

	<p>Brooklyn School Board of Trustees Policy</p> <hr/> <p>Child Protection</p>
---	---

INTRODUCTION

1.0 PRINCIPLES

Brooklyn School is committed to the prevention of abuse and to the wellbeing of children and young people. All services provided by Brooklyn School adhere to the principles of partnership, protection and participation.

The Board has an obligation to ensure that children and young people in our care thrive, belong and achieve. The Board is committed to the wellbeing of our students, prevention of child abuse and the protection of all young people. The safety and wellbeing of students at Brooklyn is our top priority.

Notification to appropriate agencies will be made in all cases of suspected or alleged abuse.

2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide Brooklyn School staff guidelines by which to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of abuse and neglect and to understand their role in students' safety.

Brooklyn School recognises that all staff and Trustees have a full and active part to play in protecting students from harm. Overall responsibility and implementation of this policy rests with the Principal of Brooklyn School.

3.0 SCOPE

This policy covers all staff of Brooklyn School who have direct or indirect contact with students.

This includes those staff, paid or voluntary, employed directly by Brooklyn School as well as those professionals contracted or invited to provide services to students in the care of Brooklyn School. This includes teaching and non-teaching staff.

The policy covers the Board of Trustees and their responsibilities in the safety and wellbeing of students.

4.0 DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE

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'.

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. 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 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.

5.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 Brooklyn School will have an appointed Designated Person for Child Protection. This function will be held by a senior staff member or the Principal.

6.0 CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

- 6.1 All concerns of potential, suspected or alleged abuse must be brought to the attention of the designated person (Working Associate Principal) for Child Protection. If the AP is unavailable then consultation should occur with the Principal.
- 6.2 If a student makes a verbal disclosure to a member of staff it is important that staff take what the student says seriously.
- 6.3 Staff are to listen carefully to what the student is saying and are not to interview them or ask too many questions, ask the very basics ie. Who/when?
- 6.4 Once the basics have been ascertained no further questions are to be asked. What the student has said is to be documented, this should include time, date and who was present. This information will be passed onto authorities as soon as possible.
- 6.5 Advise Child Youth and Family or Police promptly when a disclosure is made.
- 6.6 Deciding when and who will inform the parent(s) and/or caregiver will be determined by Child Youth and Family and Police in consultation with the school. If there is immediate risk of harm please refer to the flow-chart (Call the Police).

7.0 TRAINING OF STAFF

- 7.1 All staff will receive child protection training at the level appropriate to their role. The AP for Child protection will undertake more intensive training in child protection.

8.0 SAFE WORKING PRACTICES

- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 All staff are expected to behave in manners that maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others.

9.0 ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST MEMBERS OF STAFF

- 9.1 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 outlined in this Section.
- 9.2 It is not the responsibility of the staff to investigate allegations of child abuse.
- 9.3 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.
- 9.4 Where the allegation is against a teacher the school will advise the Education Council as per Section 394, Education Act 1989 – Mandatory reporting of possible serious misconduct as soon as possible.

10.0 DELEGATION

- 10.1 The Board **requires the Principal** to:
- 1.1.1 Develop appropriate procedures to meet child safety requirements as appropriate to the school;
 - 1.1.2 Comply with relevant legislative requirements and responsibilities;
 - 1.1.3 Make this policy available to all staff and any other person upon request;
 - 1.1.4 Ensure that every contract or funding arrangement the school enters into includes child protection provisions as appropriate;
 - 1.1.5 Ensure that the interests of children and young people are paramount in all circumstances;
 - 1.1.6 Recognise the rights of the family to participate in decision-making about their child;
 - 1.1.7 Ensure that all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect, deal with disclosures and/or allegations against staff members, and are able to take the appropriate action;

- 1.1.8 Support all staff to work in accordance with this policy and feel confident they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal;
- 1.1.9 Consult, discuss and share relevant information in a timely way regarding any concerns about an individual child with the appropriate agency, Board or designated person;
- 1.1.10 Seek advice as necessary from NZSTA advisers on employment matters and other relevant agencies where child safety issues arise.

11.0 REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE

- 11.1 This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the regular Policy Review process of the Board of Trustees and when necessary in line with changes in legislation and associated policies.
- 11.2 This policy links to the school’s Mission and Values; section 15 of the Children Young Persons and their Families Act 1989, and the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

Policy developed by: Brooklyn School Board of Trustees
Date reviewed and adopted: November 2016
Due date for Policy Review: 2019