

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

PURPOSE STATEMENT

This policy outlines the Wesley College School board's commitment to the protection of all children and young persons and recognises the important role and responsibility of the board and all our staff in the protection of children and young persons. Protection of children and young persons is paramount.

POLICY OUTLINE

This policy includes the board's expectations when child abuse is reported or suspected. It provides a framework for board accountability and processes for staff and the board. It identifies key people, and our commitment to ongoing training for all staff to support the implementation of this policy, and foremost, protect the wellbeing of all child and young person's regardless of ethnicity, age, gender, background. The Board of Wesley College asserts that all children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation regardless of their gender, race, religion, political beliefs, age, physical or mental health, sexual orientation, family and social background, and culture or economic status.

SCOPE

This policy covers all staff who have direct or indirect contact with children and young persons. This includes those staff, paid or voluntary, non-employed/ contracted and or third party contracted entities employed directly by Wesley College. This policy covers the School Board and their responsibilities in the safeguarding and well-being of children. All staff members (including contractors and volunteers) are expected to be familiar with this policy, its associated procedures and protocols and abide by them. The board acknowledges that while it is the obligation of any contractor to have a child protection policy to cover all its staff this policy also covers those third party contracting parties.

ORGANISATION'S RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

The School Board has an obligation to ensure the wellbeing of children and young persons in our care, so they thrive, belong, and achieve. We are committed to the prevention of child abuse and neglect and to the protection of all children and young persons. The safety and wellbeing of the child is our top priority. Advice will be sought through appropriate agencies in all cases of suspected or alleged abuse.

In line with section 15 of the Children, Young Person and Their Families Act, any person in our school/kura who believes that any child or young person has been, or is likely to be, harmed (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually) ill-treated, abused, neglected, or deprived must follow school procedures and may also report the matter to a social worker or the local police.

Although ultimate accountability sits with the board, the board delegates responsibility to the principal to ensure that all child safety procedures are implemented and available to all staff, contractors, volunteers, and parents.

The Designated Person for Child Protection is delegated by the principal to lead and support colleagues to deal child protection concerns and ultimately, ensure the needs and rights of children come first.

Therefore, the principal must:

1. Develop appropriate procedures to meet child safety requirements as required and appropriate to the school
2. Comply with relevant legislative requirements and responsibilities

3. Make this policy available on the school's internet site or available on request
4. Develop appropriate procedures for the key roles
5. Ensure that every contract, or funding arrangement, that the school enters into requires the adoption of child protection policies where required
6. Ensure the interests and protection of the child are paramount in all circumstances
7. Recognise the rights of family/whānau to participate in the decision-making about their children
8. Ensure that all staff are able to identify the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect, deal with disclosures by children and allegations against staff members and are able to take appropriate action in response
9. Support all staff to work in accordance with this policy, to work with partner agencies and organisations to ensure child protection policies are understood and implemented
10. Promote a culture where staff feel confident they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal
11. Consult, discuss and share relevant information, in line with our commitment to confidentiality and information sharing protocols, in a timely way regarding any concerns about an individual child with the board or designated person
12. Seek advice as necessary from NZSTA advisors on employment matters and other relevant agencies where child safety issues arise
13. Make available professional development, resources and/or advice to ensure all staff can carry out their roles in terms of this policy
14. Ensure that this policy forms part of the initial staff induction programme for each staff member

This policy has been written in accordance with the following legislation:

- Education and Training Act 2020
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989
- Crimes Act 1961
- Family Violence Act 2019
- Health Act 1956
- Privacy Act 2020
- Health Information Privacy Code 2020
- Children's Act 2014
- Care of Children Act 2004
- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Human Rights Act 1993

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy "child" means a student under the age of 14 years, "young person" means a student between the age of 14 years to 18 years; but does not include any person who is or has been married or in a civil union (Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989; Section 2)

For purposes of this policy, "staff" means people paid or voluntary, employed directly by Wesley College. This includes teaching and non-teaching staff, Boarding House tutors, associates and volunteers whether working on a full time, part time, casual or temporary basis. This policy also includes the checking of contractors that are on the school grounds during a school day when students are present.

The Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989 defines child abuse as "...the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually), ill treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person".

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This can include a pattern of

rejecting, degrading, ignoring, isolating, corrupting, exploiting or terrorising a child. It may also include age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It also includes seeing or hearing the ill treatment of others.

