

## 5.05 Child Protection Policy

### **Rationale:**

The Board of Trustees has a responsibility to promote the principles of Catholic Social teaching which includes the protection of the poor and the vulnerable. Also, under current legislation, it has an obligation to provide a safe environment which caters for the physical and emotional wellbeing of its students. As such the Board of Trustees is committed to preventing child abuse and / or neglect protection.

### **Purpose:**

1. To ensure compliance with the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.
2. To ensure consistency with the Ministry of Vulnerable Children / Oranga Tamariki, and Police Guidelines.
3. To promote child protection with regards to:
  - The early identification of possible signs abuse and or neglect
  - The ability of staff to take appropriate action
  - Appropriate screening of all employees / potential employees
4. To provide staff guidelines by which to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of abuse and neglect, and to understand their role in keeping young people safe.
5. To provide procedures for using professional agencies with specialist child abuse knowledge.
6. To provide a mechanism to report suspected abuse and / or neglect.
7. To provide a safe physical and emotional environment, free from physical, sexual and verbal abuse

### **Definitions:**

**Abuse:** the harming (whether physical, emotionally or sexually), ill treatment, neglect or deprivation of any child which is the direct consequence of a deliberate act or omission by an adult and which has the potential or effect of serious harm to the young person.

**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, which is the direct consequence of a deliberate act or omission by an adult and which has the potential or effect of serious harm to the young person.

**Child or young person:** any child or young person aged under 17 years.

**Child protection:** activities carried out to ensure that children are safe in cases where there is suspected abuse, neglect or the risk of abuse or neglect.

**Staff:** people (paid or unpaid), working at Liston College, working on a full time, part time, casual, or temporary basis, or volunteers who come into contact with students.

### **Guidelines:**

1. The interest and protection of the child is paramount in all actions by staff.
2. These guidelines apply to all staff who have direct or indirect contact with our students.

3. Recognition of the culture of the family/whānau, its importance and the rights of family/whānau to participate in decision-making about their children and the rights of the child to participate in decision making, are key aspects of this policy.
4. All staff will be made aware of these requirements and their obligations under the Vulnerable Children Act 2014. New staff induction will include information about this policy.
5. All appointments [permanent, fixed term, contractor, casual or volunteers (including those whose work involves regular or overnight contact with children)] to positions that have direct and/or frequent contact with children or young people will be made in accordance with the requirements of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014. This will include a safety check every three years.
6. All staff are expected to behave in a manner that maintains appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others.
7. Staff will receive regular training to help them identify suspected abuse and / or neglect and to be able to respond appropriately.
8. Preventative education is to be provided to students as part of the Health Programme.
9. All cases of suspected abuse and / or neglect must be reported in the first instance to the Principal and Director of Pastoral Care.
10. Procedures as outlined in appendices 1 to 4 are to be used as soon as practicable when abuse and / or neglect is reported / suspected.
11. Procedures for responding to suspected child abuse and / or neglect must ensure:
  - confidentiality
  - appropriate record-keeping procedures are maintained (such documentation may be used in subsequent court cases)
  - that appropriate informing of parents when parents are suspected or when others are suspected, takes place
  - that there are mechanisms to ensure the suspected person has no further access to child(ren) while the case is under investigation
  - resources are available for parents and students
12. Where possible, the Guidance Counsellor should act as the support person for the student.
13. Where the allegation is made against an employee of Liston College, then the Complaints Policy is to be followed.
14. This policy will be made available on the school's internet site and is available on request

**Conclusion:**

This policy provides a mechanism whereby a student who suspected child abuse and / or neglect can be afforded support and assistance.

*Refer to Procedures : 5.05 Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect (Child Protection)*

**Adopted by Board of Trustees**

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reviewed:**

New 2007

28/8/07

25/8/09

31/5/11

25/07/17

24.11.20

**Next Review:** 2023 – every three years