



**Ruawai
Primary**

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NAG 5 Health and Safety – Child Abuse Allegations against School Employees Policy

Introduction

The school aims to ensure that all students are treated with dignity and respect. They have the right to work in a safe environment. When allegations are made which threaten child safety, the principal and board chairperson will act on the allegations, while making sure that all parties are treated fairly.

Purpose

1. To ensure that all complaints of child abuse by an employee are taken seriously and dealt with effectively, with action being guided by the applicable employment contract and relevant school policies.
2. To provide clear guidance for the Board of Trustees chairperson and principal, and the employee in respect of any allegation received concerning children within the school environment.

Guidelines

In respect of the child refer to the policy “Child Protection Policy”.

The procedure for investigating the complaint against an employee is as follows:

1. The chairperson of the Board of Trustees is informed immediately.
2. The child making the allegation will not be exposed to any risk. The board will consider the removal of the employee from the school environment subject to the requirements of the relevant employment contract.
3. The principal ensures the implementation of the policy “Prevention and Reporting of Child Abuse”, and will notify the parents/ caregivers of the child involved after contacting CYPS.

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4. The principal ensures records are kept of any comments by the child and/ or allegations and follow-up action.
5. The chairperson and principal have a dual responsibility in respect of both the child and the employee.
6. The decision to follow up an allegation of suspected abuse or neglect against an employee of the school should be made in consultation with the following:
 - NZCYPS, NZ Police, Board of Trustees, NZSTA
7. The purpose of consultation is to enable the principal and chairperson to discuss the concern or allegation and to:
 - determine the extent of the assistance the school can give to the investigation.
 - consider the time frame to be followed with regard to the possible conflict between what steps the board may take as an employer and possible police intervention.
 - consider the employer role of the board in conjunction with any procedures outlined in relevant employment contracts.
8. When it has been determined the board will pursue the matter as an employer, the board will advise the employee accused of the offence and seek a response. The board will refer to the relevant employment contract when proceeding with disciplinary action.
9. The employee complained against is advised by the chairperson or principal to seek support and advice from:
 - NZEI counselor, field officer, or other appropriate union representative.
 - other relevant organisations if applicable.
10. Board actions will be consistent and applicable with the collective employment contract.
11. The board chairperson and the principal will liaise closely with NZCYPS and NZ Police to ensure that actions taken by the school do not undermine or frustrate any investigation being undertaken by any external agency.
12. If the allegation is against the principal, the principal's role in this policy will be delegated to the board chairperson.

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Conclusion

Children will be taught in a safe emotional and physical environment. All child abuse allegations against employees will be dealt with fairly and in accordance with relevant employment contracts.

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