



OSCAR CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



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Waimarino Education Trust
Oscar@waimarinotrust.co.nz
07 576 4233 / 027 421 0435
36 Taniwha Place, Bethlehem, Tauranga

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1. Mission Statement

The Waimarino Education Trust OSCAR Programmes aim to provide a safe and stimulating range of recreational activities and experiences for children aged 5-13 from all demographic **and cultural backgrounds. A key focus of the programme emphasises developing 'our future leaders' both mentally and physically while attempting to encompass and provide for** individual needs and interests.

Basically, we:

LIVE – Teaching children to make the most out of life, accept new challenges, to assess the risks and to always put safety first. Face their fear and do it anyway. To always put in 100% and to never give up.

LAUGH – Have fun; make new friends, laugh and play. Create lasting memories and experiences.

LEARN – By teaching new skills to your children we will build their self-esteem, challenge them to discover a higher level of confidence, and help them achieve their goals. Our fantastic staffs are chosen not only for their amazing skills in running programmes like this **but also because they are great role models for today's children.**

Please note: Waimarino Education Trust is a Charitable Trust focused on education for children. The trust provides out-of-school programmes and purposely designed programmes for school groups, for children from 5 to 17 years old.

2. Objectives of the Waimarino Education Trust

To provide children in the 5 -13 years age group with recreation programmes that are:

- Age appropriate
- Well supervised
- Structured
- Safe
- Responsible
- Enjoyable
- Fun
- Our objective is to inspire and motivate the children of today while providing a fun, safe and stimulating environment where children feel safe and parents feel secure knowing that their children are being well cared for
- To provide equal opportunities to children with the absence of discrimination
- The Waimarino Education Trust OSCAR Programmes operate in accordance to standards recommended by Oranga Tamariki and they have a CYFS Level Four Standards Approval

Summary

Ensuring the wellbeing and safety of children, family/whanau and the public including prevention of child abuse or maltreatment, is a paramount goal of this organisation. This policy provides guidance to staff on how to identify and respond to concerns about the wellbeing of a child, including possible abuse or neglect.

The interests of the child will be the paramount consideration when any action is taken in response to suspected abuse or neglect. This organisation commits to support the statutory agencies (Child, Youth and Family and the New Zealand Police) to investigate abuse and will report suspected cases and concerns to these agencies as per the process in this policy.

Our Designated Person for Child Protection, Amanda McCabe, will be responsible for the maintenance and annual review of this policy, in addition to carrying out the responsibilities outlined in this policy. Staff will not assume responsibility beyond the level of their experience and training.

Our organisation commits to ensure staff have access to the training they need.

This policy was authored by Amanda McCabe on the 22nd of August, 2023. A digital copy can be found on our website at www.waimarinotrust.co.nz

The policy is due to be updated on the 22nd of August, 2024. It is consistent with Child, Youth and Family and Police guidelines and will be updated when new guidance is issued.

3. Purpose of Protection Policy

Our child protection policy supports our staff to respond appropriately to potential child protection concerns, including suspected abuse or neglect. It is our **organisation's commitment to protect children, members of family/ whanau and the community from abuse and to recognise the important roles all of our staff have in protecting children.**

This policy provides a broad framework and expectations to protect children, their families/ whanau and members of the public in actual or suspected child abuse and neglect. It applies to all staff, including volunteers and part-time or temporary roles and contractors. It is intended to protect all children that staff may encounter, including siblings, the children of adults accessing services and any other children encountered by staff as they provide their service. In addition to guiding staff to make referrals of suspected child abuse and neglect to the statutory agencies - i.e., Oranga Tamariki and the Police - this policy will also help our staff to identify and respond to the needs of the many vulnerable children whose wellbeing is of concern.

We recognise that in many of these cases, the involvement of statutory agencies would be inappropriate and potentially harmful to families/whānau. Throughout New Zealand statutory and no statutory agencies provide a network of mutually supportive services, and it is important for our organisation to work with these to respond to the needs of vulnerable children and families/whānau in a manner proportionate to the level of need and risk. Contact details for agencies and services in our community are provided as an appendix to this policy.

