



11 February 2025

Tēnā koe

**Official Information Act request**

Thank you for your emails of 2 and 3 January, requesting information about the Golden Bay Workcentre Trust.

I have considered your requests under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on each part of your request set out separately below.

*Question 1 Request for three documents referenced in the Golden Bay Workcentre Trust's accreditation assessment of request.*

Please find attached three documents:

1. Child Protection Policy Golden Bay Workcentre Trust May 2023.
2. Mohua Social Services Child Protection Policy February 2023.
3. Children, Young People, and Associated Community Members Protection Policy 2023.

You will note that the information regarding some individuals in reports 1 and 3 is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of natural persons. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

*Question 2 Request for the Child Protection Policies for Golden Bay Workcentre Trust and Mohua Social Services for the period 15 October to 19 November 2023.*

In addition to the Child Protection Policy Golden Bay Workcentre Trust May 2023 document provided above, I also provide:

4. Care and Protection Notification Process flow chart, May 2018

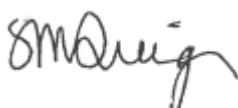
I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact [OIA\\_Requests@msd.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'AGraham', written over the 'pp.' text.

Anna Graham

**General Manager**

**Ministerial and Executive Services**

# GBWCT POLICY



Document Number: 03.01.03  
Effective Date: 01/04/2019  
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Next Review Date: 01/01/2025  
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## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This policy describes the commitment that the Golden Bay Workcentre Trust has to children and young people, and the measures it will take to ensure their safety and well-being. The safety of children and young people is our prime consideration at all times.

### 1.0 Purpose

This Policy articulates GBWCT's commitment to ensuring the well-being and safety of children and young people who are receiving services from GBWCT. In the delivery of its services, GBWCT recognises that there is a genuine and significant opportunity to identify the abuse and neglect of children and young people that might otherwise be undetected.

### 2.0 Principles

The Golden Bay Workcentre Trust is committed to the following principles:

- This policy recognises that children, young people, and vulnerable adults have a right to be safe from abuse and harm.
- We are committed to the prevention of abuse and to the well-being of staff, volunteers, children, young people, vulnerable adults, and their families.
- We are committed to acting at all times in the best interest of the children, young people, vulnerable adults, and their families.
- We are committed to dealing with abuse, suspected abuse, or disclosure of abuse in a timely fashion.
- We recognise that the family's primary role in caring and protecting the child/young person should be valued and maintained. However the child/young persons safety will have priority.
- We acknowledge that in cases of suspected child abuse, support for families is important.
- We agree that working in accordance with this policy requires staff to be trained and supported.
- We will ensure any disclosures about alleged abuse are acknowledged and investigated and that appropriate action is taken to ensure the safety of children and young people who make disclosures.
- We are committed to complying with all relevant legislation.



- We will ensure that children, young people, and staff have access to appropriate medical, psychological, and legal services and support.

### 3.0 Policy Statements

The Golden Bay Workcentre Trust values children and young people and is committed to the prevention of child abuse and to the protection of children and young people. This commitment means that the interests and welfare of the child/young person are the prime considerations when any decision is made about suspected child abuse.

We support the roles of the Police and Oranga Tamariki in the investigation of suspected abuse and will report suspected child abuse to these agencies.

We are committed to supporting families and maintaining relationships with agencies and individuals in the community.

To fulfil its obligations for this Policy, GBWCT will ensure:

- The rights of children and young people are respected. The welfare and safety of children and young persons are our primary consideration when providing services to children and young people.
- Including this organisation's commitment to the safety of children and young people in all our strategies, plans, and relevant public documents.
- Regularly referring to the commitment to the safety of children and young people to ensure all staff maintains the commitment.
- Making information about the organisation's commitment available to stakeholders, including parents, staff, and prospective staff, and all others involved in the organisation.
- Giving leadership on child safety from the Board and management.
- Appropriate training is completed by all employees providing services to children and young people while employed by the Trust.
- Employees follow this Policy.
- Employees learn to identify abuse and neglect in accordance with Safeguarding Children guidelines.
- Any person who believes that a child or young person has been, or is likely to be, harmed, illtreated, abused, (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), neglected, or deprived, or who has concerns about the well-being of a child or young person and the child/young person is not in immediate danger, must first report their concerns to the Manager and together they can assess the best approach to take. This may involve:
  - a) Seeking guidance from funders Contract or Relationship Manager/s
  - b) Reporting the matter to Oranga Tamariki or NZ Police
  - c) Recording the concerns in the GBWCT 'Book of Worries'



- If an employee identifies an incident of child abuse or neglect and determines that the child/young person is in immediate danger, the employee must notify the New Zealand Police on 111 immediately.
- All incidents including suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect must be managed respectfully and sensitively while maintaining the need for individual privacy.
- Contractors and service providers funded by, or working on behalf of GBWCT to provide services to children/young people have adopted a suitable child protection policy and regularly review this policy.
- Employees cooperate with other agencies including Oranga Tamariki and the New Zealand Police in a way that is in the best interest of the child/young person and aligns with the purposes of the Act and associated legislation and regulation.
- GBWCT recognises that working with situations involving child abuse or neglect could impact on an employee's emotional wellbeing. Management will support employees who do report child abuse or neglect and will ensure they have access to increased professional supervision as required.

## 4.0 Employment of Safe People

In order to provide a safe environment for children and young people, we are committed to employing people who will do no harm. We will do this by requesting sufficient relevant information to be able to gain a comprehensive candidate picture. Refer to Safety Checking of Staff engaged in Children's Workers roles.

### We will do this by:

- Providing clear job descriptions to all interested candidates.
- All candidates will be personally required to complete an application form. The application form will include provision for the applicant to give permission for the organisation to speak to any appropriate people about the applicant.
- Personnel checks will be referenced back to the replies from this application.
- An applicant who is not truthful on an application form will not be considered.
- A recent CV will be required along with the application form.
- Conviction of a crime will not necessarily be a bar to employment. Factors such as age at the time of the offence, type of offence, remoteness of the offence in time, and rehabilitation will be taken into account in determining the suitability for this position. Persons with convictions for violence/sexual offences or involving the exploitation of children or young people will not be employed.

### Vetting & Reference Checking:

Candidates will be checked for their suitability and safety for working with children and young people. No applicant will be employed by this organisation in any capacity without being vetted and undergoing a reference check.

All staff, volunteers, and trustees will be police vetted. Personal reference checks will be undertaken with at least two referees. Educational checks will be made when appropriate. Claims made in the Application Form will be cross-referenced with referees.

All candidates for paid, voluntary, or trustee positions will be interviewed in person by at least two interviewees before an appointment is made. All successful applicants will be required to have a signed Employment Contract and to agree to the policies related to protection. Full employment records will be maintained.

## 5.0 Professional Behaviour

The Golden Bay Workcentre Trust requires high standards of behaviour from staff in order to protect children and young people from abuse and at-risk situations and to protect staff from unwarranted suspicion.

We believe that, as far as is possible, staff working with children, young people and their whānau should keep their personal and professional lives separate and should not encourage close personal relationships or caretaking activities outside the work environment.

### We do this by:

- Regularly reviewing child protection guidelines with staff, particularly at times when roles are not clear.
- Ensuring staff have a clear understanding of the Child Protection policy.
- Staff are expected to inform the Manager of any relationship/s with clients or their families which could constitute a conflict of interest or place the staff member in a position of compromise.
- Declaring that no staff member is to enter into any relationship with a child, young person or their whānau which could mean that any other policy is compromised.
- Ensuring that at any time during employment, any staff member (paid or unpaid) is aware that they are required to bring any issues relating to child abuse and child protection to the Manager.

## 6.0 Responding to Suspected Abuse/Neglect

We aim to respond to allegations and suspicions of child abuse in a manner which best ensures children's or young persons' immediate and long-term safety and to refer to specialist advice and support those who seek help when concerned about a child or young person at risk.



We will respond to suspicions and allegations of child abuse by a member of staff by recording all observations, impressions, and communications about children or young people suspected of being abused.

We will not act alone and will refer all suspected situations of child abuse to the Police and/or Oranga Tamariki. The safety of the child/young person will be the primary consideration, and no person in this organisation will collude to protect an adult or an organisation.

Allegations will be treated in such a way that the rights of adults and the stresses of the staff are also taken into consideration.

