

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

School Vision: Developing the Character of God - Academic Excellence

*Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." **Mark 10:11***

### **Outcome statement:**

Students at Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist school thrive, belong and achieve to the best of their ability. Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist school is committed to the prevention of child abuse and neglect and to the protection of all children.

### **Purposes**

1. Making the safety and wellbeing of children the primary concern, with the child at the centre of all decision making.
2. A commitment to work together to produce the best possible outcomes for the children and to work towards continuous improvement in child protection practices
3. Supporting children, their whānau, agencies, core and non-core workers to provide for the wellbeing of students who attend the Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist School.
- 4.

### **Scope of this Policy**

1. We recognise that all staff and trustees have a full and active part to play in protecting students from harm
2. Overall responsibility, implementation and review of this policy rests with the principal
3. All staff members (including contractors and volunteers) are expected to be familiar with this policy, its associated procedures and protocols and abide by them.
4. Advice will be sought through appropriate agencies in all cases of suspected or alleged abuse.
5. In line with Section 15 of the [Oranga Tamariki Act 1989](#), 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.
6. Delegation - 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.
7. This policy applies to:
  - all children who are enrolled at Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist School
  - all staff employed by Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist School

- all parents and caregivers who come into contact with students within the school grounds and attending school events
- all volunteers who come into contact with students in the course of their work
- all contractors who come into contact with students in the course of their work

This policy is aimed at

### **Purpose**

To ensure that we provide a safe environment, free from physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse.

To ensure that we recognise the important role and responsibility of all of our staff in the protection of children by identifying and responding to suspected child abuse or neglect and appropriately responding to concerns about the wellbeing of a child.

To ensure that Part 2, Section 18 (a), (b), (c) & (d) of the Children's Act 2014 are met; namely that the Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist School Board will:

(a) adopt a child protection policy

(b) ensure that the policy is available on the school website and is available upon request from the school office

(c) ensure that all agencies, contracts or funding arrangements fulfil the requirements of this policy

(d) review the policy every three years

(e) delegate to the principal, as per the delegations policy, the responsibility for 'requirements specified by Act of Parliament, the Secretary of Education, any other permanent head of a Government department'.

### **Guidelines**

- The Principal is required to ensure that leaders within the school work together with other children's agencies (such as the Police, Child Youth and Family, Social Workers, etc.) to improve the well-being of vulnerable children by: - protecting them from abuse and neglect - improving their physical and mental health and their cultural and emotional well-being - improving their educational outcomes and their participation in cultural and extra-curricular activities - strengthening their connection to their families, whānau, hapu and iwi, or other culturally recognised family groups - Increasing their participation in self-decision making and their contribution to society - Improving their social and economic well-being
- The Principal is to ensure that safe recruitment practices in line with the Children's Act 2014 are in place.
- The Privacy Act 2020 and the Oranga Tamaiki Act 1989 - Children's, and Young Young People's Well-Being Act 1989 allow for information to be shared to keep children safe when abused or suspected abuse is reported or investigated.
- Core and non-core workers will have been provided with training in order to recognise and respond to suspected abuse and neglect. The training should ensure roles and expectations of adult behaviour with children meet professional requirements as this will assist with the personal safety of core and non-core workers.
- The Principal will ensure that there are procedures in place to identify and respond to allegations regarding abuse. The Principal will ensure that there are procedures in place to deal with the possibility of an allegation involving a staff member.
- Any external organisation that has a contracting and/or funding arrangement with the school must provide a copy of their Children Protection Policy to the Principal as well as agree to the school's Child Protection Policy and accompanying procedures. Definition: Child abuse: Includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse as well as neglect which is the direct consequence of a deliberate act

or omission by an adult and which has the potential or effect of serious harm to the child. Child neglect: Failure or omission to care for a child. This can be physical, emotional, medical, educational and a lack of supervision.

