

Statement of Intent

1. This policy outlines Rangimarie Bush Centre's (RBC) commitment to child protection and recognises the important role and responsibility of those who act on RBC behalf in the protection of children. It includes RBC expectations when child abuse is reported or suspected by us.
2. The directors, staff, contractors and volunteers working on behalf of RBC are expected to be familiar with this policy and abide by its contents.
3. RBC has an obligation to ensure the wellbeing of children in our care. We are committed to the prevention of child abuse and neglect and to the protection of all children. The safety and wellbeing of the child is our top priority. Advice will be sought through appropriate agencies in all cases of suspected or alleged abuse.
4. In line with section 18 of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families (Oranga Tamariki) Legislation Act 2017 any person who believes that any child or young person has been, or is likely to be, harmed (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually) ill-treated, abused, neglected, or deprived may report their concerns to RBC staff or the police.
5. Where facilitators, contractors or volunteers are working directly with schools on RBC's behalf, the school is the first port of call for any disclosure, followed by reporting to RBC directors.
6. Guidance on identifying and responding to possible abuse or neglect can be found in Item 4 of this policy.
7. This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

ITEM 1: *RBC's duties.*

The Directors will:

1. Comply with relevant legislative requirements and responsibilities.
2. Make this policy available on request.
3. Ensure that every contract entered into requires the adoption of child protection policies where required.
4. Ensure a contract agreement is in place where required, either directly or through delegation to a project manager, such as a schools-focus project or initiative. Form 6 in the EOTC Guidelines Toolkit can be used as the template as it includes child protection policy and worker safety checking considerations.
5. Ensure the interests and protection of the child are paramount in all circumstances.
6. Recognise the rights of family/whānau to participate in the decision-making about their children.
7. Ensure that all contractors and volunteers, if they identify the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect or receive disclosures by children, can take appropriate action in response by speaking to school staff or senior



managers and informing the Directors of the action taken. See Item 5 - Safer Organisations, Safer Children: Guidelines for child protection policies to build safer organisations (p25), for guidance on identifying possible abuse or neglect.

8. Support contractors and volunteers to work in accordance with this policy and the supporting material that is provided.
9. Promote a culture where staff, contractors and volunteers feel confident that they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal.
10. Consult, discuss and share relevant information with the RBC directors regarding any concerns about an individual child in line with RBC commitment to confidentiality and information-sharing protocols and in a timely way.
11. Make available advice to ensure all staff, contractors and volunteers can carry out their roles in terms of this policy.
12. Ensure that this policy forms part of the initial induction programme for each staff member, contractor and volunteer.
13. Ensure that safety checking protocols are adhered to with staff, contractors and volunteers where appropriate.

ITEM 2: *Protection of young people includes, but is not limited to:*

- Parental permissions gained
- Ensuring that the students have transport to and from venue
- No student is forced to participate in any event

ITEM 3: *Safety checking protocols*

- Confirming identity
- Information gathering
- Police Vetting
- Interviews
- Checking referees
- Considering risk

ITEM 4: *Related documentation and information*

- Ministry of Education website www.education.govt.nz
- Children's Act 2014
- Safer Organisations, Safer Children: Guidelines for child protection policies to build safer organisations
- <https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Safer-Organisations-safer-children.pdf>
- Working with Children and worker safety checking:
<https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/working-with-children/childrens-act-requirements/safety-checking/>