Neglect is frequently defined as the failure of a parent or other person with responsibility for the child to provide needed food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision. It is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, causing long term serious harm to the child's health or development. It may also include neglect of a child's basic or emotional needs. Neglect is a lack of action, emotion or basic needs.

Physical abuse is a non-accidental act on a child that results in physical harm. Physical abuse is any act that results in physical injury to a child or adolescent. This includes, but is not limited to, beating, hitting, shaking, burning, drowning, suffocating, biting, poisoning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse also involves the fabrication or inducing of illness. Physical abuse often results from physical punishment that goes too far or when a parent or caregiver lashes out in anger. Most often children are abused by a caregiver or someone they know, not a stranger.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities. There are two main types of child sexual abuse: touching and non-touching. Touching includes touching a child's genitals, making a child touch someone else's genitals, playing sexual games, and/or putting objects or body parts inside the vulva or vagina, in the mouth, or in the anus of a child for sexual pleasure or rape, kissing and masturbation. Non-touching abuse includes showing pornography to a child, exposing a person's genitals to a child, prostituting/trafficking a child, photographing a child in sexual poses, encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts either in person or on a video, and/or watching a child undress or use the bathroom.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Any member of staff, paid or voluntary, may directly witness child abuse or have allegations, made by a child or an adult, relayed to them. There may also be disclosures of abuse that have occurred prior to attending Wesley College. Sustained abuse and neglect of children, wherever it occurs, can have major long-term effects on all aspects of children's health, development and well-being and their ability to sustain stable and meaningful relationships in the future. It is the intention of Wesley College to ensure that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in ensuring the safety of children at all times. This is achieved through consistent and agreed protocols regarding child protection, as well as the regular and ongoing training.

Each member of staff must be aware of, and alert to, potential indicators of abuse or neglect record a factual account of any concerns they have, or that are brought to their attention appropriately seek advice and support from their Designated Person for Child Protection who will then contact external agencies if appropriate work in cooperation with the parents and caregivers, unless this compromises the safety of the child.

It is the primary responsibility of ALL staff to be vigilant, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators or neglect, potential or actual abuse and to report any concerns, suspicions, or allegations of suspected abuse immediately and ensure that the concern is taken seriously and reported. It is the responsibility of management to provide regular training to staff throughout the school year and on induction of new staff.

The statutory responsibility to investigate allegations of child abuse rests with Oranga Tamariki and the Police.

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL BOARD IS TO:

- Ensure the needs and rights of children come first i.e. the safety and wellbeing of each child is paramount.

- Review and ratify the CPP every three years as per policy review schedule and after every child protection concern
- Support the Principal to ensure that all allegations are managed appropriately. No investigation will occur without appropriate consultation and a decision whether a response from Child Youth and Family or the Police is required.
- Support the Principal to ensure that allegations or complaints are appropriately referred to the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand | Matatu o Aotearoa.
- Inform the Principal immediately should any member of the School Board be aware of a concern for the wellbeing and safety of a child who attends Wesley College.
- The Presiding Member of the School Board will be directly informed of any allegations of abuse against the Principal.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

All staff will respond to concerns of child abuse by following the identified procedures, consulting appropriately and collaborating with external agencies. The Designated Person for Child Protection contact details will be known to all staff.

The procedures set out below will help staff with the identification of abuse handling disclosures, whether verbal or behavioural, from a child reporting abuse.

Identification of abuse

If the Designated Person for Child Protection is unavailable for advice and guidance then staff should consult with the Principal. At any time staff may seek advice from Oranga Tamariki (0800 326 459) regarding child protection concerns.

Further information regarding signs and indicators of abuse is included in the Appendix.

Responding to disclosures

If a child makes a verbal disclosure to a member of staff it is important that staff take what the child says seriously. This applies irrespective of the setting, or the member of staff's own opinion on what the child is saying.

Further information regarding responding to a disclosure is included in the Appendix.

Staff will not extensively question a child who has disclosed abuse, or who is displaying signs of possible abuse. However, it is important that a child is listened to and responded to appropriately. When a child discloses abuse, this needs to be taken very seriously. It is important that any disclosure is dealt with appropriately, both for the wellbeing of the child and also to ensure that your actions do not jeopardise any legal action against the alleged offender.

Under no circumstances should a member of staff attempt to conduct an investigation or deal with concerns of abuse themselves. Children need to know that staff are listening and taking seriously the information that has been divulged. When child abuse is disclosed, staff will respond positively to ensure the child's future protection. It is important to record what is said at the time, if appropriate, or as soon as possible following the disclosure. It may not be appropriate to enquire into further details at this stage. See Oranga Tamariki Reporting form in Appendix.

ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL IS TO:

- Ensure the needs and rights of children come first i.e. the safety and wellbeing of each child is paramount.
- Receive information that suggests potential or actual risk of harm to a child who attends Wesley College irrespective of whether the alleged abuse is current, past or likely to occur. The Principal will advise and support staff and, on the basis of the initial detail, will make a decision as to whether or not to delegate to the Designated Person for Child Protection for further action.

- Delegate to the Designated Person for Child Protection appropriate action and responsibilities as concerns are raised.
- Provide regular training opportunities to support the Designated Person for Child Protection.
- Make any referrals to the Social Worker in School, Oranga Tamariki or Police as appropriate.
- Ensure that all allegations are managed appropriately. No investigation will occur without appropriate consultation and a decision whether a response from Oranga Tamariki or the Police is required.
- Ensure that allegations or complaints against teaching staff are appropriately referred to the Teaching Council | Matatū Aotearoa
- Ensure that the Child Protection Policy is effectively implemented throughout Wesley College.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of, and have access to, full copies of the procedures for reporting child abuse.
- Ensure that all staff are recruited and employed in accordance with the guidelines identified in the Employment Policy to identify those people safe to work with children.
- Ensure that all staff receive child protection training on induction and regular ongoing training throughout the year.
- Ensure that the procedures in the CPP are refreshed with staff at least once a calendar year.

ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED PERSON FOR CHILD PROTECTION IS TO:

- Ensure the needs and rights of children come first i.e. the safety and wellbeing of each child is paramount.
- Ensure and safeguard clear, confidential, detailed and dated records on all child protection cases. These must contain all available information relating to the cause for concern and any subsequent action taken, including when it has been decided not to make a notification to Oranga Tamariki or the police. These records will be kept separate from student's records for the purpose of confidentiality.
- Establish a close link with the relevant local agencies to ensure clear and effective communication and be a recognised contact within Wesley College for agencies to contact regarding concerns.
- Work closely and effectively with the Social Worker in School, ensuring information is appropriately shared to effectively safeguard the child.
- Ensure that all staff are supported appropriately when dealing with child protection concerns.
- Maintain a current awareness of the children identified on the Risk Register, and regularly highlight these children to the appropriate staff.
- Consult with the Principal regarding all child protection concerns.

Concerns made against a staff member

Wesley Board follows all identification checks in accordance with the Employment Policy, and employee identification checks. If concerns are raised against staff members these will be treated seriously and process is to be followed as per the flow chart below. If there is a conflict of interest with the Designated Person for Child Protection and/or the principal the concern will be led by the principal. If there is a conflict of interest between the accused staff member, the Designated Person and the principal another staff member will be selected for their skills by the presiding member.

Child-on-child harmful behaviours

It is important to be aware that children can harm other children. These behaviours are outside of what may be considered the normal range, and can extend to bullying, violence or sexual assault. Therefore, when a child alleges inappropriate harmful behaviour by another child then the child protection procedures outlined in this policy must be considered for both the children.

Suicidal concerns or self-harming behaviours

It is important to be aware that children can harm themselves or attempt suicide. When a child identifies thoughts of suicide, or self-harming behaviour, this must be immediately notified to the Principal. If immediate action is required, phone the Emergency Services on 111.

Reporting procedures

ALL disclosures and concerns of potential suspected or alleged abuse must be brought to the attention of the Designated Person for Child Protection. If the Designated Person for Child Protection is unavailable then consultation should occur with the Principal. A decision will be made as to whether to seek further advice or notify Oranga Tamariki or the police.

When reporting an incident staff should:

- Inform the Designated Person for Child Protection as soon as possible
- Record in writing all conversations and actions taken
- Effective documentation, including referrals and notifications, must include the following:
- Record of facts, including observations, with time and date
- What was said and by whom, using the person's words
- What action has been taken, by whom and when

See Appendix for Oranga Tamariki Reporting form

Keeping the child's family informed and involved

Although the parent or caregiver of the child will usually be informed of concerns, there may be times when those with

parental responsibility may not be initially informed. This may happen when:

- the parent or caregiver is the alleged perpetrator
- it is possible that the child may be intimidated into silence
- there is a strong likelihood that evidence will be destroyed
- the child does not want their parent or caregiver involved and they are of an age when they are competent to make that decision

Sharing information and confidentiality

The safety of children and young persons is paramount. At times a child is unable to speak for or protect themselves. Therefore, Wesley College has a greater responsibility to know when and how to share appropriate information with external agencies to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young persons. Principle 5 of the Privacy Act, 2020, states that organisations must ensure there are safeguards in place that are reasonable in the circumstances to prevent loss, misuse or disclosure of personal information.