## **Expectations & Limitations**

The principal must:

- develop appropriate procedures to meet child safety requirements as required and appropriate to the school
- comply with relevant legislative requirements and responsibilities
- make this policy available on the school's internet site or available on request
- ensure that every contract or funding arrangement that the school enters into requires the adoption of child protection policies where required
- ensure the interests and protection of the child are paramount in all circumstances
- recognise the rights of family/whānau to participate in the decision making about their children
- ensure that all staff are able to identify the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect and deal with disclosures by children and allegations against staff members and are able to take appropriate action in response
- support all staff to work in accordance with this policy to work with partner agencies and organisations to ensure child protection procedures are understood and implemented
- promote a culture where staff feel confident they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal
- consult, discuss and share relevant information with the board or designated person in line with our commitment to confidentiality and information-sharing protocols in a timely way regarding any concerns about an individual child
- seek advice as necessary from NZSTA advisers on employment matters and other relevant agencies where child safety issues arise
- make available professional development, resources and/or advice to ensure all staff can carry out their roles in terms of this policy
- ensure that this policy forms part of the initial staff induction programme for each staff member.

## **Supporting Procedures and Documents**

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Appointment Policy
- Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Identifying, Responding and Reporting alleged abuse
- Child Abuse Disclosure Policy
- Anti-Bullying Procedures
- EOTC Procedures
- Online Publication of Student Images and Work
- Student safety and welfare Supporting Documents
- Safer organisations Safer children – Guidelines for child protection policies to build safer organisations
- Children's Act 2014
- Privacy Act 2020
- Oranga Tamaiki Act 1989 - Children's, and Young Young People's Well-Being Act 1989
- <https://www.education.govt.nz/school/health-safety-and-wellbeing/pastoral-care-and-wellbeing/childrens-act-2014-requirements-for-schools-and-kura/>

## Guidelines

This policy includes guidelines and procedures for the following:

- safety checking of adult employees and volunteers
- harmful behaviour
- bullying
- disclosure of abuse by an adult (including staff members)
- referrals to external agencies
- safe working practices (including restraint and seclusion)
- protected disclosures

Other policies related to this policy are:

- Education Outside the Classroom
- Internet Safety - Cybersafety Policy
- Privacy Act - Protected Disclosure of Information Policy

### Guidelines: Safety Checking of Adult Employees and Volunteers

1. All adults who work or volunteer in an unsupervised capacity with children must undergo a safety check, as outlined in the Children's Act 2014
2. The safety check will be carried out by the principal
3. The safety check will include:
  - sighting two forms of official identification (Drivers' Licence, Passport, Birth Certificate)
  - a verbal referee's check with a focus on child protection (e.g. Are you aware of any reason that this person is not safe to work with children?)
  - a police vet every two years

## HARMFUL BEHAVIOUR

### Guidelines: Child-on-Child Harmful Behaviour

1. Child-on-child harmful behaviour is any behaviour through which one child is seriously harmed or injured by another child. This does not cover minor incidents that are handled within the schools behaviour management policy
2. Types of harmful behaviour could be sexualised behaviour or violence.
3. When child-on-child harmful behaviour is disclosed or witnessed, the Harmful Behaviour Process (next page) should be followed.

