

# Henderson Intermediate School

## VULNERABLE CHILDREN POLICY

### RATIONALE

In line with the VULNERABLE CHILDREN ACT 2014, any person in our School who believes that any child or young person has been, or is likely to be harmed ( physically, emotional or sexually) ill treated, abused, neglected or deprived in any way must report the matter to the Principal.

The School must also protect the safety of students who disclose abuse or are suspected of being abused, create a safe environment for the disclosure of abuse and support staff, students and parents who make a disclosure.

### GUIDELINES

1. At all times, student health and safety, protection, will be paramount.
2. **Staff will** be provided with information to help them identify the signs of physical, sexual, emotional abuse, or neglect. **Any member of staff may report suspected abuse.**
3. **Teachers will** make any concerns known to the Principal, or Deputy Principal, who will, in consultation with staff and outside agencies, decide on the most suitable course of action. Whenever possible and appropriate, teachers will remain informed of developments and decisions.
4. In cases where it is obvious abuse has occurred or a disclosure has been made, staff members should notify the Principal immediately. The Board Chairman will be kept informed.
5. Where the **Principal or Deputy Principal** believe there may be any form of abuse, he/she is bound to contact the Child, Youth and Family Services or the Police in accordance with the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.
6. **Teachers will**, on reporting disclosure to the Principal, maintain confidentiality.
7. **Parents will**, on reporting disclosure to the School, be provided with advice and support as to the way that they manage the information they have about suspected abuse.
8. **Staff** who become stressed as a result of dealing with a matter of abuse will have counselling made available.
9. Decisions about informing parents or caregivers should be made after consultation between the school and the statutory child protection service called in by them.

### Disclosure of abuse by an Employee

1. Subject to the overriding safety of the child, the staff member will be informed by the Principal or Deputy of the allegation as soon as possible.
2. The staff member will be encouraged to seek appropriate advice and support.
3. The school will seek the advice of NZSTA and the School's Lawyer.
4. The Chairperson of the Board of Trustees will be informed.

**Reviewed on 27 June 2022**