



WAIHEKE ISLAND RUDOLF STEINER EDUCATION TRUST  
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## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **Reviewed April 2017**

References: HS31, 32, 33

### **Rationale**

As an early childhood centre we have a moral and professional responsibility for the health and welfare of the children in our care by ensuring that there are adequate child protection systems in place.

“The interest, safety and well-being of children are paramount.” Children, Young Persons and their Families Act (1989)

The effects of abuse may be more damaging than is immediately apparent and it is, therefore, important to break the pattern of abuse and begin support for the child as soon as possible in a professional and appropriate manner.

Child abuse includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect leading to failure to thrive.

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse means any physical force or action which results in or may result in a non-accidental injury to a child.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse means any sexual contact with a child whether consensual or not. It includes touching of a sexual nature and sexual intercourse and may include any behaviour of a sexual nature towards a child.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse means acts or omissions of those responsible for the care of a child which are likely to produce long term serious emotional difficulties

## **Neglect**

Neglect means the failure of those responsible for the care of the child to meet the physical, emotional or medical needs of a child to the extent that the child's health, development or safety is endangered.

## **Objectives**

To develop policies that give clear guidelines to staff and parents on appropriate steps to take for the prevention and interruption of abuse of children.

To inform parents by offering reading material, parent education, and information on child protection agencies.

To develop personnel policies that ensure the protection of staff, and the employment of appropriate individuals (see personnel policies).

To ensure that as much as possible, more than one adult is present with any group of children at all times.

## **Procedures**

Fossil Bay Kindergarten is committed to the protection of the kindergarten children through the following procedures :

1. All new staff will be familiarised with this policy before commencing employment.
2. All new staff employed to be on the premises during class time will require a current police safety check to comply with the Vulnerable Children's Act 2014
3. Staff supervision :
  - More than one staff member is present at all times and adult to child ratios as required by the ECE Regulations will be adhered to at all times
  - No child is alone with only one member of staff without being visible as far as practicable
  - Any teacher helping a child in the bathroom will ensure they are visible (doors left open)
  - While physical comfort may be appropriate, teachers are sensitive to the child's wishes and aware of professional boundaries when doing so.
4. Collection of Children
  - To ensure children do not leave kindy without parental consent , a sign-in book is maintained and enrolment forms detail who may pick up
  - Only adults named on the enrolment form are able to collect children from the kindergarten. If a child is to be collected by someone other than the persons on their enrolment form, parents/legal guardian are required to give permission to the teaching team including relationship to the child and to write it in the sign-in book
5. Visitors and Relievers
  - Parents' and visitors' roles and limits are made clear by staff before contact with children
  - Visitors must sign in to the visitor book on arrival

- Parents will be notified of the presence of any student or reliever via a notice on the sign in table.
  - Visitors and students are not allowed to change or toilet any child unsupervised and are not to be left alone with any child or group of children
  - No person on the premises uses or is under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that has a detrimental effect on their functioning or behavior during hours of operation
6. Signed permission forms needed for child excursions (See excursions policy)
  7. A Complaints Procedure ensures issues of concern are dealt with appropriately. Parents are encouraged to express their feelings and concerns so that the operation of the kindergarten can be constantly improved.
  8. Senior staff to keep informed of professional agencies with specialist abuse knowledge who can support intervention, including a list of contact phone numbers.
  9. Reporting will be made only to CYFS or to the Police. N.B Section 15 & 16 of the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act - reporting of child abuse.

10. Disclosure :

A child's initial disclosure of abuse is a critical moment and must be handled carefully. At the initial stage of suspicion, when the child is disclosing information about alleged abuse, the person to whom the disclosure is being made should:

- Listen carefully, without challenging the information
- Make sure they don't ask any leading questions
- Seek to reassure the child indicating that further help will be sought
- Immediately write down accurately what he/she said
- Discuss concerns with the College of Teachers who will decide whether to take the matter up personally with the child, continue observation and recording, or refer the matter to an outside agency.
- Be given support by staff and the Centre Manager will support the person reporting.
- Ensure access arrangements are appropriate to ensure the continued safety of the child e.g person under suspicion denied access to child.

When concerns are felt but no disclosure has been made it is important to :

- Observe child and note concerns - with dates - use initials, not full name
- Continue observation and maintain friendly relations with child
- Listen to the child and reassure them, but do not make promises or commitments that you cannot keep.
- Do not interview the child. Obtain only the necessary facts
- Seek support from the Centre Manager.

If a staff member is under suspicion, the Centre Manager and licensee should be informed and the staff member directed by them to appropriate legal/professional advice and support.

11. Confidentiality :

At all stages confidentiality must be maintained. Communication should only be with people who need to know and/or are legally entitled. It is important to note that in some

situations other children may also be involved or at risk. This must be established as quickly as possible and the appropriate steps taken.

6. Record keeping :

It is essential accurate records are maintained that do not use full names are kept locked in the office filing cabinet.

12. Personnel policies which include procedures for selecting suitable staff:

- A police vet is done for every new staff member and other frequent visitors
- Full interview process is followed and references checked

13. Professionalism:

- Staff will endeavor to maintain professional standards at all times and recognize the boundaries between personal and professional life.

14. Communication with parents:

- The child protection policy will be reviewed annually and available to parents' perusal.
- The complaints procedures are displayed on the outside notice board
- Preventative education programs are provided for staff, parents, children and community about ways to keep children safe.
- Resources are available for staff, parents and children.