We do this by:

- All staff will follow the process in the Response to Suspicions or Disclosure of Abuse flow chart.
- Staff will declare to the Manager any situation where there could be a conflict of interest.
- Where possible, staff will not act alone about suspicions, but will consult with the Manager who is committed to taking action as outlined in the flow chart.
- When child abuse is suspected, the Manager will inform Oranga Tamariki or the Police. If the Manager is not available and a staff member has concerns for child/young person safety, the staff member will report these concerns to the Police or Oranga Tamariki immediately.
- If it is decided that concerns are not significant enough to refer to statutory authority, the child/young person will continue to be monitored and records kept.
- All suspicions and information will be recorded factually and held confidentially. Anything that is an opinion or a personal concern will be identified as such and not as being a fact.
- Staff will not question or interrogate a child or young person who has disclosed abuse or who is displaying signs of possible abuse. Staff will listen to the child/young person and respond to them appropriately.
- The Manager will inform parents or guardians as soon as practically possible. The Manager will only inform the parents or guardians if the Manager is certain that the child/young person will be safe if the information is disclosed.
- If a family member or someone close to the family is suspected of abuse, the Police or Oranga Tamariki will make the disclosure.
- The Trust will ensure that support is available to help staff debrief after dealing with a case of child abuse.
- Information and concerns about child abuse will only be made available to those who have a need to know. This will be determined by the Manager.



## 7.0 Allegations Against Staff

We aim to respond to allegations and suspicions of child abuse by a member of staff in a manner which best ensures children's or young persons' immediate and long-term safety and will treat suspicions or allegations against a staff member with the same seriousness as suspicions or allegations made against another person.

We will not act alone and will refer all suspected situations of child abuse to the Police and/or Oranga Tamariki. The safety of the child/young person will be the primary consideration, and no person in this organisation will collude to protect an adult or an organisation.

Allegations will be treated in such a way that the rights of adults and the stresses of the staff are also taken into consideration.

We will do this by:

- The first consideration will be to ensure the safety of the child/young person.
- Both staff and children/young persons rights are to be attended to. Safety of the child/young person is the first concern, and the staff member must have access to legal and professional advice.
- Recording and notification will happen as described in the above section.
- This organisation will not collude with, or protect that person or this agency.
- The person managing the alleged abuse issue will not be the same person as that managing the employment issue.
- The suspected staff member or volunteer will be prevented from having further unsupervised access to children or young people during any investigation and will be informed fully of his or her rights.
- The organisation will adhere to the principles of the Employment Contracts Act and give the staff member all information regarding his or her rights.

## 8.0 Supervision of Children & Young People

The Golden Bay Workcentre Trust aims to ensure any children or young person the organisation is working with have appropriate supervision at all times.

We will ensure that children and young people receive the safest and most appropriate care from our staff, that they are safe on any of our premises, that activities take place in ways that protect them from abuse, and that staff members are protected from unwarranted allegations of child abuse.

Staff are to be well supervised and, wherever possible, visible in the activities they perform with children and young people.

#### **We do this by:**

- Having an 'open door' policy.
- Staff are discouraged from being alone with children and young people and when this is unavoidable, another staff member will be informed.
- There are times when touching children or young people may be necessary, such as:
  - When the child or young person has initiated the contact.
  - When the child or young person is hurt and needs first aid or another form of intervention.
  - When an activity being undertaken requires guidance and support from an adult.
- Staff will not take children or young people into their own home. In an emergency:
  - The child/young person will be taken to the Police Station, or
  - The Police will be requested to attend at the Workcentre, or
  - Oranga Tamariki will be requested to attend at the Workcentre.

## **9.0 Information Sharing**

The Golden Bay Workcentre Trust recognises that all staff must act within the legal requirements of the Privacy Act, Children, Young Persons, and their Families Act, Health Information Act, and other statutes. There are provisions within each of these acts for sharing information needed to protect children and young people and enable other people to carry out their legitimate functions. In general, staff will not share information if they believe that doing so will endanger the child.

#### **We do this by:**

- Restricting information sharing to those who have a need to know in order to protect children and young people.
- When any agency, Oranga Tamariki, lawyers, or psychologists contact a staff member for information, that staff member must first refer to their Manager for clearance before providing information.
- Information will only be given after the staff member has identified the person making the request, the actual purpose of the request, what use the information will be put to, and who will have access to the information.
- Before providing information to a non-custodial parent or other family member, staff will consult a child or young person's records and follow any recommendations on record.



## 10.0 Information Technology

The Golden Bay Workcentre Trust aims to ensure the safe use of information technology.

We will make all effort to ensure that children, young people, and adults use technology safely and within the prescribed rules.

Cyber bullying like any other bullying will not be tolerated by this organisation, and all steps will be taken to ensure the safe use of technology.

### We do this by:

- Active supervision of children and young people by staff when accessing the internet when on our premises.
- All bullying incidents will be recorded and investigated.
- Providing information to children and young people on the safe use of technology.
- Ensuring that no person may access or have involvement with inappropriate, dangerous, illegal, or objectionable material or activities.
- Ensure no person saves or distributes such material by copying, printing, or storing.
- Authorisation from the Manager must be gained before any attempt to download, install, connect, or utilise any unauthorised software or hardware onto or with any of the organisation's technology equipment or devices.
- Computer use will be monitored by the GBWCT, and random checks on use of the organisation's technology may be made without warning.

## 11.0 Photographing Children

This organisation acknowledges that from time-to-time photographs and videos will be taken of children and young people. These images will only be made when necessary for the legitimate work of our organisation and by adhering to clear guidelines.

### We do this by:

- Ensuring everyone photographing or filming the activities has a connection to the activities or is from the media.
- Distribution of the photographs or videos must have the permission of the parents and/or the child or young person.
- We will not use images of children on publications or website without the permission of the parents or child/young person if he or she is old enough to consent.



## 12.0 Definitions

Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child or young persons health, survival, development, or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power [World Health Organisation 1999].

Children and Young People Definition: For the purposes of this policy, children are those under the age of 14. Young people are those from 14 to 17.

## 13.0 Related Documents

The child protection policy is to be used in conjunction with the following existing policies and documents:

- Staff Recruitment, Selection & Induction Policy
- Police Vetting Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Staff Recruitment, Selection & Induction Policy
- Care and Protection Notification Process

This child protection policy adheres to the following Acts:

- Health and Disability Commissioner Act 1994
- Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989
- Privacy Act 1993
- Human Rights Act 1993
- Education Act 1989/1998
- Domestic Violence Act 1995
- Care of Children Act 2004 and subsequent amendments
- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights
- Vulnerable Children Act 2014

## 14.0 Roles and Responsibilities

The Manager and the Board, in collaboration with staff, are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

## 15.0 Policy Scope

This Policy applies to all employees of GBWCT who come into contact with children or young people as part of their role.

This Policy applies to every contract or funding arrangement entered into by GBWCT with other persons or organisations for the provision of services for children and young people.

It applies to staff, volunteers, and management of the organisation.

It also applies to any contracted personnel providing support services to families and members (including childcare) and to those providing support services to staff.

RELEASED UNDER THE  
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

# Mohua Social Services



Approved by the Board:

Date: 13 February 2023

Signatures

Next review date: February 2026

## Child Protection Policy

### Objective

This child protection policy describes the commitment that the Mohua Social Services has to children, and the measures it will take to ensure their safety and well-being. The interest and safety of the child is always our prime consideration.

### Scope

This policy applies to all children who are clients of this organisation, and to those with whom personnel come into contact in the course of their work with the organisation.

It applies to all staff. Staff are defined as paid employees, temporary workers, volunteers, governance and management of the organisation. It also applies to any contracted personnel providing support services to families and members, (including childcare), and to those providing support services to staff.

Ultimate responsibility rests with the Service Manager, who will allow space for raising concerns at weekly staff meetings with social workers and will be available any time to any individual raising any concern.

### Principles

Mohua Social Services are committed to the following principles:

- This policy recognises that children, young people and adults have a right to be safe from abuse and harm.
- We are committed to the prevention of abuse and to the wellbeing of staff, children, young people, vulnerable adults and their whānau. We are committed to dealing with abuse, suspected abuse or disclosure of abuse in a timely fashion.
- We recognise that the whānau's primary role in caring and protecting the child should be valued and maintained. However, the child's safety will have priority.
- We acknowledge that in cases of suspected child abuse, support for families is important.
- We agree that working in accordance with this policy requires staff to be trained and supported.



- We will ensure that any disclosures about alleged abuse are acknowledged and investigated. Appropriate action will be taken to ensure the safety of children who make disclosures.
- We will ensure children and staff have access to appropriate medical, psychological and legal services and support.

