

GREEN BAY HIGH SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Policy Reference: Health and Safety NAG 5 Appendix 5.13

Summary

Green Bay High School should at all times be a safe environment supporting the physical and emotional well being of its students. When the school becomes aware that any student may be experiencing physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or neglect, it has the responsibility to act in a timely and appropriate manner to ensure that the student is protected and supported to the fullest extent.

This policy provides guidance to staff on how to identify and respond to concerns about the wellbeing of a student at Green Bay High School, including possible abuse or neglect. These concerns may also be disclosed by the student themselves or by another party.

[The referral pathway for disclosure of child abuse](#) (Appendix i)

The interests of the student will be the paramount consideration when any action is taken in response to suspected abuse or neglect. Green Bay High School commits to support the statutory agencies (Oranga Tamariki (OT) and the NZ Police) to investigate abuse, and will report suspected cases and concerns to these agencies as part of this policy.

At Green Bay High School these official reports will be made by either the Deputy Principal - Student Services, or the Guidance Counsellor. In the absence of either of these people, the Principal will nominate an appropriate person.

The Deputy Principal - Student Services at Green Bay High School is the **designated person for child protection**. This person has responsibility for providing advice and support to staff where they have a concern about an individual student, or want advice about the child protection policy.

A copy of this policy is available on the school website, staff handbook, Deans' manual.

This policy is reviewed following any specific event which triggers its use, and will be formally reviewed in August 2020.

Purpose, scope and principles

The Green Bay High School Child Protection Policy (CPP) supports staff to respond appropriately to potential, suspected or reported child protection concerns, including abuse or neglect. It is our organisation's commitment to protect young people from abuse, and to recognise the role the school has in protecting our students.

The policy provides the framework for the expectations of our staff, in responding to actual or suspected child abuse and neglect. The policy applies to all staff, including support staff, teacher aides, part-time and temporary roles, and to those whom the school has contracted.

It is intended to protect all students staff may encounter (including their siblings who may or may not attend our school).

As well as providing the process for responding to a concern of abuse or neglect, this policy is intended to help staff identify signs of abuse and neglect in students.

[Procedure for responding to concerns of abuse](#) (Appendix ii)

The school has a commitment to working cooperatively with all education and child protection agencies to ensure best outcomes for the students in our community.

We are also committed to continual improvement in child protection practice through these relationships, and through any specialist training or professional development available.

Key Definitions

- **CHILD** - any child or young person aged under 17 years (and who is not married or in a civil union)
- **CHILD PROTECTION** - activities carried out to ensure that any young person is safe in cases where there is suspected abuse or neglect, or is at risk of abuse or neglect
- **DESIGNATED PERSON FOR CHILD PROTECTION (DPCP)**- the designated person responsible for providing advice and support to staff where they have a concern about an individual child, or who want advice about the child protection policy.
- **DISCLOSURE** - information given to a staff member by a student, parent/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 care and protection to young people found to be in need
- **NZ POLICE** - the agency responsible for responding to situations where a young person is in immediate danger, and for working with OT in child protection work, and in investigating cases of abuse or neglect where an offence may have occurred.
- **PHYSICAL ABUSE** - any act(s) which may result in physical harm to a 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 act(s) which involve forcing or enticing a 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 young person to perform such acts on the perpetrator or another, involvement of the 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 young person can also be emotional abuse.
 - Exposure to family/whanau 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 such as a warm place, food and clothing.
 - **Emotional**: not providing comfort, attention and love.
 - **Neglectful Supervision**: leaving young people without someone safe looking after them.
 - **Medical**: not taking care of health needs
 - **Educational**: allowing chronic truancy, failure to enrol in education or inattention to education needs.

Training

Green Bay High School is committed to maintaining and increasing staff awareness of how to recognise and respond to abuse. Information on identifying abuse and neglect is included in this policy. As part of

their induction, new staff are made aware of the policy. Staff refreshers are held annually as part of the PLD plan.

Identifying child abuse and neglect

At Green Bay High School we recognise the signs of potential abuse:

- The young person talking about, or disclosing in a way which indicates abuse
- Physical signs such as unexplained injuries, burns, fracture, unusual or excessive itching, genital injuries, STDs.
- Emotional abuse/neglect such as sleep problems, low self esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness, loneliness and evidence of self harm.
- Behavioural concerns such as fear of a certain person or place, eating disorders, substance abuse, disengagement, neediness, aggression, inappropriate sexual behaviour.
- Development delays such as size, cognitive delays, falling behind, poor speech and social skills.

We are also aware of the signs of potential neglect:

- The young person talking about, or disclosing in a way which indicates neglect
- Physical signs such as looking uncared for and dirty, school uniform dirty and unkempt, underweight, no money or food, lack of school materials.
- Emotional abuse/neglect such as sleep problems, low self esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness, loneliness and evidence of self harm.
- Medical neglect such as untreated medical issues
- Behavioural concerns such as disengagement, neediness, eating disorders, substance abuse, aggression.
- Neglectful supervision such as out and about unsupervised, left alone, no safe home to return to.
- Development delays such as size, cognitive delays, falling behind, poor speech and social skills.

