



**NEW PLYMOUTH BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL**  
TE KURA TAMATĀNE O NGĀMOTU

<b>Title</b>	<b>CHILD PROTECTION POLICY</b>
<b>Reference Number</b>	F606
<b>Section</b>	Students
<b>Written By</b>	Sarah Darke
<b>Checked By</b>	NPBHS Policy Committee
<b>Approved By</b>	NPBHS Policy Committee
<b>Issue Date</b>	01/08/2023
<b>Review Date</b>	01/08/2026
<b>Associated Policies</b>	Abuse external to the school environment. Complaints - staff conduct and discipline. Privacy Protected Disclosures Reducing student distress and use of physical restraint Sexual Harassment.
<b>Associated Procedures</b>	

## RATIONALE

This policy outlines New Plymouth Boys' High School commitment to child protection and recognises the responsibility and role of all NPBHS staff in the protection of children.

## SCOPE:

This policy applies to all permanent, part-time or temporary staff, including contractors and volunteers.

## DEFINITIONS:

A child or young person may be harmed by a parent/legal guardian, sibling, relative, caregiver, teacher, coach, peers, acquaintance, or a stranger. Harm may result from a direct act or by failure to provide proper care.

- **Abuse**
  - **Physical Abuse** - a non-accidental act on a child that results in physical harm. (Including but not limited to - bruising, cutting, hitting, beating, biting, burning, causing abrasions, strangulation, suffocation, drowning, poisoning and fabricated or induced illness).
  - **Sexual Abuse** - an act or acts that result in the sexual exploitation of a child or young person, whether consensual or not. (May include both physical, and/or



non-physical e.g. exhibitionism, voyeurism, exposure to pornographic or sexual imagery, inappropriate photography/digital content or depictions of sexual or suggestive behaviours or comments).

- **Emotional Abuse** - any act or omission that results in impaired psychological, social, intellectual and/or emotional functioning and development of a child or young person. (Any child who is sexually abused, physically abused or neglected is always a victim of emotional harm).
- **Neglect** - any act or omission that results in impaired physical functioning, injury and/or development of a child or young person.
  - **Physical** (caregivers not providing the necessities of life like a warm place, food and clothing).
  - **Emotional** (caregivers not providing comfort, attention and love).
  - **Neglectful supervision** (caregivers leaving students without someone safe looking after them).
  - **Medical** (caregivers not taking care of health needs).
  - **Educational** (caregivers allowing chronic truancy, failure to enrol in education or inattention to education needs).
- **Family Violence/Harm** - in addition to physical violence, this includes intimidating behaviour, threatening to harm people, pets or property.

(A Guide to Keeping Children Safe, Child Matters, 2019)

## PURPOSE:

New Plymouth Boys' High School has ethical and professional responsibilities to ensure that students are:

- safe from harm wherever abuse is current
- able to have access to counselling wherever past abuse if disclosed

In alignment with the Vulnerable Children Act 2014, New Plymouth Boys' High School is committed to ensuring the wellbeing and safety of its students so they may thrive, belong and achieve. This policy provides guidance to all staff on how to identify and respond to concerns regarding the wellbeing of a student, including the identification and referral of suspected child abuse or neglect.

## GUIDELINES AND PROTOCOLS:

### Indicators of child abuse

- *Physical signs* (e.g., unexplained injuries, bruises, burns, fractures, unusual or excessive itching, genital injuries, sexually transmitted diseases).
- *Developmental delays* (e.g., small for their age, cognitive delays, falling behind in school, poor speech and social skills).
- *Socio-emotional* (e.g., sleep problems, low self-esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness/loneliness and evidence of self-harm).

### Indicators of neglect

- *Behavioural concerns* (e.g., age-inappropriate sexual interest or play, fear of a certain person or place, eating disorders/substance abuse, disengagement/neediness, aggression).
- The student talking about things that indicate abuse (sometimes called an allegation or disclosure).



