

Child Protection Policy

Early Childhood Regulations 2008: 46(1) (a)

Licensing Criteria: HS 31; 5

Children's Act 2014

Rationale: Wanaka Preschool is committed to helping build a strong culture of child protection across Aotearoa New Zealand. The safety of the child is paramount and the trust our families and the community places in us to protect them. This policy is to support our staff to respond appropriately to concerns regarding the well being of any child in our care. This policy applies to all adults who come into contact with the children while in the care of Wanaka Preschool, including visitors.

Links to Te Whāriki -

Well Being / Mana atua: The health and wellbeing of the child are protected and nurtured. Children understand their own mana atuaanga - uniqueness and spiritual connectedness

Objectives

- The staff will gain a working knowledge of how to respond to vulnerable children to understand their role in supporting vulnerable children to keep them safe, and the referral process when abuse is suspected or disclosed including -
 1. Emotional Abuse including Family Violence/Racial abuse
 2. Neglect
 3. Physical Abuse
 4. Sexual Abuse
- Staff will be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect:
 - physical signs
 - parent/caregiver signs
 - behavioural signs
 - child/family vulnerabilities
 - developmental signs
- To always give priority to the safety and well-being of the child.
- To support children's rights by delivering an inclusive curriculum which empowers children/tamariki through talking with them and involving them in decisions that affect them, respecting their rights to express a point of view and encouraging them to take increased responsibility for the wellbeing of themselves, others and the environment.
- All teachers will follow the procedures in this policy when abuse is suspected or identified.

- Preschool is committed to regular training for all staff including paid time off for courses in child protection when available. Staff will be kept informed and involved in review of this policy.
- To build community networks - families/whanau will be encouraged to access educational programmes and support services in the community.
- **Confidentiality will be maintained.** Staff will only speak to the Centre Manager not with any other teacher/whānau/support staff or even their own whānau.
- Definitions

child abuse: *includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse as well as neglect which is the direct consequence of a deliberate act or omission by an adult and which has the potential or effect of serious harm to the child.*

Abuse: *the harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill-treatment, neglect or deprivation of any tamaiti. (Oranga Tamariki Act, 1989)*

This policy covers all types of possible abuse: emotional, physical, sexual, cyber and neglect.

Neglect: *the persistent failure to meet the basic physical or psychological needs of a tamaiti, leading to adverse or impaired physical or emotional functioning or development.*

Procedures

- Management will ensure that all employees are well informed about, and follow our Child Protection procedures.
- This policy will be included in induction for new teachers and relievers.
- Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children have social workers based in Alexandra and will guide us through the reporting of child protection concerns. Lines are open 24/7 on 0508 332 774 or 0508 326 459 or email contact@mvcot.govt.nz
- If a child is in imminent danger we will call the police 111 and ask for the POLICE CHILD PROTECTION TEAM for an immediate response.
- We will follow the Safety Checking Procedures, a 7 point safety check. Any employee will have a police vet renewed every 3 years or be a Certificated teacher. Periodic safety checks completed every 3 years. Refer to our Safety Check Procedures and forms.
- We support staff to raise concerns with management around poor practice of colleagues, and/or anyone on site with children, when children's safety is jeopardised.
- Teachers and staff will be familiar with the indicators associated with abuse and neglect - see attachment
- Where an allegation of child abuse or neglect has been made against a teacher or staff member follow the steps in the attached flowchart.
- All suspected child abuse or any concerning behaviour will be recorded in the incident book kept in the locked administration filing cabinet. Note any observations, impressions and communications in regards to the child and keep confidential, with access on a 'needs to know' basis.
- Teachers or staff will not inform families/whanau unless this has been discussed with and approved by Oranga Tamariki or the police.
- Should specific information be requested about a child by telephone, do not provide any information even if the caller says they are the police or Oranga Tamariki. Take the caller details and ask for them to email the Centre Manager who will verify the caller and then respond in a timely manner keeping the safety of the child paramount.

Note: Any person who believes that a child has been, or is likely to be harmed, ill treated or neglected may report the matter to Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children or the police.

A person reporting ill treatment or neglect of a child or young person is protected from prosecution or disciplinary proceedings under section 16 of the Children, Young Person and their Families Act 1998 if the information was disclosed or supplied in good faith.

Person responsible for managing the referral process

Notify Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children or the Police

- During the notification ask for an indication of likely action and the agencies time frame for completing this.
- Seek advice on what to tell the child and what action (if any) to take next.

Decisions concerning ECE arrangements and notifying parents will be made by police and social workers in consultation with Preschool.

You may wish to seek support from MOE – Special Education Traumatic Incident Co-coordinator
0800 848326

Reviewed: June 2024

Next Review Date: June 2025