## Definitions

Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power". [World Health Organisation 2022]

Children and Young People Definition: For the purposes of this policy, children are those under the age of 14. Young people are those from 14 and up to the age of 18. (Children's Act 2014)

## Responsibilities

The Manager/s and the Board, in collaboration with staff, are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

## Review:

This policy and all sub policies are reviewed triennially.

## Employment of Safe People:

In order to provide a safe environment for children, we are committed to employing people who will do no harm. We will do this by requesting sufficient relevant information to be able to gain a comprehensive candidate picture.

We will do this by:

- Following the Safety Check procedures outlined in the Recruitment and Selection and Police Vetting Policies, we ensure the employment of safe people with the following procedures:
  - clear job descriptions to all interested candidates.
  - All candidates will be personally required to complete an application form. The application form will be prepared by the Office Manager in conjunction with reference to the book 'Safe Not Sorry'.
  - The application form will include provision for the applicant to give permission for the organisation to speak to any appropriate people about the applicant.
  - Personal checks will be referenced back to the replies from this application.
  - An applicant who is not truthful on an application form will not be considered.
  - A recent CV will be required along with the application form.
  - Conviction of a crime will not necessarily be a bar to employment. Factors such as age at the time of the offence, type of offence, remoteness of the offence in time, and rehabilitation will be taken into account in determining the suitability for this position.
  - No one with a Specified Offence under Schedule 2 of the VCA, unless they seek an exemption, will be employed. Similarly, no one whose police record is return 'red stamped' will be employed. Page 2 of the Police Vetting Policy sets out further criteria for applications that will be or probably be declined.
  - Vetting & Reference Checking.

- Candidates will be checked for their suitability and safety for working with children. No applicant will be employed by this organisation in any capacity without being vetted and undergoing a reference check.
- All staff will be police vetted or undergo a Criminal Convictions History check. Police checks will be repeated every three years for existing staff
- Personal reference checks will be undertaken with at least two referees. Educational checks will be made when appropriate. Claims made in the Application Form will be cross-referenced with referees.
- All candidates for paid, voluntary or trustee positions will be interviewed in person by at least two interviewees before an appointment is made. Where it is not practicable to interview 'in person', the minimum requirement is an audio/visual interview.
- All successful applicants will be required to have a signed Employment Contract and to sign a confidentiality agreement, Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct. Full employment records will be maintained.
- Periodic safety checks of all core and non-core children's workers will be undertaken according to the process set out in the Recruitment and Selection and Police Vetting Policies
- Induction training : all new staff receive a copy of this policy as part of their induction. Ongoing training in child protection will be provided as opportunities arise.

### **Practices:**

The interests and welfare of the child are paramount when any decision is made about suspected child abuse.

We support the roles of the Police and Oranga Tamariki in the investigation of suspected abuse and will report suspected child abuse to these agencies.

We are committed to supporting families and maintaining relationships with agencies and individuals in the community.

We do this by:

- Including this organisation's commitment to the safety of children in all our strategies, plans and relevant public documents.
- Referring to the commitment to the safety of children regularly to ensure all staff maintain the commitment.
- Making available information about the organisation's commitment to stakeholders, including parents, staff and prospective staff and all others involved in the organisation.
- The Board and management providing leadership on child safety.

### **Professional Behaviour of Staff:**

Mohua Social Services require high standards of behaviour from staff to protect children from abuse and at-risk situations and to protect staff from unwarranted suspicion.

We believe that, as far as possible, staff working with children and families should keep their personal and professional lives separate and do not encourage close personal relationships or care taking activities outside the work environment.

We do this by:

- Reviewing regularly with staff the behavioural guidelines, particularly at times when roles are not clear.

- Ensuring staff have a clear understanding and agree to the Code of Ethics.
- Expecting staff to inform, as soon as possible, their manager of existing relationships with clients or their families which could constitute a conflict of interest or place the staff member in a position of compromise.
- No staff member entering any relationship with a child, young person or family which could mean that any other policy is compromised.
- Making sure that at any time during employment, any staff member (paid or unpaid) feels it is their right to bring any issues relating to child abuse and child protection to the manager.

## **Responding to Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (by persons associated with children)**

It is mandatory for all staff to immediately report any suspected abuse or neglect to their manager and a plan will be made. If required/appropriate, it will be brought up at weekly staff meetings. We aim to respond to allegations and suspicions of child abuse in a manner which best ensures children's or young person's immediate and long-term safety and to refer to specialist advice and support those who seek help when concerned about a child at risk.

We will respond to a member of staff's suspicions and allegations of child abuse by recording all observations, impressions and communications about children suspected of being abused. We will not act alone and will refer all suspected situations of child abuse to the Police or Oranga Tamariki. The safety of the child will be the primary consideration and no person in this organisation will collude to protect an adult or an organisation.

Allegations will be treated in such a way that the rights of adults and the stresses of the staff are also taken into consideration.

We do this by:

- All staff following the process in the Disclosure of Abuse flowchart
- All staff declaring to the manager any situation where there could be a conflict of interest.
- Ensuring that staff will not act alone about suspicions, but will consult with their manager who is committed to taking action as outlined in the flowchart.
- The manager informing Oranga Tamariki or the Police when child abuse is suspected.
- If it is decided that concerns are not significant enough to refer to statutory authorities, the child will continue to be monitored and records kept in the appropriate register. In deciding whether to report to statutory authorities, the Service Manager or Senior Social Worker will use their discretion based on their knowledge of the context.
  - All suspicions and information will be recorded factually and held confidentially. Anything that is an opinion or a personal concern will be identified as such and not as being a fact.
- Not questioning or interrogating a child who has disclosed abuse or who is displaying signs of possible abuse. Staff will listen to the child and respond to them appropriately.
- The Service Manager informing parents as soon as practically possible. They will only do so if they are certain that the child will be safe.
  - If a family member or someone close to the family is suspected of abuse, the police or Oranga Tamariki will make the disclosure.
- Ensuring that support is available to help staff debrief after dealing with a case of child abuse.
- Making information and concerns about child abuse only available to those who have a need to know. This will be determined by the Service Manager.
- Maintaining a record of all notifications/reports of concern to statutory authorities (and any acknowledgement of receipt thereof) in the dedicated register.



## **Responding to allegations of abuse against staff:**

We aim to respond to allegations and suspicions of child abuse by a member of staff in a manner which best ensures children's or young person's immediate and long-term safety. Suspicions or allegations against a staff member will be treated with the same seriousness as suspicions or allegations made against another person. Historic allegations will be responded to in the same way as contemporary ones, with the same priority. All allegations will be investigated fully, regardless of the resignation or termination of the staff member concerned.

We will not act alone and will refer all suspected situations of child abuse to the Police or Oranga Tamariki. The safety of the child will be the primary consideration and no person in this organisation will collude to protect an adult or an organisation.

Allegations will be treated in such a way that the rights of adults and the stresses of the staff are also taken into consideration.

We will do this by:

- Following the Disclosure of Abuse Flowchart for Allegations made against staff.
- Giving the first consideration to ensure the safety of the child.
- Attending to both staff and children's rights. Safety of the child is the first concern and the staff member must have access to legal and professional advice.
- Following the process outlined in the Disciplinary Procedure policy when deciding about suspension during the investigation.
- Recording and notification will happen as described in the above section.
- Not colluding with, or protecting, that person or this agency.
- Assigning separate senior staff members to the tasks of managing the child abuse and managing the employment issue.
- Preventing the suspected staff member or volunteer from having further unsupervised access to children during any investigation and informing them fully of their rights.
- Adhering to the principles of the Employment Contracts Act and give the staff member all information regarding his or her rights.
- Not using 'settlement agreements' where these are contrary to a culture of child protection. For example: allowing a staff member to resign provided that no disciplinary action is taken and or a future reference is agreed.
- Offering protection for any employee reporting concerns about the conduct of another staff member

## **Supervision of Children:**

Mohua Social Services aim to ensure any children the organisation is caring for, or working with, have appropriate supervision at all times.

We will ensure that children and young people receive the safest and most appropriate care from our staff, that they are safe on any of our premises, that activities take place in ways that protect them from abuse and that staff members are protected from unwarranted allegations of child abuse.

Staff are to be well supervised and, wherever possible, be visible in the activities they perform with children. Opportunities for staff to be alone with children will be kept to a minimum and undertaken within prescribed regulations.

We do this by:

- Adhering Behaviour Management Guidelines as outlined in the following section.
- Operating under an 'open door' policy.
- Staff are discouraged from being alone with children and when this is unavoidable, another staff member will be informed.
- Staff will only touch a child when both child and adult are visible to others. There are times when touching children is necessary, such as:
  - When the child has initiated the contact.
  - When the child is hurt and needs attention.
  - When an activity being undertaken requires guidance and support from an adult.
  - When the child needs toileting or intimate care.
- Staff will not take children into their own home except in an emergency and when another staff member has been previously informed. This to be recorded in the incident register.
- Children who do not have a parent present should be visible to two staff members at all times.
- Adult visitors to the premises shall be supervised by staff.