Giving information to protect children better is not a breach in confidentiality. Wherever possible the family/ whaanau

should be kept informed of what information has been shared and to which agency, and for what purpose.

Principle 11 of the Privacy Act, 2020, states "disclosure of the information is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious threat".

Should Wesley College be contacted with a requested for information or access to interview a child then the following procedure will be followed:

- Confirm identity and credentials of person requesting information
- Notify the Principal and Designated Person
- Identify specific information required and purpose
- Check information held – does Wesley College have the information requested
- Principal to identify way forward and provide permission

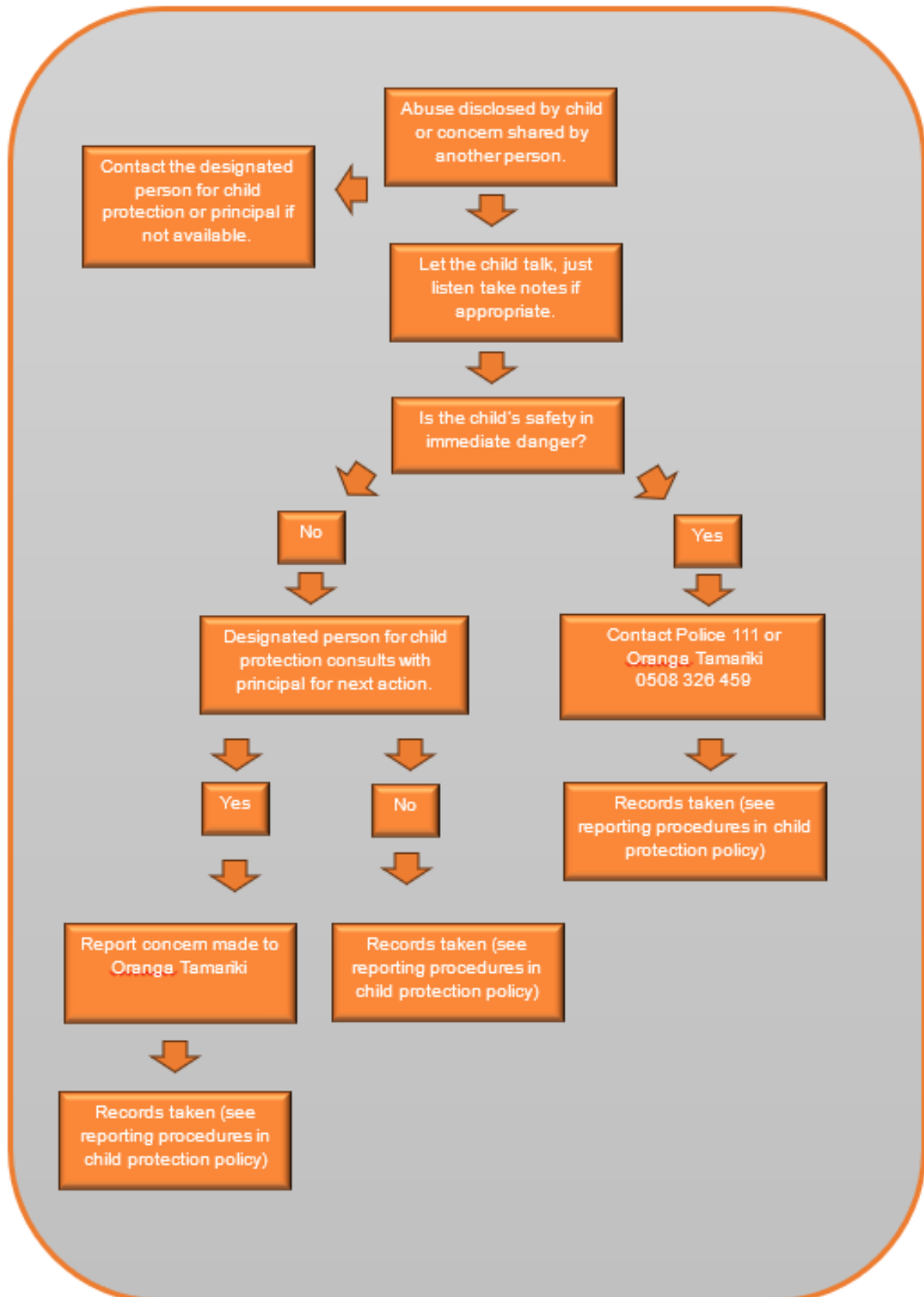
- Depending on the reason for the request, and risk to children as judged case by case, inform the family that information has been requested, by whom and seek permission. If this is a child protection issue, permission from the family is not required.
- Document all steps in the process.
- Ensure that all documentation is placed on the child's child protection file and kept separate from their school file.

