

BROWNS BAY SCHOOL  
*POLICY*

SUBJECT: Child Protection

AREA: Personnel

PURPOSE:

1. The safety and interests of the child is paramount.
2. To ensure Staff will be able to identify signs of abuse or neglect.
3. To provide procedures for dealing with cases of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect.
4. To provide guidelines under which outside agencies will be used.
5. To provide guidelines for interview procedures and how parents/caregivers will be informed.
6. To provide guidelines with media organisations.

GUIDELINES:

1. Child abuse in any form constitutes a criminal act and all allegations must be treated seriously.
2. All staff will have access to training and resources to assist with identifying the signs of abuse or neglect.
3. Staff will have support systems and procedures in place to prevent having to deal with any suspected case of abuse alone.
4. Where there is suspected abuse, Oranga Tamariki/ Ministry of Vulnerable Children and/or Police will be notified and have the responsibility to investigate.
5. That parents/caregivers of children involved will be informed of any suspected abuse except where they may be implicated. In these situations, the outside referral agency will be responsible for informing parents.
6. All child abuse is to be treated with the utmost confidentiality.
7. Where a staff member is implicated, all actions will be governed by relevant employment contracts and laws
8. In the case of a report from a third party to the school, the first course of action will be that the school will direct the third party to a helping agency without becoming involved. The school may be involved at a later date.
9. Any person working in the school will be required to adhere to the Browns Bay School Code of Conduct.

## PROCEDURES:

1. The child is to be listened to and reassured that they have done the right thing in coming forward. The Staff member will not attempt to interview the child or to ask leading questions
2. The Principal will be informed of concerns or where there is a suspected case of abuse to be answered. The Principal will determine the specific process to follow ie OT/ MoVC or Police
3. Staff will have guidelines on appropriate behaviour when working with students.
4. The school will provide Peer Mediation and KOS as programmes that provide safety education for students.
5. All other staff will be provided with training on the basics of abuse identification and of the procedures for dealing with serious abuse. The training needs will be identified by management.
6. The school Child Protection policy will be circulated to all Staff on a six monthly basis.

In a situation involving suspected child abuse:

1. The Principal will form a resource team involving Senior Leadership (and other staff if necessary). At this stage, the identity of the child may be kept confidential.
2. The Staff member and all subsequent staff involved in the identified abuse case are to document any objective observations, anything said by the child and all processes used to reach decisions made.
3. If immediate danger or safety is identified as an issue, all procedures are to be acted upon with urgency.
4. In any event where OT/ MoVC and the Police are to be notified, the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees should be informed as soon as possible.
5. The Chairperson, Principal and staff will await further contact and instructions from OT/ MoVC or the Police.
6. Support should be arranged for those staff and board members dealing with the abuse.
7. The Board will provide clear guidelines as to what will be released to the media. A media spokesperson is to be appointed by the Board of Trustees to deal with any possible media enquiries. Staff will be briefed as necessary.
8. Where the suspected abuse is alleged to involve a Staff member, the provisions of the relevant employment contract will apply. An urgent meeting of the Board of Trustees is to be convened.
9. Where necessary the Senior Leadership Team, with a BOT member, will form a combined committee to deal with the situation.
10. Support will be sourced from the Crisis Intervention Team at the MoE

MAY 2019

## BROWNS BAY SCHOOL

### Sexual Harassment and Abuse Procedure

#### Child complainant

1. If a child discloses sexual abuse or harassment from an adult or family member outside of the school, staff should tell the school principal. Where appropriate, the principal will make a verbal report to Oranga Tamariki so that they can invoke an inquiry and take action as appropriate.
2. If a child discloses sexual abuse or harassment from another child at the school, the school will
  - Investigate the complaint
  - Contact the parents of the children involved
  - If appropriate, consider disciplinary action against the child or children abusing or harassing the victim
  - If appropriate, arrange a restorative meeting between the children involved and their parents
  - Work to keep that child safe in the future by considering such protections as transferring either child to another class where possible or arranging for a teacher to monitor the child and their interaction with the victim.
3. If the child discloses sexual abuse or harassment from a school volunteer the school will undertake the following procedure

The principal will undertake an initial investigation. Part of this may be contacting the volunteer and putting the allegation to them. At times this may not be appropriate.

If the principal finds there is a case to be answered for, the principal will:

- Contact the child's parents or caregivers
  - Where appropriate, report the allegations to Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police.
  - Where appropriate, contact the volunteer and have discussion with them, letting them know that it is no longer appropriate for the volunteer to continue volunteering at the school and that going forward they will not be engaged for any school related activities.
4. If a child discloses sexual abuse or harassment from a member of staff  
The staff member who received the disclosure should firstly bring the complaint to the principal.

The principal will undertake an initial investigation. If the principal feels there is a case to be answered for, the principal will

- Hold immediate discussion with NZSTA IR advisor. If appropriate, NZSTA IR advisor will advise to notify Oranga Tamariki and use the Oranga Tamariki child protection protocols.
- Decide when and who will inform the parent(s) and/or caregiver as determined by Oranga Tamariki and Police in consultation with the school.
- Refer the complaint to the board for formal disciplinary process. The board will follow the standard staff disciplinary process as per the Primary Teachers Collective

Agreement. Suspension should be considered if necessary to ensure the safety of children or staff at the school. The board should contact NZSTA IR advisor for assistance.

The BOT would comply with Teacher Council guidelines to ensure legislated requirements are met.

**Guidelines for the staff member whom the child discloses to:**

- If the child or young person is in danger or unsafe, act immediately to secure their safety.
- Listen to the child or young person and reassure them they did the right thing in disclosing.
- Write down what the child says, check that comments and events surrounding the concern are also recorded.
- Do not formally interview the child or young person. Obtain only necessary relevant facts for when clarification is needed.
- If the child or young person is not in immediate danger and is not upset reinvolve the student in usual school activities.
- If the child or young person is visibly upset provide appropriate activity for them under supervision with someone familiar (i.e. teacher) until they are able to re-join classroom activities.