### **Child Behaviour Management Guidelines**

MSS services and programmes will be designed to ensure that children and families experience an environment where they are safe, secure, respected and their dignity is protected.

Rules, formulated between children and staff (if age appropriate) will be based on respect for each other, staff and equipment. Staff will encourage children by outlining what is expected of them and explaining the consequences of disobeying. Positive reinforcement will be used at all times and stimulating and varied activities will be provided to ensure against boredom.

A staff member will supervise children at all times.

When a child misbehaves or ignores rules staff will:

1. Remind the child in an assertive but non aggressive manner what is expected and the consequences of disobeying.
2. If the behaviour continues the child will be reminded again and warned of the consequence that will result.
3. If the child continues to misbehave after two warnings the consequence will be enforced.

Consequences must be appropriate and may include:

- Having physical play boundaries reduced (for example, when a child continually leaves the defined boundaries).
- Not being allowed to play with a certain piece of equipment (for example, when a child continually misuses that piece of equipment).
- If a child continually misbehaves, parents will be notified when they pick up the child and will be asked to support the staff in their attempts to encourage the child to behave. If disruptive behaviour continues, parents will be asked to meet with a staff member to plan a course of action.
- If a child continually behaves in a manner that endangers themselves or other children, despite the above measures, parents will be notified by a staff member and asked to remove their child.

- At no time will punitive discipline be used. This includes punishing children by physically hitting, withholding food and drink, isolation from the group, abusive, demeaning or condescending comments. Children shall not be treated in a way that is degrading, humiliating or causes them fear or anxiety.

At all times, staff will maintain a fair, consistent and positive approach to children's behaviour.

When children are in conflict with each other, staff will encourage the children to resolve the situation themselves and aid them by making suggestions on how to do so. If children cannot resolve the conflict they will be removed from the situation, for example they will not be allowed to play with the toy or each other.

Children will only be physically restrained if their immediate safety is at risk and verbal commands have failed.

## **Care of Staff**

Our Supervision and Appraisal policy is to ensure that staff feel well supported, supervised and not overloaded. We will ensure that staff have access to personal supervision and the opportunity to deal with stress and any issues arising as a result of being involved directly or indirectly with an incidence of child abuse.

Professional supervision is mandatory for those working in social work.

We do this by:

- Providing professional, supportive workplace supervision to all staff.
- Social workers undertaking mandatory supervision with a recognised supervisor.
- Other staff attending regular supervision as approved by their manager.
- Making paid, professional supervision available to staff affected by a traumatic incident or incident of child abuse. This need will be determined by their manager. Volunteers are eligible.
- Assessing staff workload through regular performance reviews.
- Providing opportunities for staff to communicate with each other, their peers and managers, through peer mentoring, supervision and staff meetings.

## **Relationships with specialist and statutory agencies**

Mohua Social Services will maintain a good working with Oranga Tamariki and with Police and be familiar with laws that serve to protect children from abuse. We will consult with Oranga Tamariki, the Police and with other appropriate agencies that have specialist knowledge to help us protect children from abuse.

People who suspect or uncover abuse should not be tempted to deal with cases themselves, but collaborate with appropriate statutory agencies with whom we maintain a relationship of trust and understanding.

We do this by:

- Ensuring current contacts for Oranga Tamariki and Police are maintained.



- Keeping and regularly updating a list of specialist agencies. This list is available to all staff.
- The Service Manager meeting regularly with a contact person from specialist agencies to ensure that a trusted relationship is maintained in order that the Mohua Social Services can seek help easily and appropriately.
- Maintaining relationships with NGOs and agencies that provide services to children and families.
- Encouraging networking of agencies and staff to maintain relationships between the agencies.

### **Information Sharing with other agencies and groups**

Mohua Social Services recognises that all staff must act within the legal requirements of the relevant acts listed under Related Documents. There are provisions within each of these acts for sharing information needed to protect children and enable other people to carry out their legitimate functions. In general, staff will not share information if they believe that by doing so will endanger the child.

We encourage the sharing of information when appropriate steps have been taken.

We do this by:

- Restricting information sharing to those who have a need to know in order to protect children.
- Ensuring any staff member, when contacted by any agency - Oranga Tamariki, lawyers or psychologists - first refers to their manager for clearance before providing information.
- Ensuring that before any information is given out the staff member has identified the person making the request, the actual purpose of the request, what use the information will be put to and who will see the information.
- Staff consulting a child's record and following any recorded recommendations before providing information to a non-custodial parent or other family member.

### **Provision for support and treatment**

Mohua Social Services provides support and counselling for children and families at risk. We will ensure that all staff employed to provide support and counselling to children and their families are well qualified and will undertake ongoing training and supervision. Whenever possible, children will be supported and counselled in association with their families, by a counsellor appropriate to their culture.

We do this by:

- Providing support for children and families at risk by social workers employed by this agency and counsellors contracted by this agency.
- Ensuring that any counselling and support will, as far as possible, be appropriate to both the gender and culture of the child and family. To achieve this, we will seek to contract a range of trained counsellors to be available when needed.
- Ensuring that all counselling staff are current members of a professional counselling or social work organisation and adhere to that organisation's code of ethics.

### **Educating parents and children to prevent child abuse**

Mohua Social Services aim to ensure parents and children are educated in important aspects of preventing child abuse.

Parents will be encouraged to make use of community-based education programmes and we will have books available for parents on the topic.

We do this by:

- Inviting appropriate agencies or organisations to speak at public meetings.
- Maintaining an up to date and free library service.
- Assisting other specialist organisations to run programmes in this community.

## **Photographing Children**

This organisation acknowledges that from time to time photographs and videos will be taken of children in its care (eg: Art & Sewing Class). These images will only be made when necessary for the legitimate work of our organisation and by adhering to clear guidelines.

We do this by:

- Ensuring everyone photographing or filming the activities has a connection to the activities or is from the media.
- Distribution of the photographs or videos must have the permission of the parents.
- We will not use images of children on publications or website without the permission of the parents or child if he or she is old enough to consent.
- Cameras and mobile phones will not be allowed in any changing room/toilets.

## **Cybersafety and use of information technology**

Mohua Social Services aims to ensure the safe use of information technology.

We will make all effort to ensure that children and adults use technology safely and within the prescribed rules.

Cyber bullying like any other bullying will not be tolerated by this organisation and all steps will be taken to ensure the safe use of information and computing technology. (ICT).

We do this by:

- Actively supervising children by staff when accessing the internet when on our premises.
- Recording and investigating all bullying incidents
- Providing information to children and parents on safe use of technology.
- Ensuring that no person may access or have involvement with inappropriate, dangerous, illegal or objectionable material or activities.
- Ensuring no person saves or distributes such material by copying, printing or storing.
- Gaining authorisation from the manager before any attempt to download, install, connect or utilise any unauthorised software or hardware onto or with any of the agency's ICT equipment or devices.

- The manager or IT support person monitoring computer use and conducting random checks on the use of the organisation's technology without warning.

### **Related Documents:**

The child protection policy is to be used in conjunction with the following existing policies:

- Staff Induction
- Police Vetting
- Conflict of Interest
- Confidentiality
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Performance Management
- Supervision and Appraisal
- Health & Safety
- Recruitment & Selection
- Conflict Resolution
- Staff Safety Guidelines
- Protocol for reporting suspected child abuse

This child protection policy adheres to the following Acts:

- Vulnerable Children's Act 2017
- Health and Disability Commissioner Act 2003
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- Privacy Act 2020
- Human Rights Act 1993
- Education Act 2020
- Family Violence Act 2018
- Care of Children Act 2004
- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights

This child protection policy fulfils the requirements of the following

- Accreditation as a Service Provider for Ministry of Social Development



## Appendix I

### Indicators of Potential Abuse

- Physical signs (unexplained injuries, burns, fractures, unusual or excessive itching, genital injuries, sexually transmitted diseases).
- Developmental delays (small for their age, cognitive delays, falling behind in school, poor speech and social skills)
- Emotional abuse/neglect (sleep problems, low self esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness/loneliness and evidence of self harm).
- Behavioural concerns (age inappropriate sexual play or interest, 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).