### Harassment/Bullying.

1. Bullying is defined by the Ministry of Education (Circular 160301) in the following statement:

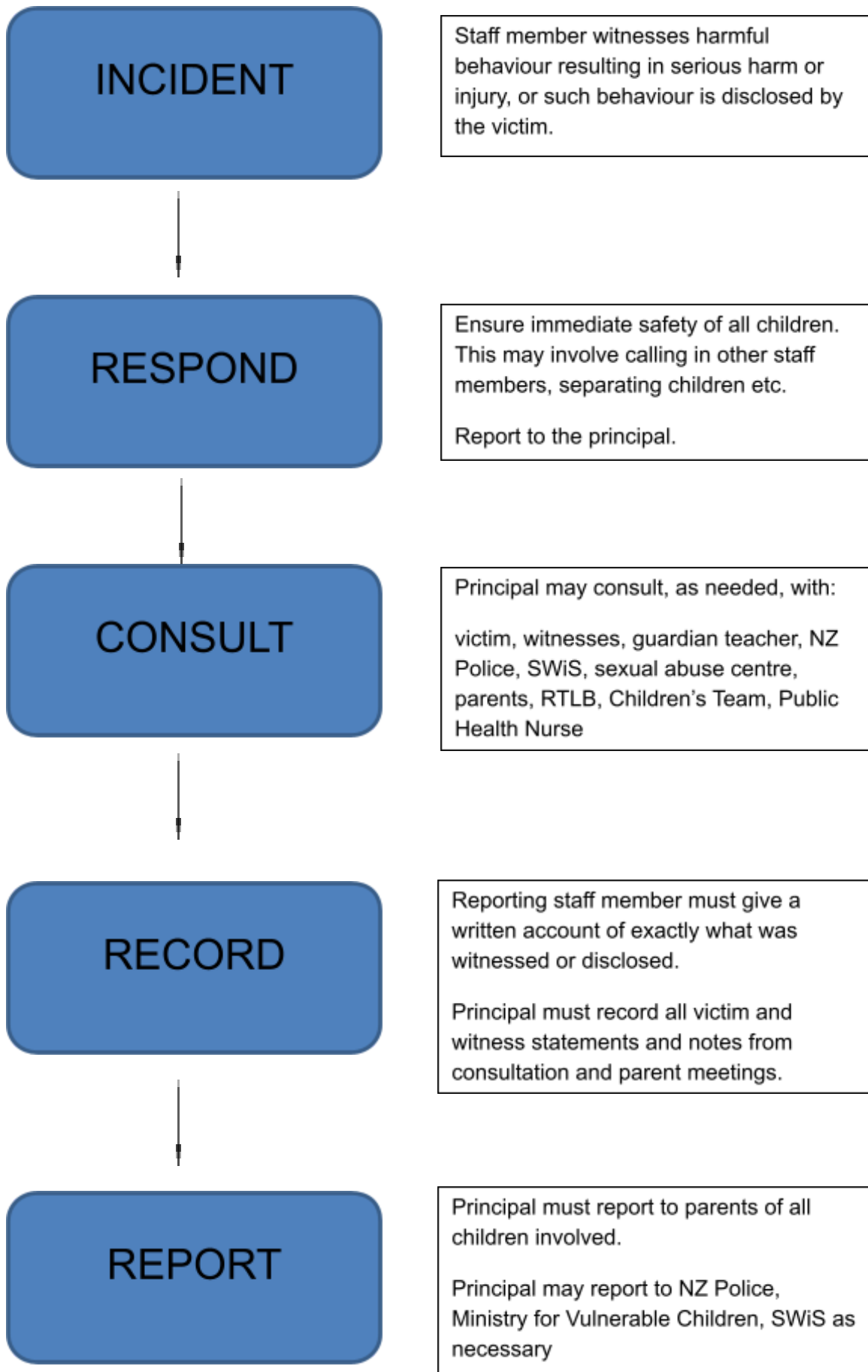
*Whether bullying is physical, verbal, emotional or online (cyberbullying), there are four factors that can be used to identify bullying.*

- *Bullying is deliberate – intentionally causing physical and / or psychological harm to another person.*
- *Bullying involves a power imbalance – an actual (or perceived) unequal relationship between those being bullied and those who bully. For example due to physical size, age, gender, social status or digital capability and access.*
- *Bullying is usually not a one-off – it is repeated over time, with the threat of further incidents leading to*

2. Staff will endeavour to create a bully-free environment, placing emphasis on respectful behaviour and our school values, and the Fruits of the Spirit.
3. Harmful or aggressive behaviour that does not meet the criteria for bullying will be covered by the Playground and Classroom Behaviour Management Plan and worked through using the school's collaborative problem solving process.
4. When an incident of bullying is disclosed or witnessed, the Harmful Behaviour Process (next page) should be followed.

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## Harmful Behaviour Process



## **ADULT ABUSE OF CHILDREN**

### **General Guidelines**

1. Adults will be receptive and sensitive to children so that they feel listened to and believed.
2. Abuse is defined as causing physical, sexual or psychological harm, or neglecting to provide the necessities for a child's safety and health.
3. Any suspected abuse or offending against children must be reported to the NZ Police and the Ministry for Vulnerable Children. This should be done by following school procedures outlined in the guidelines below.
4. Where a disclosure of abuse is made or suspected, all information must be kept confidential within the parties involved.
5. Parents will be made aware of procedures the school will take to protect children from abuse.
6. Staff will be reminded of the guidelines to follow for any cases of suspected abuse at least once annually
7. The NZ Police unit, 'Keeping Ourselves Safe' will be taught as part of the Health Curriculum biannually to increase children's assertive skills in dealing with uncomfortable situations, and to help raise teachers' consciousness of the issues

