



General

Student Protection Policy

(Personal Abuse of Children and Young Persons)

Rationale

The College should have a clear policy and procedures in place in accordance with the Vulnerable Children's Act 2014, Vulnerable Children (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) regulations 2015 and the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989/Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989.

Purpose

To ensure that students at St Andrew's College are free from emotional, physical and sexual abuse, neglect, and deprivation. The College accepts the important role and responsibility that all staff have in identifying and responding to suspected child abuse or neglect and in responding appropriately to concerns about the wellbeing of the child.

The interest/safety and welfare of the student will always be paramount in the management of abuse cases (refer to the Education Ministry Guidelines on Child Protection Policy pages 7 and 8).

St Andrew's College makes a commitment to the appropriate safety checking of all staff who have relevant engagement with students of the College.

Guidelines

The following procedures will apply:

- 1.1 If abuse is suspected, or visible signs of abuse are observed in students (i.e. bruising or changes in behaviour), or an allegation of abuse of, or by, a student is made, the Rector/Head of Secondary School/Principal of Preparatory School and Counsellor must be notified immediately.
- 1.2 Information will be gathered, and written records will be kept, signed and dated on the College database. Once it seems apparent that abuse may have taken place, all questioning will cease, and the following guidelines actioned:
 - a) The Counsellor will notify the Head of Secondary or Principal of Preparatory and other pastoral care staff or medical professionals where appropriate as soon as possible.
 - b) The Counsellor will coordinate the approach to be taken in conjunction with the Head of Secondary or Principal of Preparatory and will assess and ensure the student's immediate safety.



- c) Where there is a serious allegation of abuse any person or the Head of Secondary/Principal of Preparatory will refer the matter in a timely manner to Oranga Tamariki and/or the NZ Police and their advice and intervention will be sought. A notification may be made verbally or in writing, and notes made on the College database of action taken.
- d) **Note: Immunity from Prosecution** - Section 16 of the Children, Young Persons, and their Families Act 1989 protects any person who reports abuse in good faith from civil and criminal prosecution or disciplinary action.
- e) Any person associated with the school may report suspected abuse directly to Oranga Tamariki or the NZ Police. They are asked to notify the Head of Secondary or Principal of the Preparatory School or Counsellor, who then ensure a record is made of this notification on the College database.
- f) The Head of Secondary or Principal of Preparatory will advise the Rector who will advise the Board Chair.
- g) In the case of allegations of serious abuse, the interviewing of the suspected abuse victim will be by the Oranga Tamariki/Police once the matter is referred to them.
- h) Decisions about informing parents or caregivers should be made after consultation between management and Oranga Tamariki or Police. A record of the decision taken should then be made on the College database.
- i) Where abuse of a child by a staff member is suspected or alleged, the Rector/Head of Secondary or Principal of Preparatory will be advised immediately. The Rector will inform the Board Chair who will ensure appropriate action is taken in accordance with the principles of natural justice and consistent with the Employment Relations Act 2000 and Section 66 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1989. The Rector will inform the staff member of her/his rights and refer them to support services within the school or an appropriate external agency. A record of the action taken should then be made on the College database.
- j) The Rector (or nominee) will inform the Education Council if a teacher is suspected or alleged to have abused a student or staff member. A record of the action taken should then be made on the College database.

Professionalism

- 2.1 Staff will accept and abide by the Education Council Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession for Registered Teachers.
- 2.2 Staff will keep relationships with parents/whānau on a professional basis, for example, discretion will apply regarding contact with parents outside working hours, etc.



- 2.3 Any confidential physical documentation will be securely filed with the offices of Principal of Preparatory, Head of Secondary or Rector. Any confidential electronic documentation should be stored on the College database, with the appropriate security settings regarding visibility applied.

Professional Development and Support

- 3.1 The school will ensure staff receive education and training to maintain and increase awareness of how to prevent, recognise and respond to abuse and the procedures to report abuse (refer to the Education Ministry Guidelines on Child Protection Policy page 9).
- 3.2 All staff will be familiar with and kept up to date on the laws and regulations which serve to protect children from abuse.

Employment

- 4.1 The Rector/Head of Secondary, Principal of Preparatory or The General Manager will investigate applicants' work history, contact past employers, and personally (or via a nominee) contact referees before employing an applicant. Personal and character attributes will be a prime consideration when employing staff. All staff must be police checked / vetted every three years as outlined in Education Council regulations.

Complaints

- 5.1 The school complaints procedure and this Student Protection policy will be made available to parents/ whānau via the St Andrew's College intranet or portal.
- 5.2 Parents/ whānau will be able to communicate and have access to appropriate staff members before and after sessions.

Student Education

- 6.1 Through curriculum delivery, the school will provide appropriate programmes e.g. Health, Te Waka etc. to develop skills in students that may assist them in identifying and protecting themselves from abusive situations.