### Indicators of Potential Neglect

- Physical signs (looking rough and uncared for, dirty, without appropriate clothing, underweight)
- Developmental delays (small for their age, cognitive delays, falling behind in school, poor speech and social skills).
- Emotional abuse/neglect (sleep problems, low self esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness/loneliness and evidence of self harm).
- Behavioural concerns (disengagement/neediness, eating disorders/substance abuse, aggression)
- Neglectful supervision (out and about unsupervised, left alone, no safe home to return to)
- Medical neglect (persistent nappy rash or skin disorders or other untreated medical issues).

Link to Child Matters 'How can I tell?' <https://www.childmatters.org.nz/downloads/20057-how-can-i-tell-04.pdf>

## Appendix II

Responding to a child when the child discloses abuse:

(i) Listen to the child	Disclosures by children are often subtle and need to be handled with particular care, including an awareness of the child's cultural identity and how that affects interpretation of their behaviour and language.
(ii) Reassure the child	Let the child know that they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are not in trouble</li><li>• Have done the right thing</li></ul>
(iii) Ask open ended prompts – e.g: "What happened next?"	Do not interview the child (in other words, do not ask questions beyond prompts for the child to continue). Do not make promises that can't be kept, e.g.: "I will keep you safe now".
(iv) If the child is visibly distressed	Provide appropriate reassurance and re-engage in appropriate activities under supervision until they are able to participate in ordinary activities.
(v) If the child is not in immediate danger	Re-involve the child in ordinary activities and explain what you are going to do next.
(vi) If the child is in immediate danger	Contact the Police immediately.
(vii) As soon as possible formally record the disclosure	Record: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Word for word, what the child said.</li><li>• The date, time and who was present.</li></ul>

### Recording and Storing Information:

Formally record:

- Anything said by the child.
- The date, time, location and the names of any staff that may be relevant.
- The factual concerns or observations that have led to the suspicion of abuse or neglect (eg: any physical, behavioural or developmental concerns)
- The action taken by the organisation.
- Any other information that may be relevant.

Securely store:

- The record of concern.
- A record of any related discussions (including copies of correspondence)
- A record of any advice received.
- The action our organisation took, including any rationale.
- This concern, with any earlier concerns, if the notification is based on an accumulation of concerns (rather than a specified incident).

# GBWCT POLICY



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Status: APPROVED

## CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, and ASSOCIATED COMMUNITY MEMBERS PROTECTION POLICY

This policy recognises that children, young people, and vulnerable adults have a right to be safe from abuse and harm. We are committed to the prevention of abuse and to the well-being of staff, volunteers, children, young people, vulnerable adults, associated community members and their families.

### 1.0 Purpose

The most effective way to safeguard children and young people is to have a comprehensive and effective policy, with attached practices and guidelines. This Policy is written under the principle that children and young people attending GBWCT have a right to feel safe and comfortable in that contact.

The purpose of this policy is to provide GBWCT staff guidelines by which to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of abuse and neglect, and to understand their role in keeping children and young people safe.

This Policy will be reviewed triennially, and updated regularly in the light of operational experience and in line with changes in legislation and associated policies.

### 2.0 Principles

This Child Protection Policy confirms the commitment of GBWCT to the protection of children and young people and proceeds to:

- Outline the standards and principles by which all staff will abide
- Define child abuse
- Outline the action to be taken by staff where any form of abuse or ill-treatment is known or suspected
- Establish what action is required when allegations are made against staff
- Explore the implications for staff training

GBWCT will ensure that:

- Staff are carefully selected with the principles of this policy in mind.
- Staff are appropriately trained in issues of child protection.



- Staff are aware of the Child Protection Policy and accompanying procedures and/or guidelines.
- Allegations or suspicion of abuse of any kind will be handled according to GBWCT policy in a timely manner.
- That no person who has been convicted of an offence listed in Schedule 2 of the VCA 2014 will be employed by GBWCT.
- We will ensure that children and staff have access to appropriate medical, psychological, and legal services and support.

GBWCT 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 Manager of GBWCT.

GBWCT acknowledges that in cases of suspected child abuse, support for families is important. We recognise that the family's primary role in caring and protecting the child or young person should be valued and maintained, AND the child or young persons safety will be the priority at all times.

All services provided by GBWCT for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people adhere to the principles of partnership, protection and participation; and the rights and responsibilities accorded by Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

### 3.0 Policy Scope

This policy applies to all Management and staff of GBWCT who have direct or indirect contact with children and young people. This includes those staff, paid or voluntary, employed directly by GBWCT, as well as those professionals contracted or invited to provide services to children and young people in the care of GBWCT. This includes teaching and non-teaching staff, core and non-core workers.

This policy covers the Board of Trustees and their responsibilities in the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

### 4.0 Related Policies & Documents

- Education Act 1989
- Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act, 1989
- Crimes Act, 1961
- Domestic Violence Act, 1995
- Health Act, 1956
- Health and Disability Sector Standards Regulations, 2001
- Privacy Act, 1993
- Health Information Privacy Code, 1994
- Vulnerable Children's Act, 2014

- Care of Children and young people Act, 2004
- Employment Relations Act, 2000
- Human Rights Act

## 5.0 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 of or over the age of 14 years but under 17 years; but does not include any person who is or has been married or in a civil union (Children, Young Person, and Their Families Act 1989).

For the purpose of this Policy “Staff” means people working at GBWCT and includes employees, contractors, consultants, students, associates and volunteers whether working on a full time, part time, casual, or temporary basis.

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".

**Abuse** – the harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill-treatment, neglect or deprivation of any child

**Neglect** – the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical or psychological needs, leading to adverse or impaired physical or emotional functioning or development

**Child protection** – activities carried out to ensure that children and young people are safe in cases where there is suspected abuse or neglect or the risk of abuse or neglect

**Delegated Other** – the member of staff who has been given the delegated authority to act in place of the Manager, in cases where the Manager is absent. This delegated authority will be approved and given by the GBWCT Board of Trustees.

**Disclosure** – information given to a staff member by the child/young person, parent or caregiver or third party in relation to abuse or neglect

**Oranga Tamariki** – the agency responsible for investigating and responding to suspected abuse and neglect and for providing a statutory response to children and young people found to be in need of care and protection

**New Zealand Police** – the agency responsible for responding to situations where a child or young person is in immediate danger and for working with Oranga Tamariki in child protection work, including investigating cases of abuse or neglect where an offence may have occurred

**Children’s services** – any organisation that provides services to children and young people or to adults where contact with children and young people may be part of the service. These organisations should have child protection policies. Organisations that provide services to adults who may be caring for or parenting children and young people should also consider developing a policy, e.g., adult mental health and addiction services



**Associated Community Member** – any person who is closely associated with a child or young person in receipt of our services. This could be any of the following (but not limited to) a parent, guardian, close relative or family friend.

**Safer recruitment** – following good practice processes for pre-employment checking which help manage the risk of unsuitable persons entering the children's workforce

**Standard safety checking** – the process of safer recruitment that will be mandatory for organisations covered by the Vulnerable Children Act 2014

**Workforce restriction** – a restriction on the employment or engagement of people with certain specified convictions under the Vulnerable Children Act 2014

**Children's workforce/children's workers** – people who work with children and young people, or who have regular contact with children/young people, as part of their roles

**Physical abuse** – any acts that may result in the physical harm of a child or young person. It can be, but is not limited to: bruising, cutting, hitting, beating, biting, burning, causing abrasions, strangulation, suffocation, drowning, poisoning and fabricated or induced illness.

**Sexual abuse** – any acts that involve forcing or enticing a child or young person 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 or young person to perform such acts on the perpetrator or another, involvement of the child or young person 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 or development. This can include:

- Patterns of isolation, degradation, constant criticism or negative comparison to others. Isolating, corrupting, exploiting or terrorising a child or young person can also be emotional abuse.
- Exposure to family/whānau or intimate partner violence.
- Neglect – neglect is the most common form of abuse, and although the effects may not be as obvious as physical abuse, it is just as serious. 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 and young people 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).



## 6.0 Procedures

All staff will respond to concerns of child abuse by following the identified procedures, consulting appropriately and collaborating with external agencies.

**The procedures set out below will help staff with:**

- The identification of abuse
- Handling disclosures, whether verbal or behavioural, from a child or young person
- Reporting procedures

### **Identification of abuse:**

If the Manager, or Delegated Other, is unavailable for advice and guidance then staff may seek advice from Oranga Tamariki (0508 FAMILY) regarding child protection concerns.

Further information regarding signs and indicators of abuse is included in the Appendix. Handling disclosures from a child.

If a child or young person makes a verbal disclosure to a member of staff it is important that staff take what the child or young person says seriously. This applies irrespective of the setting, or the member of staff's own opinion on what the child or young person is saying.

