

Kiddies Campus Policies and Practices

Policy Name: CHILD ABUSE POLICY

Trigger Event(s):

Evidence of child abuse of a child is identified at the Centre. Definition of child abuse includes harming (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person, which is the direct consequence of a deliberate act, or omission, by an adult and which has the potential to cause, or has caused, serious harm to the child.

Rationale:

Policies and practices used by the Centre give confidence to parents, staff and officials that, if any child is subjected to abuse, it will likely be detected, and appropriate action taken.

Te Whariki:

Goal 3 – Well-being: Children experience and environment where they are kept safe from harm.

Recommended Procedure:

1. **It is the duty of all staff, trainees, and other adults at the Centre to take all steps necessary to prevent any instance of child abuse at the Centre.**
2. Any person (staff, trainee or other adult) who believes that **any** child or young person (either at Kiddies Campus or at any other place) has been, or is likely to be, harmed, ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived may report the matter to the Head Teacher, Director or directly to Oranga Tamariki, a social worker or the police. There shall be no action taken against any person disclosing or supplying information to any agency unless the information was disclosed or supplied in bad faith.
3. All matters related to individual cases of reported abuse are confidential to those directly involved and should not be discussed with other staff, parents, children or any other person in or outside the Centre. Failure of staff to comply with this policy is regarded as a serious breach of the Centre Rules.
4. Full and detailed written records are to be kept of every related discussion, act or incident which involved any parent, child, suspected offender or staff member from when the suspected child abuse is suspected.
5. Staff do not assume responsibility for action or advice beyond the level of their own expertise.
6. Responding to information or complaint: Where any person reports any suspicions of child abuse at the centre to any staff member, that staff member shall immediately notify the Head Teacher, Director or the police. No staff member will take any other action unless the circumstances are such that there is good cause to suspect that the child's safety is compromised.
7. Those involved in the allegation, investigation or report must not discuss these matters with any other person, be they staff or parents of the victim. Where it is appropriate the person making the allegation will be given a copy of this policy.
8. When advised of an incident or allegation the Director or Head Teacher shall immediately begin making accurate notes of what is being said by the parties involved. These notes will form part of the investigation undertaken by the Police or Oranga Tamariki.

9. If it has not been done previously, the Head Teacher must, as soon as possible, contact the Director and advise them of the situation and keep them informed of any developments.
10. The Director or Head Teacher shall contact the Police or Oranga Tamariki who will advise of the appropriate action to take.
11. During the investigation priority must be given to:
 - a) protecting the child; and
 - b) protecting the rights of those involved; and
 - c) ensure the confidentiality of those involved.
12. When a staff member is suspected:
 - a) The initial report of any incident or accusation must be written down in full as soon as possible.
 - b) Where the investigation takes more than one day, the Centre will take direction from the Police or Oranga Tamariki.
 - c) The Centre will take the advice of the Police or Oranga Tamariki regarding appropriate action to take.
 - d) The parent of the child (or children) affected will be advised as soon as possible.
13. Care will be taken to ensure that the presumption of innocence of those accused or implicated will be maintained until the investigation is complete.
14. When abuse outside the centre is suspected
 - a) Where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been or is subject to abuse, but is not in immediate danger, the Director or Head Teacher will be advised so Oranga Tamariki or the Police can be informed.
 - b) Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child is in immediate danger of abuse when they leave the centre, or observations reveal evidence of abuse, the Head Teacher will immediately notify the Police and/or Oranga Tamariki.
 - c) Once an investigation has started the Centre will take advice from the investigating body.

15. When to call in an Agency:

- a) If it is clear from the information supplied that there is evidence of, or reasonable cause to suspect, an instance of child abuse, the Head Teacher and/or Director will immediately notify the Police or Oranga Tamariki.

Policy Reference Information:

- Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, sections 15 and 16
- Children's Act 2014
- Privacy Act 2020
- Breaking the Cycle
- Interagency Protocols and Guide
- Our Code of Standards – Commitment to Learners
- Teaching Standard 4
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015