- *Physical signs* (e.g. unkempt physical appearance, unwashed, dirty clothing, without appropriate clothing)
- *Behavioural concerns* (e.g. disengagement, acting out/neediness, aggression, quiet/withdrawn).
- *Developmental delays* (e.g. small for their age, aggression, cognitive delays, falling behind in school, poor speech and social skills)
- *Socio- emotional* (e.g. sleep problems, low self-esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness/loneliness and evidence of self-harm).

### **Responding to suspected abuse or neglect**

New Zealand Police, Oranga Tamariki, and other statutory agencies, have clearly defined legal processes and responsibilities in the event of abuse being reported to them. In all cases where a member of staff has a concern about the welfare/wellbeing of a student they will report this to the guidance counsellor or senior management.

### **Procedure for responding to a student when the student discloses abuse**

#### **Respond**

- Listen.
- Stay calm, be patient, don't question extensively.
- Keep your voice low and gentle.
- Thank the child for telling you.
- Don't fill in the sentences.
- Don't promise confidentiality.

#### **Consult**

- Consult and share with guidance counsellor or senior management.

#### **Record**

- The date, time, location and the names of any staff that may be relevant.
- Factual statements said by the student.
- Avoid recording your own personal judgements/thoughts/emotional responses.

#### **Report**

- Following disclosure the appropriate agency/agencies (New Zealand Police/Oranga Tamariki) need to be contacted.
- If a young person is in immediate danger NZP must be contacted.
- Report of Concern can be made to Oranga Tamariki National Contact Centre by phone 0508 326 459 or email [contact@ot.govt.nz](mailto:contact@ot.govt.nz)

(A Guide to Keeping Children Safe, Child Matters, 2019)

### **Allegations or concerns about staff**

All matters involving allegations against staff will be dealt with by the Headmaster.

To ensure the student is kept safe, the headmaster will take steps to remove the staff member against whom an allegation has been made from the environment. The headmaster will consult with NZ Police and/or Oranga Tamariki before taking any further actions.

### **ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE:**

#### **Confidentiality and information sharing**

All observations, after an investigation has been notified, shall be kept in writing, stored in digital format or in a secure lockable filing cabinet in Guidance.



The Privacy Act 1993 and The Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 allow information to be shared to keep students safe when abuse or suspected abuse is reported or investigated. Note that under sections 15 and 16 of the CYPF Act, any person who believes that a student has been, or is likely to be harmed physically, emotionally or sexually or ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived may report the matter to Child, Youth and Family or the Police and, provided the report is made in good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against them. [Sharing information | Practice Centre | Oranga Tamariki](#).

The following link, from The Office of the Privacy Commissioner provides a clear set of guidelines for staff regarding confidentiality and sharing. [Office of the Privacy Commissioner | Escalation Ladder for sharing information about vulnerable children](#)

### **Student safe practice guidelines**

All staff should take appropriate measures to minimise situations where they may be alone with students. Wherever possible an open door policy for all spaces should be used (excludes toilets). Staff are responsible for the students in their class and should be aware of where all students are during their lesson. Visitors, volunteers and outside instructors should be monitored by staff at all times.

If activities require one to one physical contact or a student requires physical assistance, parents and caregivers should be advised and advice sought from outside agencies (such as the Ministry of Education). If this advice is not available, ensure that the staff members are aware of the appropriate procedures when giving assistance. NPBHS adheres to the Education and training Act (2020) as per the Reducing student distress and use of physical restraint policy.

(Childrens Action Plan, 2015)

### **Recruitment and employment (safety checking)**

As required by the Vulnerable Children's Act 2014 all new employees must have had a specified safety check before they are employed. Teachers are covered by the Education Council registration process, however support staff will be required to complete a police vetting and consent form. The Headmasters Executive Officer will maintain an updated database of police vets and will notify support staff in a timely manner to ensure that police clearances are always current.

### **Training supervision and support**

We are committed to maintaining and increasing staff awareness of how to prevent, recognise and respond to abuse. As part of their induction, new staff are made aware of the policy on student protection by the guidance team; who will meet with new staff, discuss the policy and answer any questions they may have.

### **Relevant Legislation**

- Vulnerable Children's Act 2014
- The Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- Care of Children Act 2004
- Domestic Violence Act 1995
- Privacy Act 1993
- Victims' Rights Act 2002
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child (UNCROC)