### **Guidelines for Cases of Suspected Abuse**

1. Teachers will be trained to help identify students who are possibly "at risk" and will then monitor these students and keep detailed written records of concerns. This information should be kept in a file which will only be accessed by those who have a right to view this information (e.g. Principal, NZ Police, Ministry for Vulnerable Children)
2. Once abuse is strongly suspected, staff should follow the Disclosure of Abuse Process (next page)

### **Guidelines for Cases of Disclosed Abuse**

1. Disclosure of abuse can be direct, indirect, conditional or third party. Staff should refer to the Disclosure of Abuse Process (next page) for appropriate responses to each of these
2. If a child is in immediate danger, act immediately to secure their safety
3. Do not alert the alleged abuser
4. Follow the Disclosure of Abuse Process (next page)

### **Guidelines for Cases of Abuse by a Staff Member**

1. If any staff member is accused of abusing a child the principal and Board Chair must be informed immediately. If it is the principal who is suspected, the Board Chair or nominated Board member must be contacted.
2. The principal (or Board Chair or nominated Board member in the case of the principal being accused) must inform the NZ Police, the Education Council of NZ and NZEI.
3. The principal and Board Chair will inform the staff member, who will then be advised to seek legal and / or union representation
4. Once an investigation has started, the staff member will be suspended according to the regulations set out in the Primary Teachers Collective Contract Agreement, Sections 10.4 and 10.5

## Disclosure of Abuse Process

### Direct Disclosure

Child directly tells you of abuse by an adult.

e.g. "My dad hit me." "My mum locked me in a cupboard last night." "My uncle came into my room last night and touched my private parts."

### Indirect Disclosure (including third party or conditional disclosure)

e.g. "My dad does things I don't like." "Me and Mum have a secret." "I don't like it when my uncle comes to stay." "I don't want to go home today." "My friend has told me that her cousin touches her." "Can I tell you a secret?"

### Respond

Give a reassuring response

e.g. "Thank you for telling me." "You've done the right thing." "It's not OK what happened to you." "I'm going to get you some help."

### Clarifying Question

"Tell me about it?"

"Tell me a bit more?"

Child discloses abuse

Abuse is not disclosed but is still strongly suspected

### CONSULT

Tell the principal as soon as you have finished talking to the child.

The principal may consult with the following: the child's classroom teacher, the school's Social Worker, Oranga Tamariki, NZ Police, Public Health Nurse, Sexual Abuse Centre, the Board Chairperson or nominated Board Member

### RECORD

- the date and time
- what was said, verbatim
- your name

Give this to the principal within 24 hours of the disclosure. The principal will file this in a confidential file.

### REPORT

The principal must report all cases of disclosed or strongly suspected abuse to Oranga Tamariki, the NZ Police and the Board Chairperson.

For cases of abuse by a teacher, the Education Council must also be informed.



## **SHARING INFORMATION WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES**

There are times when, in the interests of child protection and safety, information will need to be shared with outside agencies. This could happen in the consultation or the reporting stage of the processes outlined in this policy.

### **Guidelines**

1. The Privacy Act 2020 must be adhered to at all times
2. If agencies such as the NZ Police or Oranga Tamariki request information from the school their inquiry should be forwarded to the principal
3. The principal should not give out any information to the NZ Police or Oranga Tamariki without first verifying the identification and role of the person requesting the information
4. All written information regarding suspected or disclosed abuse must be kept in a confidential file available only to the principal.
5. When a staff member has a student disclose abuse to them they should not talk about this with other staff members who were not present. If the staff member needs support this will be made available to them.

## **PROTECTED DISCLOSURES**

When a child discloses harmful behaviour or bullying by another child, the perpetrator and their whanau do not have an automatic right to know who their accuser is. This information will be given at the discretion of the principal and with both children's safety as a considering factor.

## **SAFE WORKING PRACTICES**

Below are listed situations which could be considered as "high risk" for child vulnerability and the procedures which must be followed in these cases.