Security at College

- 7.1 Visitors to the College must report to the appropriate school Reception area.
- 7.2 Security identification must be worn by visitors to the College.
- 7.3 Any unidentified person on the College grounds during the College day is to be escorted to the Strowan Reception or Preparatory School Reception by a staff member and students are to be encouraged to advise staff at the earliest opportunity of any unidentified person in the College grounds.



Student Living Arrangements

When parents are absent from the home of day students during term time for more than two consecutive days, the College requires the parents to provide to the relevant Head of School details of their care provider in Christchurch for the period of absence and requests that arrangements for care and supervision be communicated to the College before the parents leave.

Access by Social Worker or Police to a Student

Consent of the Head of Secondary or Principal of Preparatory is required before a student can be interviewed at the College. While the College has the right to deny access if parental consent has not been obtained, the principle applies that the welfare of the student is paramount. (Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989 Section 6).

A staff member, selected by the student, may be present for the interview and may receive a briefing from Oranga Tamariki or the Police prior to the interview. **Once Oranga Tamariki is involved with the student, the responsibility for that student will be with Oranga Tamariki.**

Refer to:

- Privacy Policy (St Andrew's College).
- Complaints Procedure (St Andrew's College).
- Health & Safety Policy (St Andrew's College).
- Vulnerable Children's Act 2014, Vulnerable Children (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) regulations 2015.
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989/Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989.
- Child Youth and Family, (2001) An Interagency Guide to Breaking the Cycle – Let's Stop Child Abuse Together, NZ: Child Youth and Family.
- Oranga Tamariki National Call Centre 0508 FAMILY (0508 326 459) or email contact@ot.govt.nz or via the website <https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/>.
- [Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession.](#)
- Ministry of Education Child Protection Policy.

Appendix 1 - Definitions

The following definitions apply to this policy:

Abuse – the harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill-treatment, neglect or deprivation of any child.

Child – any child or young person aged under 17 years, and who is not married or in a civil union.



Child protection – activities carried out to ensure that children are safe in cases where there is suspected abuse or neglect or the risk of abuse or neglect.

Children's services – any organisation that provides services to children or to adults where contact with children may be part of the service. These organisations should have child protection policies. Organisations that provide services to adults who may be caring for or parenting children should also consider developing a policy, e.g., adult mental health and addiction services.

Children's workforce/children's workers – people who work with children, or who have regular contact with children, as part of their roles.

Designated person for child protection – the manager/supervisor (Rector in consultation with the School Counsellor and the Head of the Secondary or Principal of the Preparatory School) or designated person responsible for providing advice and support to staff where they have a concern about an individual child or who want advice about the Student Protection policy.

Disclosure – information given to a staff member by the child, parent or caregiver or third party in relation to abuse or neglect.

Emotional abuse – any act or omission that results in adverse or impaired psychological, social, intellectual and emotional functioning or development. This can include:

- Patterns of isolation, degradation, constant criticism or negative comparison to others. Isolating, corrupting, exploiting or terrorising a child can also be emotional abuse.
- Exposure to family/whānau or intimate partner violence.

Neglect – neglect is the most common form of abuse, and although the effects may not be as obvious as physical abuse, it is just as serious. Neglect can be:

- Physical (not providing the necessities of life, like a warm place, food and clothing).
- Emotional (not providing comfort, attention and love).
- Neglectful supervision (leaving children without someone safe looking after them).
- Medical neglect (not taking care of health needs).
- Educational neglect (allowing chronic truancy, failure to enrol in education or inattention to education needs).

New Zealand Police – the agency responsible for responding to situations where a child is in immediate danger and for working with Oranga Tamariki in child protection work, including investigating cases of abuse or neglect where an offence may have occurred.



Oranga Tamariki – the agency responsible for investigating and responding to suspected abuse and neglect and for providing a statutory response to children found to be in need of care and protection.

Physical abuse – any acts that may result in the physical harm of a child or young person. It can be, but is not limited to: bruising, cutting, hitting, beating, biting, burning, causing abrasions, strangulation, suffocation, drowning, poisoning and fabricated or induced illness.

Safer recruitment – following good practice processes for pre-employment checking which help manage the risk of unsuitable persons entering the children's workforce.

Sexual abuse – any acts that involve forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse can be, but is not limited to:

- Contact abuse: touching breasts, genital/anal fondling, masturbation, oral sex, penetrative or non-penetrative contact with the anus or genitals, encouraging the child to perform such acts on the perpetrator or another, involvement of the child in activities for the purposes of pornography or prostitution.
- Non-contact abuse: exhibitionism, voyeurism, exposure to pornographic or sexual imagery, inappropriate photography or depictions of sexual or suggestive behaviours or comments.

Standard safety checking – the process of safer recruitment that will be mandatory for organisations covered by the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

Workforce restriction – a restriction on the employment or engagement of people with certain specified convictions under the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

Review Leader: Evert van Florenstein

Review: April 2019

Ratified: 02 April 2019

Date for Review: 01 April 2022