Further information regarding responding to a disclosure is included in the Appendix. Under no circumstances should a member of staff attempt to conduct an investigation or deal with concerns regarding child abuse alone. Any incidents, concerns or suspicions must be reported following the procedures set out below.

### **Child-on-Child Harmful Behaviours**

It is important to be aware that children and young people can harm other children. These behaviours are outside of what may be considered the normal range, and can extend to bullying, violence or sexual assault. Therefore when a child or young person alleges inappropriate harmful behaviour by another child or young person then the child protection procedures outlined in this policy must be considered for both the children or young people.

### **Suicidal Concerns or Self-Harming Behaviours**

It is important to be aware that children and young people can harm themselves or attempt suicide. When a child or young person identifies thoughts of suicide, or self-harming behaviour, this must be immediately notified to the Manager, or Delegated Other. If immediate action is required phone TWM Community Mental Health Service.

### **Reporting procedures**

All concerns of potential, suspected or alleged abuse must be brought to the attention of the Manager. A decision will be made as to whether to seek further advice or notify Oranga Tamariki.

#### **When reporting an incident staff should:**

- Inform the Manager as soon as possible
- Record in writing all conversations and actions taken

#### **Effective documentation, including referrals and notifications, must include the following:**

- Record of facts, including observations, with time and date
- What was said and by whom, using the person's words
- What action has been taken, by whom and when

#### **Keeping the child's family informed and involved**

Although the parent or caregiver of the child or young person will usually be informed of concerns, there may be times when those with parental responsibility may not be initially informed. This may happen when:

- The parent or caregiver is the alleged perpetrator
- It is possible that the child or young person may be intimidated into silence
- There is a strong likelihood that evidence will be destroyed

### **Sharing Information and Confidentiality**

The safety of a child or young person is paramount. At times a child or young person is unable to speak for or protect themselves. Therefore GBWCT has a greater responsibility to know when and how to share appropriate information with external agencies to protect the safety and wellbeing of children.

Giving information to protect children and young people 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 purpose. Principle 11 of the Privacy Act, 1993, states "disclosure of the information is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious threat".

Should GBWCT be contacted with a requested for information or access to interview a child or young person then the following procedure will be followed:

- Confirm identity and credentials of person requesting information
- Notify the Manager
- Identify specific information required and purpose
- Check information held – does GBWCT have the information requested
- Manager to identify way forward and provide permission

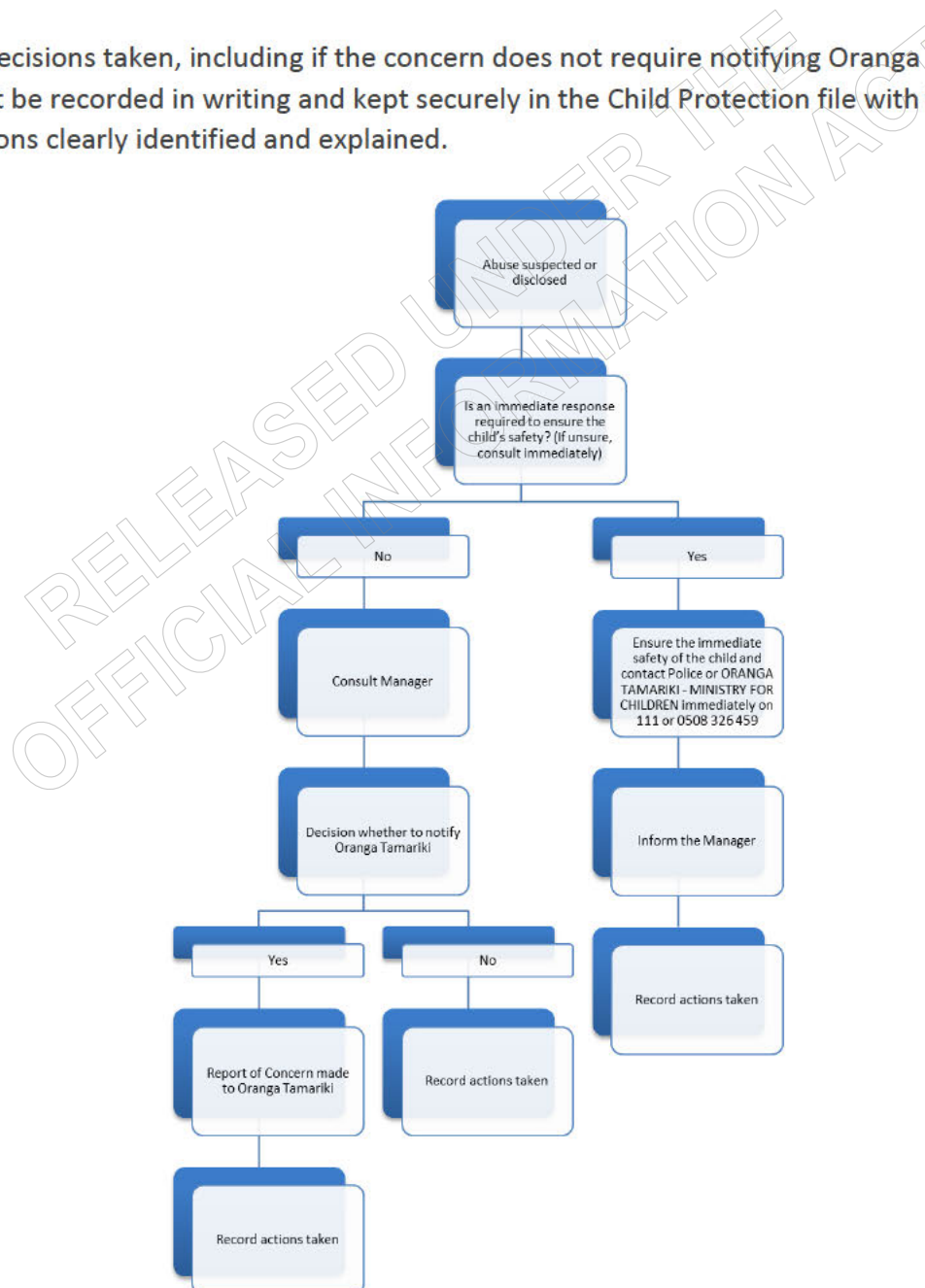


- Depending on the reason for the request, and risk to children and young people as judged case by case, inform the family that information has been requested, by whom and seek permission. If this is a child protection issue, permission from the family is not required.
- Document all steps in process. Ensure that all documentation is placed on the child/young persons child protection file.

### Action to be taken by the Manager

Concerns regarding alleged or suspected abuse will first be raised to the Manager. A decision will be made whether this information needs to be escalated to Oranga Tamariki.

All decisions taken, including if the concern does not require notifying Oranga Tamariki, must be recorded in writing and kept securely in the Child Protection file with the reasons clearly identified and explained.

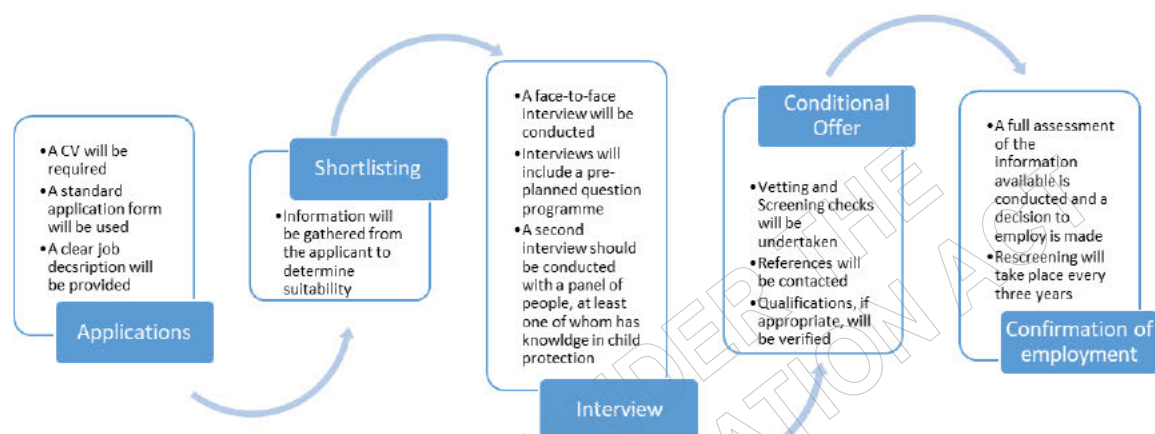




## 7.0 Safe Recruitment of Staff

The GBWCT is committed to employing people who will do no harm.

