropriate agency should be advised quickly.
3. Adults shall be receptive and sensitive to children so that the children feel listened to and believed.
4. The school will use the most appropriate support agency for suspected cases of sexual, emotional or physical abuse and/or neglect.
5. In the case of a report from a third party to the school, the first course of action is the school directing the third party to a helping agency without becoming involved. The school may be involved at a later date.
6. Keeping Ourselves Safe and self-esteem units are taught as part of the health programme to increase children's assertiveness skills in dealing with uncomfortable situations and to help raise consciousness of the issues.
7. Parents are informed, except where the student's welfare is likely to be threatened. Whichever agency is involved in the case is responsible for informing parents as they have the skills to handle the situation in the most appropriate way to support the child.
8. If appropriate, teachers who have concerns discuss these only with their syndicate leader or the principal.
9. Where further investigation or action is necessary, the Principal will contact the appropriate agency, give them the relevant information, and leave it in their hands. It is important to name the child as information may already be held by CYPF.
10. Teachers should use the appendices attached to help identify children possibly at risk. NB: The appendices will be updated triennially as part of the review of this policy.
11. All information/discussions shall be confidential to those involved. Data shall be stored in one place known to the senior staff. Data is kept for the duration of the child's enrolment.
12. Once an agency has been involved, that agency and, where appropriate, the Police, investigate and the school acts on advice from the agency.
13. Whenever an interview is held with a child, an adult on the staff whom the child has confidence in, should be present. The welfare of the child is the first priority and wherever that is compromised the interview will be terminated. Staff members attending such interviews have the ability to make this judgment.

Complaints Against Staff Involving Sexual Abuse

Once a helping agency is involved, the following procedures are followed and are in line with those set out in the Teachers' Employment Contract re Complaints Against Teachers.

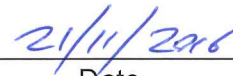
- 1 The Principal informs the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
- 2 Both inform the staff member who is advised they may seek legal and/or union representation.
- 3 The school informs the union.
- 4 The staff member is suspended on full pay once an investigation has begun, in line with Section 2.21g of the Teachers' Collective Contract. At this stage the rest of the staff are informed. Counsellors from SES or NZEI can be made available to any staff requesting support.

EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

- 1 This policy will be reviewed by the board in accordance with its triennial programme of self-review.
- 2 The board will make its review report available to parents and staff.



Board Chairperson



Date