- CAHMS Tauranga 07 579 8000 (Ask for advice)
- Oranga Tamariki 0508 326459 (Make a disclosure statement)
- New Zealand Police 111 (If you feel like the child is in immediate danger)
- Youth Horizon 07 575 2639 (If the child has come from there)

To ensure that Waimarino demonstrates continual improvement in child protection practice, we will work to maintain a good working relationship with child protection agencies and support our staff to protect children from abuse by consulting with experts with specialist knowledge and providing the necessary training options. We also commit to explore opportunities to work with other providers, including from other sectors, to develop a network of child protection practice in our community. This policy applies to all staff, including contractors and volunteers.

Definitions;

- **Child** – any child or young person aged under 17 years and who is not married or in a civil union.
- **Child protection** – activities carried out to ensure that children are safe in cases where there is suspected abuse or neglect or are at risk of abuse or neglect.
- **Designated person for child protection** – the manager/supervisor or designated person responsible for providing advice and support to staff where they have a concern about an individual child or who want advice about child protection policy.
- **Disclosure** – information given to a staff member by a child, parent or caregiver or a third party in relation to abuse or neglect.
- **Child, Youth and Family (Oranga Tamariki)** – the agency responsible for investigating and responding to suspected abuse and neglect and for providing care and protection to children found to be in need.
- **New Zealand Police** – the agency responsible for responding to situations where a child is in immediate danger and for working with Child, Youth and Family in child protection work and investigating cases of abuse or neglect where an offence may have occurred.
- **Physical abuse** – any acts that may result in physical harm of a child or young person. It can be, but is not limited to: bruising, cutting, hitting, beating, biting, burning, and causing abrasions, strangulation, suffocation, and drowning, poisoning and fabricated or induced illness.

- **Sexual abuse** – any acts that involve forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse can be, but is not limited to:
 - **Contact abuse:** touching breasts, genital/anal fondling, masturbation, oral sex, Penetrative or non-penetrative contact with the anus or genitals, encouraging the child to perform such acts on the perpetrator or another, involvement of the child in activities for the purposes of pornography or prostitution.
 - **Non-contact abuse:** exhibitionism, voyeurism, exposure to pornographic or sexual imagery, inappropriate photography or depictions of sexual or suggestive behaviours or comments.
- **Emotional abuse** – any act or omission that results in adverse, or impaired psychological, social, intellectual and emotional functioning, and/or development.
- This can include:
- Patterns of isolation, degradation, constant criticism or negative comparison to others. Isolating, corrupting, exploiting or terrorising a child can also be emotional abuse
- Exposure to family/**whānau** or intimate partner violence.
- **Neglect** – neglect is the most common form of abuse. Neglect can be:
 - Physical (not providing the necessities of life like a warm place, food and clothing).
 - Emotional (not providing comfort, attention and love).
 - Neglectful supervision (leaving children without someone safe looking after them).
 - Medical neglect (not taking care of health needs).
 - Educational neglect (allowing chronic truancy, failure to enrol in education or Inattention to education needs).

4. Training

We are committed to maintaining and increasing staff awareness of how to prevent, recognise and respond to abuse through appropriate training. As part of their induction, new staff is made aware of the policy on child protection.

Identifying child abuse and neglect

Our approach to identifying abuse or neglect is guided by the following principles:

- **We understand that every situation is different and it's important to consider all** available information about the child and their environment before reaching conclusions.
- For example, behavioural concerns may be the result of life events, such as divorce, accidental injury, the arrival of a new sibling etc.

- We understand when we are concerned a child is showing signs of potential abuse or neglect we should talk to someone, either a colleague, manager/supervisor or the Designated Person for Child Protection – we **shouldn't act alone**.
- While there are different definitions of abuse, the important thing is for us to consider overall wellbeing and the risk of harm to the child. It is not so important to be able to categorise the type of abuse or neglect.
- It is normal for us to feel uncertain, however, the important thing is that we should be able to recognise when something is wrong, especially if we notice a pattern forming or several signs that make us concerned.
- Exposure to intimate partner violence (IPV) is a form of child abuse. There is a high rate of co-occurrence between IPV and the physical abuse of children.

