

CENTRAL NORMAL SCHOOL

Procedure 5.1

Title: Child Protection Policy

Procedure 5.1 covers these principles:

- Central Normal School is committed to the prevention of abuse and to the well-being of children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families.
- All services provided by Central Normal School adhere to the principles of partnership, protection and participation; and the rights and responsibilities accorded by the Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Purpose:

- The purpose of this policy is to provide Central Normal School staff with guidelines by which to identify and respond appropriately of abuse and neglect, and to understand their role in keeping children safe.
- This policy will be reviewed annually, and updated regularly in the light of operational experience and in line with changes in legislation and associated policies.
- Central Normal School recognises that all staff and trustees have a full and active part to play in protecting students from harm. Overall responsibility, implementation and review of this policy rests with the Senior Support Team.

Scope:

- This policy covers all staff of Central Normal School who have direct or indirect contact with children. This includes those staff, paid or voluntary, employed by Central Normal School, as well as those professionals contracted or invited to provide services to children in the care of Central Normal School. This includes teaching and non-teaching staff and parent helpers.
- This policy covers the Board of Trustees and their responsibilities in the safety and wellbeing of children.

Definitions:

- For the purposes of this policy “Child” means a boy or girl under the age of 14 years, “Young Person” means a boy or girl over the age of 14 years.
- For the purposes of this policy “Staff” means all those employed by Central Normal School whether paid or voluntary, full time or part-time.

Definition of Child Abuse:

Defining Child Abuse within this policy establishes the school’s understanding, thereby minimising the opportunity for confusion. The Children, Young Persons and their Families Act, 1989, defines child abuse as “the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person”.

Physical Abuse is a non-accidental act on a child that result in physical harm. 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.

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effect 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 the seeing or hearing the ill treatment of others.

Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities (penetrative and non-penetrative, for example, rape, kissing, touching, masturbation) as well as non-contact acts such as involving children in the looking at or production of sexual images, sexual activities and sexual behaviours.

Neglect 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.

Family Violence is physical, emotional, sexual and other abuse by someone, of a person, with whom they have or have had some form of intimate relationship with, such as marriage or cohabitation, in order to maintain power and control over a person. It is important to be vigilant to any signs, particularly if children are being affected.

Roles and Responsibilities of Staff:

- It is the responsibility of staff to be vigilant, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of 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.
- Central Normal School will have an appointed Designated Person for Child Protection. This function will be held by Principal (or Deputy Principal if the Principal is away).

Child Protection Procedures:

- All concerns of potential, suspected or alleged abuse must be brought to the attention of the Designated Person. A decision will be made as to whether to seek advice or notify Child Youth and Family.
- If a child makes a verbal disclosure to a member of staff it is important that staff take what the child says seriously and records it.
- Under no circumstances should a member of staff attempt to conduct an investigation or deal with concerns regarding child abuse alone.
- All decisions taken, including if the concern does not require notifying Child Youth and Family, must be recorded in writing and kept securely in a Child Protection file with the reasons clearly identified and explained.
- Giving information to protect children better is not a breach in confidentiality. Wherever possible the family/whanau should be kept informed of what information has been shared and to which agency, and for what purposes. Guidance of sharing

information with family/whanau is to be sought from either the Police or Child Youth and Family. Principle 11 of the Privacy Act, 1993, states “disclosure of the information is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious threat”.

Safe Recruitment and Training 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 on a safety check. Further information regarding safety checking, including vetting and screening procedures, is found in the Employment Policy.
- Before making any appointment, Central Normal School will undertake a series of checks to ascertain the candidate’s suitability and safety to work at Central Normal School. These will adhere to the statutory obligations contained within the legislation such as the Privacy Act, the Human Rights Act and Vulnerable Children Act.
- All staff will receive appropriate Professional Development regarding identifying and responding to vulnerability and child abuse.
- The Principal will hold the overall responsibility for ensuring all staff have these Professional Development opportunities and know how to respond to a child who discloses.

Safe Working Practices:

- All staff are expected to behave in manners consistent with the Code of Ethics and Central Normal Schools’ policies.
- All staff are expected to behave in manners that maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others.

Allegations made against members of staff:

- Allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against staff, volunteers or representatives of other agencies must be taken seriously and reported to the Principal who will deal with them immediately, sensitively and expediently within the procedures of Central Normal School (Complaints against Staff and Sexual Harassment).
- It is NOT the responsibility of staff to investigate allegations of child abuse.
- If the police decide to undertake a criminal investigation then the member of staff may be suspended, without prejudice, as a precautionary measure. It is important that no internal investigation is undertaken, and no evidence gathered that might prejudice the criminal investigation.