# Policy No. OP8

# Policy Name: Child Protection Policy

# Procedures for: Disclosure of Child Abuse

# Date adopted: 5 March 2018

Purpose

To ensure the physical and emotional safety of children when disclosing child abuse.

Definitions

The Children, Young Persons and Their Families (Oranga Tamariki) Act, 1989, defines child abuse as the harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation of any child or young person.

Procedures

* Listen to the student and reassure them, but do not make any promises or commitments.
* Keep in mind the following:
* Don’t panic.
* Remember that the safety and well-being of the child come before the interests of any other person.
* Listen to the child and accept what the child says.
  + Look at the child directly, but do not appear shocked, remain calm.
  + Don’t seek help while the child is talking to you.
  + Reassure them that they did the right thing by telling someone.
  + Assure them that it is not their fault and you will do your best to help.
  + Let them know that you need to tell someone else.
  + Let them know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
  + Be aware that the child may have been threatened.
* Write down what the child says in their own words – record what you have seen and heard also. Do not formally interview them or ask them leading questions.
* The child's safety should always be the paramount consideration in the notification process.
* No decisions or actions in respect of suspected or actual child abuse are to be made by any staff member in isolation unless there are concerns for the immediate safety of the child.
* A consultative approach is essential to ensure the safety of the child and the staff member. Staff must discuss their concerns with the principal or nominated person/advocate. Where applicable, follow the board's complaint policy.
* Decisions about informing parents or caregivers should be made after consultation between the school and the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki.
* Make a referral to the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki.
* For an urgent referral, call the Contact Centre 0508 EDASSIST (0508 332 774), or the Police.
* After making the referral get support for yourself from appropriate persons, if needed.

Contacts

Oranga Tamariki **0508 EDASSIST (0508 332 774**

Key relevant documents

MOE CYF Protocol for reporting actual or suspected child abuse

https://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/School/Traumatic-incidents-and-emergencies/MoE-STA-CYFProtocolForReportingActualOrSuspectedChildAbuseNov09Amendment-3-2015.pdf

MOE Child Protection Policy

https://www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/publications/child-

protection-policy/