We recognise the signs of potential abuse:

- **Physical signs** (e.g., unexplained injuries, burns, fractures, unusual or excessive itching, genital injuries, and sexually transmitted diseases).
- **Developmental delays** (e.g., small for their age, cognitive delays, falling behind in school, poor speech and social skills)
- **Emotional abuse/neglect** (e.g., sleep problems, low self-esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness/loneliness and evidence of self-harm).
- **Behavioural concerns** (e.g., age inappropriate sexual interest or play, fear of a certain person or place, eating disorders/substance abuse, disengagement/neediness, aggression).
- The child talking about things that indicate abuse (sometimes called an allegation or disclosure).
- **Physical signs** (e.g., looking rough and uncared for, dirty, without appropriate clothing, underweight).
- **Developmental delays** (e.g., small for their age, cognitive delays, falling behind in school, poor speech and social skills).
- **Emotional abuse/neglect** (e.g., sleep problems, low self-esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness/loneliness and evidence of self-harm).
- **Behavioural concerns** (e.g., disengagement/ neediness, eating disorders/substance abuse, aggression).
- **Neglectful supervision** (e.g., out and about unsupervised, left alone, no safe home to return to).
- **Medical neglect** (e.g., persistent nappy rash or skin disorders or other untreated medical issues).

Every situation is different and staff will consider all available information about the child and their environment before reaching conclusions. For example, behavioural

concerns may be the result of life events, such as divorce, accidental injury, the arrival of a new sibling etc.

Waimarino will always act on the recommendations of statutory agencies, including Oranga Tamariki and the Police. We will only inform families/**whānau** about suspected or actual abuse after we have discussed this with these agencies.

When we respond to suspected child abuse or any concerning behaviour we write down our observations, impressions and communications in a confidential register. This is kept separate from our other records and access will be strictly controlled.

Staffs involved in cases of suspected child abuse are entitled to have support. We will maintain knowledge of such individuals, agencies and organisations in the community that provide support.

- EAP Services 0800 327 669
- Work Place Support 0800 443 445

5. Confidentiality and information sharing

We will seek advice from Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police before identifying information about an allegation is shared with anyone, other than the service manager or designated person.

Staff should be aware that:

- Under sections 15 and 16 of the Children, Young Persons, and The Families Act 1989 any person who believes that a child has been or is likely to be, harmed physically, emotionally or sexually or ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived may report the matter to Child, Youth and Family or the Police and provided the report is made in good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against them.
- When collecting personal information about individuals, it is important to be aware of the requirements of the privacy principles – i.e., the need to collect the information directly from the individual concerned and when doing so to be transparent about: the purposes for collecting the information and how it will be used; who can see the information; where it is held; what is compulsory/voluntary information; and that people have a right to request access to and correction of their information.
- Staff may, however, disclose information under the Privacy Act/Health Information Privacy Code where there is good reason to do so – such as where there is a serious risk to individual health and safety. Disclosure about ill-treatment or neglect of a child/young person may also be made to the Police or Child, Youth and Family under sections 15 and 16 of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989.

6. Child safe practice guidelines

To avoid situations where staff may be alone with children, all staff should examine the opportunities or possible situations where staff may be alone with children. Wherever possible an open-door policy for all spaces should be used (excludes toilets).

Staff should be aware of where all children are at all times.