### **Students who Become Violent**

- When students become violent towards themselves or others the first action must be to remove yourself and all others from the vicinity of that student. This may mean asking your class to leave the classroom, asking children to move inside away from the violent student or, in serious cases, asking the principal to place the school in lock-down.
- The principal must be informed as soon as a violent incident happens.
- At no time should a staff member seclude or lock a student in a room
- At no time should a staff member restrain a student unless he or she reasonably believes through their perceived cumulative assessment that there is a serious and imminent risk to the safety of the student or others. If physical restraint is to be used, the guidelines below must be followed.

### **Guidelines for Physical Restraint**

- At no time should a staff member restrain a student unless he or she reasonably believes through their perceived cumulative assessment that there is serious and imminent risk to the safety of the student or others.
- If physical restraint is used, it must be reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances.
- Situations where it may be appropriate include: breaking up a fight, stopping a student from moving in with a weapon, stopping a student who is throwing furniture close to others who could be injured, preventing a student from running into the road.

- If a child is restrained at any time the principal must be informed immediately and she will complete an “Incident of Physical Restraint” form and email it to the Ministry of Education and the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees or nominated Board member .
- To be clear, the use of physical restraint is a last resort. It is far better to prevent dangerous situations developing or using de-escalation techniques to calm things down.

### **Sick/injured Students**

- Staff members with current First Aid certificates are able to use their First Aid training to treat minor injuries but should not attempt to treat an injury that is hidden by underwear or that the student says they are uncomfortable about
- If treating an injured child alone, ensure that the door remains open and that other adults are in the office or staffroom. If feeling unsafe, ask another staff member to supervise

### **Changing Clothes**

There are times when children may need to change their clothes at school, e.g. after soiling themselves or falling over.

- The child should change their own clothing wherever possible
- If the child is unable to change their own clothing the child’s parent should be contacted to either come to school and assist or to give permission for a staff member to assist their child
- If a staff member is changing a child’s clothes, another staff member should be present

### **Toileting**

Children with additional needs will be unable to toilet independently and will need assistance with toileting. This should always happen in a staff or disabled toilet while other staff members are nearby. Toileting routines will differ for individual children and will be outlined in each child’s IEP.

### **Physical Contact**

It is recognised that there are some times when physical contact with a student is necessary and helpful. Primary school students will sometimes need comforting and will often initiate physical contact such as a hug or holding hands. Such contact should always be:

- above the clothes
- in the presence of others
- initiated or requested by the student
- ceased immediately if the student appears uncomfortable

### **Travelling in Cars**

- On official school trips vehicles must have current WOF and REG. Drivers must be fully Licensed.
- A student should never travel alone with an adult in a car.
- When a staff member or adult volunteer is driving a group of students to an event, they should not deviate from the agreed route unless necessary by a road block or for safety.
- A staff member or adult volunteer should not make any stops that are unplanned.
- Students of the appropriately weight and height may travel in front seat.
- No students may use a lap belt seat.
- Students requiring booster seats must provide these on excursions.

### **Social Media**

Staff members should not have contact with current students on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat or any other form of Social Media.

### **Coaching**

- Parent volunteer coaches must be police vetted

### **Camp and Overnight Trips**

- All adult volunteers attending overnight trips will be police-vetted every two years and no adults with police records for violence or offences against children will be permitted to attend
- Adult volunteers with other offences listed on their police record will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The final decision about whether an adult can attend an overnight trip will be made by the principal and Board Chair
- Thorough instructions and guidelines will be given to adult volunteers at overnight trips, including instructions not to be alone with a child
- All adult volunteers have the right to refuse a task or instruction if they feel it puts them at risk
- More guidelines around adult supervisors and volunteers can be found in the EOTC Policy

### **Witnessing Unsafe Practices**

- Staff members and parent volunteers should be confident to voice their concerns about an activity if they feel it is unsafe, even if this activity is being facilitated by an “expert”
- Adult volunteers should be made aware of this responsibility before attending a school trip and empowered to keep safety as a strong focus

### **Allegations**

If allegations are made to a staff member about a parent volunteer or a colleague, these allegations should be taken immediately to the principal who will then follow the Disclosure of Abuse Process.

FORMULATED BY: Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist School Board

APPROVED: Presiding Member, Victoria Finch \_\_\_\_\_

BOT RATIFIED: 31st May 2022

BOT REVIEWED: 24 October 2018  
3rd May 2022