All appointments (permanent, fixed term, student, casual or volunteer) to positions that have direct and/or frequent contact with children and young people or young people will be conditional on a safety checks, including a Police check.



No person who has a criminal record of offences listed in Schedule 2 of the VCA 2014 will be employed by GBWCT.

*Further information regarding Safety Checking, including vetting and screening procedures, is found in the Staff Recruitment and Induction Policy.*

## 8.0 Staff Training

All staff will receive child protection training at the level appropriate to their role. Staff working in direct contact with children and young people will undertake more intensive training.

All staff will be given appropriate training covering basic awareness of child protection. This will include an overview of signs and indicators of abuse, and also the procedure for responding to actual or suspected abuse. This training will include:

- Roles and responsibility of staff regarding child protection
- Recognising and responding to the signs and indicators of actual or suspected abuse
- Ensuring staff understand and can follow the Child Protection Policy and the procedures for reporting a concern

All staff will receive updated training every year as a minimum.

## Induction

All new staff will receive child protection training as part of their induction.

All new staff will have access to this policy as part of the induction process.

## 9.0 Safe Working Practices

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.

Adults should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. Adults who work with children and young people must therefore act in a way that is considered to be safe practice.

Communication between children and young people and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phone, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites, social networking and blogs. Adults should not share any personal information with a child or young person. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child or young person other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Any sexual activity between an adult and a child or young person will be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action.

When physical contact is made with a child or young person this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Adults should use their professional judgement at all times, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the child or young person for the minimum amount of time necessary.

All staff are expected to behave in manners consistent with the GBWCT Code of Conduct (which is within employment agreement).

## 10.0 Allegations Against Staff

GBWCT has a duty of care to the children and young people it provides services to. A failure to report a significant concern about a child or young person is a breach of that child/young persons human rights.



Anyone who has reason to make a complaint will be made aware of the GBWCT complaint process. There is potential that an issue raised as a complaint may also constitute an allegation of abuse. Any such complaint that raises a child protection issue will be referred directly to the Manager.

It must be remembered that making a disclosure or a complaint against someone in a position of power and authority is always difficult. The person making the disclosure may reconsider and express a wish to retract their allegation. At the outset it must be clearly communicated with the child or young person or adult that their concern is being taken seriously and will be responded to in accordance with this policy.

Allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against staff, volunteers or representatives of other agencies must be taken seriously and reported to the Manager who will deal with them immediately, sensitively and expediently within the procedures outlined in this policy. Concerns may be raised a number of ways e.g.:

- Directly by staff hearing or observing issues of concern or behaviour of concern
- Direct disclosure by the child or young person
- Indirect disclosure e.g. through written or art work or through friends
- Complaint from a parent or caregiver or whanau member
- Reports by other colleagues or agencies
- As an anonymous report

If the allegation is against the Manager then this must be reported directly to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

It is NOT the responsibility of staff to investigate allegations of child abuse. Allegations against staff will be discussed with the Board of Trustees where a decision will be made if a notification to Oranga Tamariki is appropriate.

In all child protection cases GBWCT will co-operate fully with both Oranga Tamariki and the Police in their investigations and assessments.

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.

If there is insufficient evidence to pursue a criminal prosecution, then a disciplinary investigation may still be undertaken if there is reasonable cause to suspect that abuse or inappropriate behaviour may have occurred. The allegation may represent poor practice by a member of staff which needs to be considered under internal disciplinary procedures.



A complaint or allegation against a member of staff, who is also a registered member of staff, may require a report to Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (EDUCANZ). Further information regarding the thresholds for reports to EDUCANZ is in the Appendix.

All staff have a responsibility to understand what constitutes appropriate behaviour in relation to children and young people and young people. All staff have a responsibility to maintain appropriate standards of behaviour and to report lapses in these standards by others. Any concerns or reasonable suspicions of abuse should be reported to the Manager.

A person tendering his or her resignation, or ceasing to provide their services, will not prevent an allegation of abuse against a child or young person being followed up in accordance with these procedures.

## 11.0 Protection of Associated Community Members

At times GBWCT staff may become concerned about an Associated Community Member (in relation to the child/young person). This concern may not directly affect the child/young person to whom they are associated. The guidelines and procedures for reporting these concerns is the same as it is for children/young people, however there may be the need to report these concerns to additional and/or other agencies, such as 'Age Concern' or Community MH services.

All concerns of potential, suspected or alleged abuse must be brought to the attention of the Manager. A decision will be made as to whether to seek further advice or to make notification/s to the relevant agency/s.

When reporting an incident staff should:

- Inform the Manager as soon as possible
- Record in writing all conversations and actions taken

Effective documentation, including referrals and notifications, must include the following:

- Record of facts, including observations, with time and date
- What was said and by whom, using the person's words
- What action has been taken, by whom and when

## 12.0 Responsibilities

Any member of Management or staff, paid or voluntary, and/or contracted personnel, may directly witness child abuse or have allegations, made by a child, young person or

an adult, relayed to them. There may also be disclosures of abuse that have occurred prior to attending GBWCT. Sustained abuse and neglect of children and young people, wherever it occurs, can have major long term effects on all aspects of children's health, development and well-being and their ability to sustain stable and meaningful relationships in the future. It is the intention of GBWCT to ensure that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in ensuring the safety of children and young people at all times. This is achieved through consistent and agreed protocols regarding child protection, as well as the regular undertaking of awareness raising training.

**Each member of staff must:**

- Be aware of, and alert to, potential indicators of abuse or neglect
- Record a factual account of any concerns they have, or that are brought to their attention
- Appropriately seek advice and support from the Manager, or Delegated Other, who will then contact external agencies if appropriate
- Work in co-operation with the parents and caregivers, unless this compromises the safety of the child.

It is the primary responsibility of staff to be vigilant, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators or 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.

The statutory responsibility to investigate allegations of child abuse rests with Oranga Tamariki and the Police.

**The role of the Manager (or Delegated Other) is to:**

- Ensure the needs and rights of children and young people come first i.e. the safety and wellbeing of each child is paramount.
- Receive information that suggests potential or actual risk of harm to a child or young person who attends GBWCT, irrespective of whether the alleged abuse is current, past or likely to occur. The Manager will advise and support staff and ensure that appropriate action is taken.
- Ensure that the Child Protection Policy is effectively implemented throughout GBWCT.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of, and have access to, full copies of the procedures for reporting child abuse.
- Ensure that all staff are recruited and employed in accordance with the guidelines identified in the Employment Policy to identify those people safe to work with children.
- Ensure that all staff receive child protection training.
- Ensure and safeguard clear, confidential, detailed and dated records on all child protection cases. These must contain all available information relating to the



cause for concern and any subsequent action taken, including when it has been decided not to make a notification to Oranga Tamariki or the police. These records will be kept separate from student's records for the purpose of confidentiality.

- Establish a close link with the relevant local agencies to ensure clear and effective communication and be a recognised contact within GBWCT for agencies to contact regarding concerns.
- Ensure that all staff are supported appropriately when dealing with child protection concerns.
- Maintain a current awareness of the children and young people identified on the Risk Register, and regularly highlight these children and young people to the appropriate staff.
- In cases where the Manager is not available, the Delegated Other will act on their behalf.

**The role of the Board of Trustees is to:**

- Ensure the needs and rights of children and young people come first i.e. the safety and wellbeing of each child or young person is paramount.
- Support the Manager to ensure that all allegations are managed appropriately. No investigation will occur without appropriate consultation and a decision whether a response from Oranga Tamariki or the Police is required.
- Inform the Manager immediately should any member of the Board of Trustees be aware of a concern for the wellbeing and safety of a child or young person who attends GBWCT.
- The Chair of the Board of Trustees will be directly informed of any allegations of abuse against the Manager.



## Child Protection Policy – Appendix

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### Definitions of Abuse

#### Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child or young person 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.