Action to be taken by the designated person for child protection

Concerns regarding alleged or suspected abuse will first be raised to the Designated Person for Child Protection. If further guidance is required then consultation will occur with the Principal. A decision will be made whether this information needs to be escalated to Oranga Tamariki or police. Ensure that there is follow up action from a child or young person's disclosure or concern raised by others.

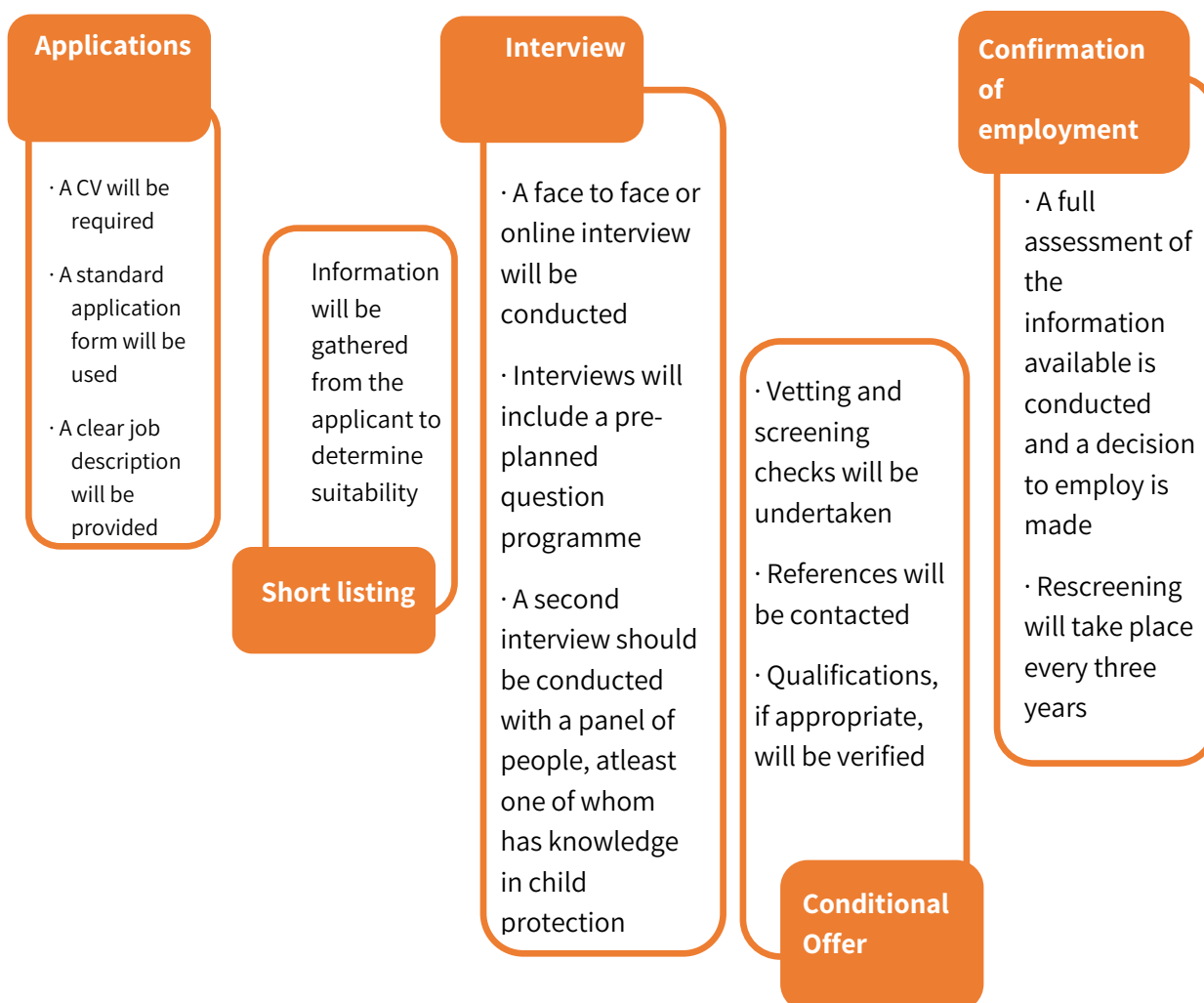
All decisions taken, including if the concern does not require notifying Oranga Tamariki, must be recorded in writing and kept securely in a Child Protection file with the reasons for the file. The following is the flowchart for action to be taken.