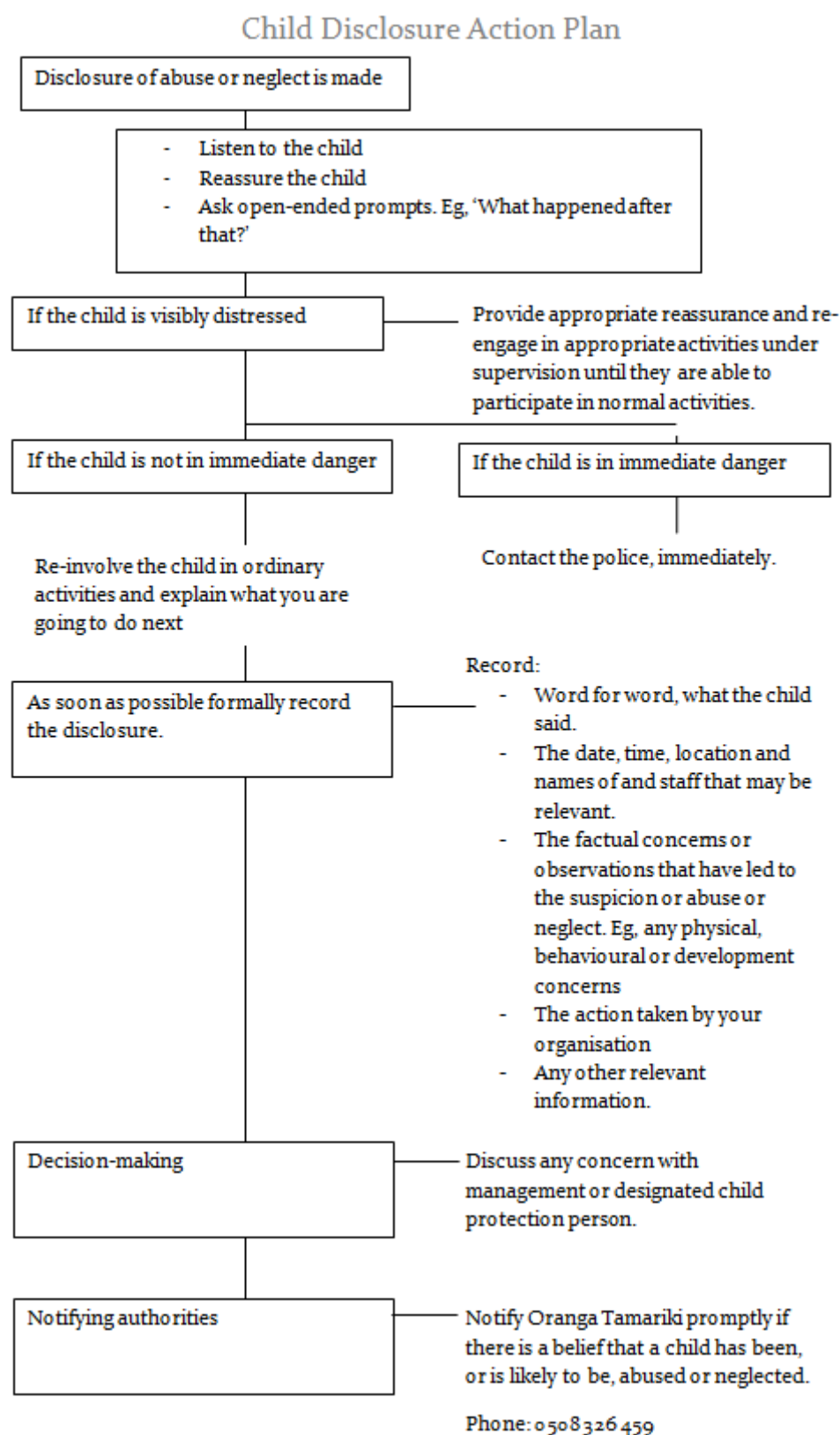
Visitors should be monitored at all times by staff and volunteers and outside instructors should be monitored by staff.

If activities require one to one physical contact (i.e., swimming, helping child, sharing a kayak etc.) parents and caregivers should be advised.

Where a child or young person requires assistance, e.g., if they are intellectually or physically disabled, if possible involve the parents/caregivers and outside agencies (in education **such as the Ministry of Education's Special Education group**) to assist. If this assistance is not available, ensure that the staff members are aware of the appropriate procedures when giving assistance.

Staff will at times be alone in a vehicle with a child (if they are the last child being dropped off or picked up). They are to ensure their own safety by having the child sit in the back seat of the vehicle. Unless an emergency requires it, children and young people are not to be taken from our **organisation's premises, or from the programme** we provide, without written parental consent.

7. Child Disclosure Action Plan



8. Procedures

The safety and welfare of the young person is of paramount consideration in the implementation of the Waimarino Education Trust (WET) child protection procedures.

9. Suspected or current ongoing abuse or neglect

The following is a guide for staff who encounters child allegations of abuse, or suspected abuse.

Remain Calm

- Listen.
- Ask open-ended questions (such as; what happened next?)
- Do not make promises, or commitments you cannot keep (such as; keeping this a secret. Abuse thrives in secrecy)
- Tell the child that you will need to consult with management about the best way to keep them safe.
- Respond to the child with calmness, and kindness. Except how the child may be feeling
- If the child is visibly distressed, provide appropriate reassurance and find an appropriate place for them to be - until they are able to return to ordinary activities.
- **Do not interview the child about what they have said.**
- Reassure the child that what happened was not okay, that you believe them that they are not in trouble.

