

## APARIMA COLLEGE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

In order to comply with the provisions of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014 the Board of Trustees of Aparima College

- adopts this Child Protection Policy
- has ensured that the Policy is available on the School website
- has required that every independent contracted provider of childrens' services has a Child Protection Policy
- has a plan to review the Policy and related Procedures every 3 years

### Summary

- This policy outlines the School's commitment to child protection and it refers to the following School procedures
  - Dealing with child abuse
  - Guidelines for professional behaviour
  - Complaints Procedure
  - Staff Code of Conduct
- The foundation document for this Policy is "Safer organisations Safer children – Guidelines for child protection policies to build safer organisations" (Children's Action Plan. Identifying, Supporting and Protecting Vulnerable Children)

### Purpose

- In relation to the children in its care, the School staff
  - has the obligation to ensure their wellbeing and safety
  - must be committed to the prevention of their abuse and neglect
  - has the child as its first priority when investigating suspected / alleged abuse
  - supports the NZ Police and Child, Youth and Family (CYF) in investigations of alleged abuse
  - will report alleged abuse to the Police and CYF
  - will support families / whanau to protect their children
  - will provide a safe environment that is free of physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse

### Principles

- The interest and protection of the child is paramount in all actions
- The rights of the family / whanau to participate in decision-making about their children are recognised
- Maori tamariki and rangatahi are assessed and managed within a culturally-safe environment
- Members of all cultures are respected and managed sensitively
- All staff are guided and trained to identify the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect and to take appropriate action in response
- All staff are supported to
  - work in accordance with the Policy and related Procedures
  - work with partner agencies and organisations
  - ensure that child protection procedures are consistent and high-quality
- Relevant legislative responsibilities will be complied with
- Information will be shared in a timely way and concerns about individual children will be discussed immediately with the appointed Child Protection Coordinator
- The School staff will promote a culture where staff can confidently challenge poor practice in a constructive way and raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal
- "Settlement agreements" will not be used to settle complaints against staff where these are contrary to a culture of child protection

- Information is systematically recorded and stored to ensure confidentiality and privacy
- This Policy and related Procedures
  - comply with legislative requirements and principles of the Treaty of Waitangi
  - meet best-practice standards
  - are reviewed and audited annually

#### Interpretation

- Child
  - Person under the age of 18 years, not married or in civil union
- Improving the well-being of vulnerable children includes taking measures aimed at
  - Protecting them from abuse and neglect  
*(school anti-bullying procedure and programme, reporting of alleged abuse /neglect procedure)*
  - Improving their physical and mental health, and their cultural and emotional well-being  
*(physical education programme, participation in sport, Maori Kapa Haka programme, Guidance Counsellor availability, liaison with Community Mental Health)*
  - Improving their education and training and their participation in recreation and cultural activities  
*(Curriculum delivery, V-path, Section 71,)*
  - Strengthening their connection to their families, whanau, hapu and iwi, or other culturally-recognised family group
  - Increasing their participation in decision-making about them and their contribution to society  
*(Student leadership, Student Council, student-parent interviews and discussions)*
  - Improving their social and economic well-being  
*(Curriculum delivery, V-path, Section 71, Gateway)*