WHAT TO DO IF A CONCERN IS RAISED



SAFE RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

All appointments (permanent, fixed term, student, casual or volunteer) to positions that have direct and/or frequent contact with children or young people will be conditional upon safety checks, including a police vetting check.



TRAINING STAFF

All staff will receive child protection training at the level appropriate to their role. The Delegated Person for Child Protection will undertake more intensive training. These persons will be accessible to staff to provide advice and support.

All staff will be given appropriate training covering basic awareness of child protection. This will include an overview of signs and indicators of abuse, and also the procedure for responding to actual or suspected abuse. This will include:

- Roles and responsibility of staff regarding child protection
- Recognising and responding to the signs and indicators of actual or suspected abuse
- Ensuring staff understand and can follow the child protection policy and the procedures for reporting concerns
- In duction all new staff will receive child protection training as part of their induction
- All new staff will be given a copy of this policy as part of the induction process
- All staff will be taken through this policy after every review and at regular times between reviews.

SAFE WORKING PRACTICES

A relationship between an adult and a child or young person cannot be a relationship between equals there is a potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people. Adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification. Adults should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. Adults who work with children must therefore act in a way that is considered to be safe practice.

Communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, webcams, websites, social networking and blogs. Adults should not share any personal information with a child or a young persons. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child or young person other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Any sexual activity between an adult and a child or young person will be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action. When physical contact is made with a child this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Adults should use their professional judgment at all times, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and use a level of contact and or form of communication which is acceptable to the child for the minimum amount of time necessary.

All staff are expected to behave in a manner consistent with the Wesley College Code of Conduct (under review).

POLICY REVIEW

The Wesley College Board reviews all policies every three years and have a policy review schedule to monitor this. This policy will be reviewed every three years and if there is a Child Protection concern, it will be reviewed within two months of the concern being resolved/ actioned.

RELATED AND RELEVANT SCHOOL DOCUMENTS

- Wesley College Code of Conduct
 - Student Code of Conduct
 - Board Code of Conduct
- Employment Policy and Procedures (under review)
- Personnel Policy
- Concerns and Complaints Policy
- Transport Policy (under review)
- [Safe School Policy](#)
- Education outside the Classroom Policy
 - Education outside the Classroom Procedure
- Parenting / Custody Order Procedure

APPENDIX

Report of concern Oranga Tamariki template

Responding to disclosures:

Only a minority of children actively disclose abuse. Most child abuse is disclosed accidentally or through observation by an adult of a child's behaviour, words and/or physical appearance. If there is information disclosed regarding actual or suspected child abuse staff must:

- stay calm
- listen and hear
- give time to the child to say what they want
- reassure them that they were right to tell
- tell the child that they are being taken seriously and that they are not to blame
- explain that they have to pass on what the child has told them as soon as they are aware that the child is making a disclosure
- give an age appropriate explanation to the child of what the child can expect to happen next
- record in writing what was said as soon as possible, using the child's own words where possible.

In consultation with the Designated Person for Child Protection report the disclosure to

- Oranga Tamariki or the police.

Staff must not:

- make the child repeat the story unnecessarily
- promise to keep secrets
- enquire into the details of the alleged abuse
- ask leading questions.

[Handling Disclosures of Child Abuse \(childmatters.org.nz\)](http://childmatters.org.nz)

[Responding to Disclosure - Early, Open, Often \(earlyopenoften.org\)](http://earlyopenoften.org)

Help lines

[Family violence and sexual violence helplines | New Zealand Ministry of Justice](#)

[Wesley College Risk Register](#)

[Mandatory reporting to Teaching Council | Matatū Aotearoa Reporting a concern :: Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand](#)

[Teaching Code and Standards Our Code, Our Standards :: Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand](#)

The Wesley College School Board approved this policy June 2023.
This policy will be reviewed on / before the June meeting 2026.

David McGeorge
PRESIDING MEMBER

22 June 2023
DATE