Keep a written record

- As soon as possible, formally record what the child has said.
- Obtain only relevant facts. If, and when clarification is necessary.
- Accurately write down what the child has told you, what you said, and the date of their disclosure. Avoid making judgements. Simply record the facts. This may be used as part of your statement, or as evidence in court. It also reassures the child that you have heard them, that what they have said is important and that you are taking it seriously.

Get help

- **Do not act alone**
- Report the conversation/disclosure to management
- If necessary, phone CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services 0800 333 061)
- Phone Oranga Tamaki (0508 326459) to make a formal disclosure.

Inform and agree

- An appropriate form of action will be agreed upon

- The staff members notes will be kept in a private and confidential file
- **If the child is in immediate danger, call police (111)**

Notify

- If a notification to a statutory authority is agreed upon the time and date of this referral and who was spoken to will be noted in the file.
- Notifications to Oranga Tamariki can be made by; Phone (0508 326459), email (contact@ot.govt.nz)

10. Procedures to follow when allegations of abuse are made against staff

This policy is made on the basis that all children and young people, should be treated with dignity and respect. They have the right to have their needs met in a safe environment. When allegations are made that threatened that safety, the centres management will act on those allegations, while taking care to treat the employee fairly.

Purpose

To ensure or provide;

- The safety of this child is the first consideration
- That all complaints are taken seriously, and dealt with effectively.
- That in the case of a complaint of an employee, action is guided by the employment contract
- Clear guidance for management and employee in respect of any allegations received concerning children in the centre

Procedures

The recommended procedures should be followed in the event of suspicion or disclosure of abuse against an employee. A child must be adequately protected. Management will have dual responsibility in respect for both the student and employee.

There are 2 procedures to be followed here;

1. The reporting procedure in regard to abuse or neglect of a child
2. The procedure of dealing with the employee

In all cases, it suggested that no one person should have the responsibility for dealing with both the reporting, and employment issues. It is suggested that senior management would have responsibility of dealing with the employment issues, and OSCAR manager would have the responsibility of working with the child. The senior management should consult with the OSCAR manager to ensure implementation of the child protection policy regarding reporting in that the child is being supported.

The following steps will be taken when dealing with an employee;

- The senior management should be informed as soon as possible
- The OSCAR manager is advised to ensure records are kept of any comments by the child, complaints and/or allegations and follow up any action to be taken.
- The decision to follow up on an allegation of abuse or neglect against an employee of the centre should be made in consultation of the following;
 - Oranga Tamariki - 0508 326 459
 - New Zealand Police – 111
- The employee complained against should be advised of their right to seek support/advise from EAP Services (0800 327669) or any other relevant organisation.
- Under no circumstance should a child or young person raising the concern be exposed to unnecessary risk. This may require senior management to contemplate removal or temporarily suspension of the employee from the centre, subject to their employment contract.
- It is strongly recommended that senior management maintain a close liaison with Oranga Tamariki and the Police

11. Privacy Act 2020

I / We authorise Waimarino Education Trust to collect and retain information that regards the health and safety of your child (in case of emergency). The privacy principles are the core of the Privacy Act, and need to be adhered to when dealing with the following;

- The collection of personal information
- The storage of personal information
- The use of personal information

This information is also made available to the MSD for their audit purposes. I also understand that if any of the staff of Waimarino has any concern for the safety of my child or any of their family members, that they may inform the relevant authorities. I understand that my information collected via enrolment and profiles on Enrolmy can be shared with relevant authorities and or providers under the Sharing Information - Family Violence Act 2019 and the Oranga Tamariki Act.

Privacy Information Disclaimer

Waimarino reserves the right to exclude individuals from any of their OSCAR programmes if the information provided does not meet the minimum prescribed, accreditation standards to ensure that the duty of care for any child can be met. These standards are mandated and audited by the sectors governing body, the Ministry of Social Development.

12. Review Schedule

This policy will be renewed on the 22nd of August 2024.

13. Recruitment and Employment

Safety checking will be carried out in accordance with the vulnerable children act 2014. This will include;

- A police vet
- Identity verification
- References
- Interview

A work history will be sort and previous employment history will be contacted. If there is any suspicion that the application may impose a risk to a child, that applicant will not be employed.