

NZCF Safety of Children and Young People Policy

Purpose

NZCF is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people participating in our events.

This document outlines the NZCF policy on providing a safe environment at events where children and young people are participants.

Scope

This policy applies to all NZCF staff (including contractors and volunteers) who are engaged in an NZCF event involving children and young people. Staff are expected to be familiar with this policy and to abide by it. Any behavioural issues with students remain the responsibility of the teachers who accompany the students, and that NZCF staff are not expected to manage behaviour.

Policy Principles

- NZCF will promote the safety and well-being of participants at its activities by taking all reasonable steps to provide and maintain an environment that is physically, socially, culturally and emotionally safe.
- NZCF will ensure that all staff understand their role insofar as it relates to the safety of children and young people and are supported in taking appropriate action in response to any incident that might negatively impact the safety of a child or young person.
- NZCF will comply with relevant legislative responsibilities.
- NZCF is committed to promoting a culture where staff are confident that they can constructively raise issues of concern about the safety or wellbeing of a participant at an NZCF event.

Staff recruitment

- NZCF staff cannot be involved in an event including children or young people if they have a conviction for violence, sexual offences or offences against children.
- All current staff on whom NZCF relies on to deliver its events have undergone, or are undergoing, Ministry of Justice vetting. Before engaging any new staff, NZCF will check whether they have any convictions that would prevent them being involved at an event where they would have direct contact with students. This will include a Ministry of Justice check, requiring consent and a copy of identification verification, and may include reference checks and an interview.

Confidentiality and information sharing

Information may only be shared insofar as reasonably required to keep participants safe. If abuse or suspected abuse is reported or investigated, or there is an accident or other health and safety issue, communication with those involved or affected should be via the event co-ordinator or NZCF management.

Relevant Legislation

- Education and Training Act 2020
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 / Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989
- Children's Act 2014
- Privacy Act 2020
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

Policy and Reporting Process for Suspected or Disclosed Child Abuse

Guidelines for reporting child abuse/ neglect

- The child's safety should always be the paramount consideration in the notification process.
- No decisions or actions in respect of suspected or actual child abuse are to be made by any staff member in isolation unless there are concerns for the immediate safety of the child.
- A consultative approach is essential to ensure the safety of the child and the staff member. Staff must discuss their concerns with the event manager or the NZCF Contact Person.
- Decisions about informing parents, caregivers or school should be made after consultation by the NZCF contact person and Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children.

Key Contacts

- NZCF Contact Person: Christine Argyle 027 499 8883
- Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children - 0508 FAMILY (0508 326 459)
- Local Police

Where Child abuse is either suspected or disclosed

Ensure the child or young person is safe from immediate harm.

- Physical/behavioural observations and anything said by the child should be carefully documented (include date, time, who was present).
- Consult immediately with event manager, or NZCF Contact Person.
- The NZCF Contact Person or their nominated person in charge who received the information should contact Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children (0508 326 459) or local Police.
- If advised to do so, complete a referral form to Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children / Police.

Deciding when and who will inform the parent(s) and/or caregiver will be determined by Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children and Police, in consultation with the NZCF Contact Person - Christine Argyle 027 499 8883.

Specific actions when reporting child abuse/neglect

- If the child or young person is in danger or unsafe, act immediately to secure their safety.
- Listen to the child or young person and reassure them they did the right thing in disclosing.
- Write down what the child says, check that comments and events surrounding the concern are also recorded.
- Do not formally interview the child or young person. Obtain only necessary relevant facts for when clarification is needed.
- If the child or young person is not in immediate danger and is not upset reinvolve the student in usual activities.
- If the child or young person is visibly upset provide appropriate activity for them under supervision with someone familiar (i.e. teacher) until they are able to re-join activities.
- Hold immediate discussion with event manager or NZCF Contact Person, who will notify Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children Contact Centre or the Police and obtain during the notification an indication of likely action and their time frames. Seek advice from Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children on what to tell the child or young person (decisions concerning notifying the parents and/or school will be made by police).
- Get support for yourself from appropriate people if needed.

Notifications should be made to the Police or the Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children National Contact Centre. The Contact Centre telephone number is 0508 FAMILY (0508 326 459; fax number (09) 914 1211 or email contact@ot.govt.nz

Information required for reporting

When a notification is made to Oranga Tamariki, the NZCF Contact Person needs to provide the following information in the attached notification:

- Your Name and contact details.
- Name of child/children.
- Age (if known).
- Ethnicity (if known).
- Name of caregivers, parents.
- Contact details for child and /or Parents.
- Reasons why it is believed that the child or young person is at risk.
- Other significant background information. (include date/time)

Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

Next required policy review date: May 2026.