



Paekakariki School
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POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR CHILD PROTECTION

Rationale:

Paekakariki School is committed to providing a safe and abusive free environment for all pupils.

Purposes:

1. To ensure the safety of children.
2. To outline the procedures for the speedy reporting of suspected cases of child abuse to the authorities
3. To ensure staff have the necessary help to be able to recognise possible cases of abuse or neglect.
4. To ensure staff know what to do when a child discloses abuse or neglect.
5. To outline the procedure to be followed when there is an allegation of abuse or neglect against a staff member.

Guidelines:

Suspected abuse or neglect of a child

At all times during the process the safety of the child is paramount.

1. Confirming Suspicions

- (i) Document, date, sign and discuss all suspicions with the Principal, Deputy Principal (DP)/Assistant Principal (AP)
 - Obtain only the basic information from the child using open-ended questions eg ‘..and what happened then?’ Reassure the child that further help will be sought.
 - The child is not to be questioned rigorously on the specifics of any incident – a formal interview is not to be conducted.
 - A written record of this discussion is to be kept.
- (ii) Where appropriate, further discussions and consultations are to take place with CYF or the Police.

2. Reporting within the School

- (i) Suspicions are reported to the Principal/DP/AP. The Principal/DP/AP are to meet with the teacher/senior staff that knows the child so as to discuss details and suspicions, and agree an appropriate course of action.
- (ii) If there is disagreement seek advice from a CYF social worker (phone: 0508 326 459) or the police.

3. Reporting to an Outside Agency

- (i) Where initial concerns appear to be justified it is the responsibility of the Principal/DP/AP to contact the necessary outside agencies (CYFS or Police).
- (ii) In the event the Principal/DP/AP disagrees with the teacher’s assessment, an outside agency (CYF or police) should be consulted for advice and assistance on whether the matter should be reported.
- (iii) The school will expect that all dealings regarding the child will be instigated by the outside agency including:
 - making the child safe
 - contacting the home/parent/caregiver
 - appraising the school of the situation.

- (iv) If children are to be interviewed at school the Principal/DP/AP should be present.
- 4. Contacting Parents
 - (i) In regard to a child abuse investigation, this is the job of the outside agency.
 - (ii) Where a parent contacts the school regarding a child abuse situation, either in making an allegation or checking what has happened, they should be referred to the Principal/DP/AP.
- 5. Continued Action
 - (i) Further communication regarding the child will be signed the Principal/DP/AP.
 - (ii) Accurate records should be maintained.
- 6. Staff Training
 - (i) Training in the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect is to be made available to all staff. This includes the Keeping Ourselves Safe programme and through CYF Advisors.
- 7. Health Programme
 - (i) As part of the Health Programme staff will use a variety of programmes to support the well being of the child including Sexuality, Kia Kaha, Dare and Keeping Ourselves Safe” units.

Allegations of suspected abuse or neglect against an employee

At all times during the process the safety of the child is paramount.

At all times the employee has a right to be treated fairly:

- i. Any concern/allegations against a school employee must be reported to the Principal or DP/AP. The Board Chairperson is informed immediately.
- ii. The decision to follow-up on an allegation should be made in consultation with: CYF, Police, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.
 - Assistance may be sought from NZSTA Industrial Advisor.
- iii. Any follow up will require planning and co-ordination in terms of the process for investigation, time frames and clarifying roles of each agency involved.
- iv. The Board has responsibilities in this process as an employer and should refer to the relevant employee contract in every case of possible disciplinary action.
- v. Should there be substance to the allegation the employee is to be informed and invited to respond.
- vi. The employee is to be advised of their right to seek support and advice.
- vii. The Principal/DP/AP are to keep full documentation of conversations and actions related to these issues.
- viii. Reference should be made to the procedures in:
Trustee Handbook Page 18 410 and relevant union contract

Signed Jeff Boonen
Board Chair