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

- Each situation is different, and it is essential to gather data and information about the young person and their situation before reaching conclusions. Feedback from form teacher, Dean and Guidance team is essential. For example, behavioural concerns may be a result of life events such as divorce, accidental injury, the arrival of a new sibling.
- While there are different definitions of abuse, the important thing is that staff should be able to recognise when something is wrong, especially if they notice a pattern forming or several signs make them concerned. All staff should be familiar with the identifiers, and always err on the side of caution.
- **Staff are not to act alone. If they are concerned that a young person is showing signs of potential abuse or neglect, or has disclosed such, they must report their concerns to the level Dean, Guidance Counsellor or DP Student Services (DPCP).**

Green Bay High School will always act on the recommendation of statutory agencies, including OT and NZ Police. Families/whanau will be informed about suspected or actual abuse by the relevant statutory agency.

When we respond to suspected child abuse, or any concerning behaviours, we write down our observations, impressions and communications in a confidential format. This is kept separate from other school records and can only be accessed by the Principal, DP Student Services or Guidance Counsellor.

Staff involved in the reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect cases are entitled to support. We can offer the contact details of individuals, organisations or agencies in our community who provide such support.

Confidentiality and information sharing

The Principal of Green Bay High School has nominated that the official reporting of suspected or actual abuse or neglect to OT and/or NZ Police, will be done by **DP Student Services** or **Guidance Counsellor**, or in the absence of either of these people, the **Principal** will nominate an appropriate person.

The Principal's nominees will seek guidance from OT and/or the NZ Police **before any identifying information about an allegation will be shared with anyone.**

All staff should be aware that:

- Under sections 15 and 16 of the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989 any person who believes that a child has been or is likely to be harmed physically, emotionally or sexually or ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived may report the matter to Child, Youth and Family or the Police and provided the report is made in good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against them.
- When collecting personal information about individuals it is important to be aware of the requirements of the privacy principles.
 - The need to collect the information directly from the individual concerned;
 - The need to be transparent about:
 - the purpose for collecting the information;
 - how it will be used;
 - who can see the information;
 - where it is held;
 - what is compulsory and voluntary information
 - a person's right to request access to their information
 - a person's right to correction of their information.
- Staff may, however, disclose information under the Privacy Act/Health Information Privacy Code where there is good reason to do so, such as where there is a serious risk to individual health and safety. (Refer privacy principle 11/Code rule 11). Disclosure about ill-treatment or neglect of a young person may also be made to the NZ Police or OT under sections 15 and 16 of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989.

Student safe practice guidelines

Green Bay High School has the following guidelines for staff:

- To avoid situations when a staff member may be alone with a student, staff should examine the opportunities or possible scenarios where this may occur
- Wherever possible, an open door policy for all spaces should be used (excludes toilets)
- Staff should be aware of where students are at all times
- Where students require one to one support or assistance, this is done with the full support and knowledge of the family/whanau
- Where a young person requires assistance (disabled), if possible involve the family/whanau and outside agencies such as the MOE Special Education group to assist. If this assistance is not available, ensure that staff are aware of the appropriate procedures when giving assistance
- Staff should avoid being alone when transporting a young person, unless an emergency requires it. Family/whanau approval must be given prior to transporting except in an absolute emergency
- Students are not collected from the school premises or school organised activities by anyone other than those nominated by family/whanau. Nominees are recorded in school data base
- Family/whanau (or those nominated) must collect students from Student Services when collecting during school hours
- Visitors to Green Bay High School must sign in and out from main reception, and their visits are monitored by our staff

NB Green Bay High School Guidance Counsellors work according to the NZAC (New Zealand Association of Counsellors) ethics and protocols.

Responding to suspected abuse or neglect

Staff are not to act alone. In all cases where a staff member has a concern that a young person is showing signs of potential abuse or neglect, or has disclosed such, they must report their concerns to the Dean, Guidance Counsellor or DP Student Services (DPCP).

A referral to Oranga Tamariki and/or the NZ Police may be made at any time.

It is mandatory for all concerns to be reported by staff within a time period which allows for effective and appropriate responses.

There are a number of statutory and non statutory agencies which provide a network of mutually supportive services. It is important that for our school to work with them to respond to the needs of vulnerable children and families/whanau in a manner proportionate to the level of need and risk. A list of these agencies can be obtained from the Deputy Principal - Student Services.

Responding to a young person when they disclose abuse:

[Taking a disclosure statement: a guide for staff](#) (Appendix iii)

Responding to allegations involving a staff member:

This matter is referred directly to the Principal and BOT Chairperson

[Procedure for student abuse allegations against staff](#) (Appendix iv)