



ST FRANCIS XAVIER CATHOLIC SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES.

RATIONALE

This policy acknowledges that Boards of Trustees have particular responsibilities under legislation as well as social expectations to provide a safe environment that caters for the physical and emotional well being of its students.

Only when students are free of abuse or neglect can they reach their full potential. In implementing this policy the principles and Gospel values of tika (truth), aroha (love) and manaakitanga (respect) should be taken into account.

PURPOSE

1. To ensure that the safety of the child/young person is paramount. In line with Section 15 of the Children, Young Person and Their Families Act, any person in our school 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 Oranga Tamariki (Ministry for Vulnerable Children) worker or the police.
2. To provide teachers and others working in the school with training and guidelines so that they can identify signs of abuse and neglect.
3. To ensure that suspected and actual abuse of a child is responded to and recorded appropriately.
4. To ensure that students are provided with preventative education to enhance their safety and awareness.
5. To provide procedures for dealing with cases of current or historical abuse.
6. To provide guidelines as to which external agencies will be used, what liaison is required and the appropriate referral procedures.
7. Comply with any statutory requirements or obligations with regard to child safety.

GUIDELINES

1. 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.
2. The school will facilitate training for all employees to help them to identify suspected abuse and/or neglect so that they can respond appropriately. To assist with the training, the school will liaise with Oranga Tamariki and New Zealand Police.
3. Through curriculum delivery St Francis Xavier Catholic School will provide programmes to develop skills in children that may assist them in identifying and protecting themselves from abusive situations.
4. 4. The role of cultural groups and local support agencies in supporting the policy will be recognised by the school in its ongoing communication and liaison with the wider community.
5. Decisions about informing parents or caregivers should be made after consultation between the school and the appropriate external agency.
6. Where child abuse is disclosed or suspected, the following procedures should be followed.

PROCEDURES

1. If the child or young person is in danger or unsafe, the employee should act immediately to secure their safety.
2. The employee should listen to the child or young person and reassure them but should not make any promises or commitments that cannot be kept.
3. The employee should ensure that any information or disclosures by the child or young person are written down and should check that comments by employee and events surrounding the concern have also been recorded.
4. The employee should ensure that the child or young person has a responsible adult supporting them through this process and that the support role is clearly defined.
5. The employee should not formally interview the child or young person. Only necessary relevant facts should be obtained and clarification should be sought, if needed.
6. The employee should inform the Principal. The principal will inform the Board Chairperson.

7. The employee should hold an immediate discussion with the principal or in his / her absence the deputy principal(s) and agree on an appropriate course of action.
8. The Principal will use their judgment in deciding whether a formal notification is the course that will best promote the welfare and interests of the student.
9. If a referral to an agency is deemed appropriate, the Principal should ensure that arrangements can be made for the child's safety until such time as legal steps are taken by the police or Oranga Tamariki.
10. Once the police or Child Youth and Family (CYF) service is involved with a child the responsibility for the welfare of the child lies with the police or CYF. However, the principal will maintain liaison to offer support as required.

*Approved by: K Weir
Chairperson*

Date Reviewed: Term 2, 2017

To be Reviewed: Term 2, 2020