#### Physical Indicators:

- Bed wetting or bed soiling with no medical cause
- Frequent psychosomatic complaints (e.g. headaches, nausea, abdominal pains)
- Non-organic failure to thrive
- Pale, emaciated
- Prolonged vomiting and/or diarrhoea
- Malnutrition
- Dressed differently to other children and young people in the family

#### Behavioural Indicators:

- Severe developmental lags with obvious physical cause
- Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
- Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
- Overly compliant
- Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
- Running away from home, avoiding attending at GBWCT
- Nightmares, poor sleeping patterns
- Anti-social behaviours
- Lack of self esteem
- Obsessive behaviours
- Eating disorders

#### Caregiver Indicators:

- Labels the child or young person as inferior or publicly humiliates the child or young person (e.g. name calling)
- Treats the child or young person differently from siblings or peers in ways that suggest dislike for the child

- Actively refuses to help the child
- Constantly threatens the child or young person with physical harm or death
- Locks the child or young person in a closet or room for extended periods of time
- Teaches or reinforces criminal behaviour
- Withholds physical and verbal affection
- Keeps the child or young person at home in role of servant or surrogate parent
- Has unrealistic expectations of child
- Involves child or young person in adult issues such as separation or disputes over child's care
- Exposes child or young person to witnessing situations of arguing and violence in the home

### **Neglect**

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.

### **Physical Indicators:**

- Dressed inappropriately for the season or the weather
- Often extremely dirty and unwashed
- Severe nappy rash or other persistent skin disorders
- Inadequately supervised or left unattended frequently or for long periods
- May be left in the care of an inappropriate adult
- Does not receive adequate medical or dental care
- Malnourished - this can be both underweight and overweight
- Lacks adequate shelter
- Non-organic failure to thrive

### **Behavioural Indicators:**

- Severe developmental lags without an obvious physical cause
- Lack of attachment to parents/caregivers
- Indiscriminate attachment to other adults
- Poor attendance (i.e. kura, other education programme)
- Demanding of affection and attention
- Engages in risk taking behaviour such as drug and alcohol abuse
- May steal food
- Poor social skills
- No understanding of basic hygiene



### Caregiver Indicators:

- Puts own need ahead of child's
- Fails to provide child's basic needs
- Demonstrates little or no interest in child's life - does not attend GBWCT activities, social events
- Leaves the child or young person alone or inappropriately supervised
- Drug and alcohol use
- Depression, other poor Mental Health

### Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is a non-accidental act on a child or young person that results 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.

### Physical Indicators (often unexplained or inconsistent with explanation given):

- Bruises, welts, cuts and abrasions
- Burns - small circular burns, immersion burns, rope burns etc
- Fractures and dislocations - skull, facial bones, spinal fractures etc
- Multiple fractures at different stages of healing
- Fractures in very young children

### Behavioural Indicators:

- Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
- Wary of adults or a particular person
- Vacant stare or frozen watchfulness
- Cringing or flinching if touches unexpectedly
- May be extremely compliant and eager to please
- Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
- Runs away from home or is afraid to go home
- May regress (e.g. bedwetting)
- May indicate general sadness
- Could have vision or hearing delay
- Is violent to other children and young people or animals

### Caregiver Indicators:

- Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
- May appear unconcerned about child's wellbeing



- May state the child or young person is prone to injuries or lies about how they occur
- Delays in seeking medical attention
- May take the child or young person to multiple medical appointments and seek medical treatment without an obvious need

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person 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 and young people in the looking at or production of sexual images, sexual activities and sexual behaviours.

### **Physical Indicators:**

- Unusual or excessive itching or pain in the genital or anal area
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
- Bruises, lacerations, redness, swelling or bleeding in genital, vaginal or anal area
- Blood in urine or stools
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy
- Urinary tract infections
- Discomfort in sitting or fidgeting as unable to sit comfortably

### **Behavioural Indicators:**

- Age-inappropriate sexual play or language
- Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge
- Refuses to go home, or to a specific person's home, for no apparent reason
- Fear of a certain person
- Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
- Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
- Overly compliant
- Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
- Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
- Eating disorders
- Compulsive behaviours

### **Caregiver Indicators:**

- May be unusually over-protective of the child
- Accuses the child or young person of being sexually provocative
- Misuses alcohol or drugs

- Invades the child's privacy (e.g. during dressing, in the bathroom)
- May favour the victim over other children

### **Intimate Partner Violence or Family Violence**

Intimate Partner Violence includes threatening to harm people, pets or property, and causes family members to live in fear. Children and young people are always affected either emotionally or physically where there is family violence even if they are not personally injured or physically present.

While some men experience violence from partners and family members, women and children and young people are the most likely victims of family violence.

### **Indicators in the Child:**

- Physical injuries consistent with the indicators of Physical Abuse
- Chronic absenteeism
- Bullying or aggressive behaviour
- Complaints of headaches or stomach aches with no apparent medical reason
- Talking or describing violent behaviours

### **Indicators in the Victim:**

- Physical Injuries including: bruising to chest and abdomen, injuries during pregnancy
- Depression and/or anxiety
- Inconsistent explanations for injuries
- Fearful
- Submissive

### **Indicators in the Perpetrator:**

- Isolates and controls partner and children
- Threatens, criticises, intimidates, uses aggressive and physical abuse towards partner and children
- Minimises and denies own behaviour, or blames victim for the perpetrators own behaviour



## **Child Protection Policy – Appendix**

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### **Responding to Child Abuse**

#### **Guidelines for responding when a child or young person discloses abuse:**

It is important that you as the adult remain calm and confident when a child or young person tells you what has been happening to him or her. Every child or young person is different in how, when and where they will tell an adult about abusive experiences so it will most likely happen when you are least expecting it! Your facial expressions and your tone of voice are as important as what you actually say to the child.

Stay calm, listen, reassure the child or young person and at times you may need to clarify what the child or young person has said so that you can take the appropriate action. If a child or young person sees that you are upset or not able to cope with what he or she is telling you he or she may not continue to tell you what has been happening or take back (i.e. retract) the original statements they have made.

#### **DO**

- Listen, allow the child or young person to tell as much as they want without interrupting (remember listening is not questioning)
- Respond reassuringly to the child
- If you do ask a question avoid asking leading questions, ask only open questions that seek clarification so that you can decide what action you need to take
- Most importantly “BELIEVE WHAT THEY SAY”
- Document what the child or young person said and the responses that you made and any clarifying questions asked (word for word and remember to put the date, time, place and who was present)

#### **DON'T**

- Question in a way that introduces words, phrases, people's names or concepts
- Indicate that you disbelieve the child
- Try to correct, confront, change, challenge or influence what they say
- Respond by saying “You should have told me sooner” or “Why did you let him/her do that?”

#### **Disclosures that indicate an abusive experience**

Those working with children and young people know not to “question the child” if a disclosure of abuse is made. This is correct - questions should not be asked if the child or young person makes what could be considered a “clear disclosure” of abuse e.g. “Mum punched me in the head and made my nose bleed”, or “Uncle got into my bed and put his hand in my bum”.



These types of disclosures require:

1. A reassuring response by an adult, and
2. The adult to take immediate action by contacting Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police

RELEASED UNDER THE  
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

## **Child Protection Policy – Appendix**

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### **Serious Misconduct**

The criteria for reporting serious misconduct is that an employer suspects on reasonable grounds that a member of staff has engaged in any of the following:

- The physical abuse of a child or young person (which includes physical abuse carried out under the direction, or with the connivance, of the member of staff)
- The sexual abuse of a child or young person (which includes sexual abuse carried out under the direction, or with the connivance, of the member of staff)
- The psychological abuse of a child or young person, which may include (but is not limited to) physical abuse of another person, or damage to property, inflicted in front of a child or young person, threats of physical or sexual abuse, and harassment
- Being involved in an inappropriate relationship with any person under the age of 16 years
- Being involved in an inappropriate relationship with a student with whom the member of staff is, or was when the relationship commenced, in contact with as a result of his or her position as a member of staff
- The neglect or ill-treatment of any child or young person in the member of staff's care
- The neglect or ill-treatment of any animal in the member of staff's care
- Theft, or fraud
- Involvement in the manufacture, cultivation, supply, dealing, or use of controlled drugs
- Permitting, or acquiescing in, the manufacture, cultivation, supply, dealing, or use of controlled drugs by any child or young person
- Viewing, accessing, or possessing pornographic material while on GBWCT premises or engaged on GBWCT business
- Viewing, accessing, or possessing pornographic material that depicts children and young people or young persons or that depicts animals engaged in sexual acts with humans
- Breaching the GBWCT's standards or rules concerning the use of alcohol at the GBWCT or while on GBWCT business
- Any other act or omission that could be the subject of a prosecution for an offence punishable by imprisonment for a term of 3 months or more
- Any act or omission that brings, or is likely to bring, discredit to the profession.
- Physical, sexual, or psychological abuse is reportable whether it occurs as:
  - A single act; or
  - A number of acts forming part of a pattern of behaviour, even if some or all of those acts, viewed in isolation, would be minor or trivial.

## CARE AND PROTECTION NOTIFICATION PROCESS

### Response to Suspicions or Disclosure of Abuse

#### Volunteers & Staff



### FLOW CHART

