

<b>Child Protection Policy</b>			
<b>Approved By</b>	Chief Executive		
<b>Department</b>	People and Capability		
<b>Original Approval Date</b>	14 June 2021	<b>Review Approval Date</b>	14 June 2021
<b>Next Review Deadline</b>	14 June 2023	<b>Document ID</b>	353977
<b>Relevant Legislation</b>	Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 Family Law Act 2018 Children's Act 2014 The Treaty of Waitangi 1840 United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCROC) 1989 Harmful Digital Communications Act 2015		
<b>NCC Docs Referenced</b>	Not Applicable		Not Applicable

## Purpose

Napier City Council's Child Protection Policy provides an organisation-wide policy for responding to suspected abuse or neglect of a child. It provides information on resources to help identify possible signs of abuse or neglect, and sets out what we do if we suspect this is happening.

Napier City Council is committed to safeguarding children and its responsibilities under the Children's Act 2014. The purpose of the policy is to imbed a culture of child protection that consistently safeguards and promotes the well-being of children.

## Objectives

1. To make the safety and well-being of the child our top priority when considering suspected or alleged neglect or abuse.
2. To support staff of Napier City Council, contractors and volunteers to protect children in their facilities / programmes of work and to know how to identify and respond to possible neglect or abuse.

## Scope

This policy applies to all staff employed, contracted to, or people volunteering with Napier City Council who work with children as part of their role.

Facilities provided for children by Napier City Council include:

- Sports & Recreation centres
- Libraries
- Aquatic facilities
- Museum (MTG) & Faraday Centre
- Bay Skate

- National Aquarium of New Zealand
- Kennedy Park Resort
- Par 2 Mini Golf

Other staff that may have regular but limited contact with children include:

- Community Advisors
- Animal Control Officers
- Parking Officers

## Responsibilities

**Napier City Council** takes responsibility for ensuring:

- Staff, contractors and volunteers have the information, tools and support to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children using our facilities and taking part in activities including holiday programs.
- That our staff, contractors and volunteers can identify the signs of possible abuse or neglect and are able to take appropriate action, in a safe environment.
- That we have a workable child protection policy and appropriate procedures in place.
- That we provide child protection guidance and support to staff when needed

## Managers

are responsible for ensuring their staff understand and adhere to this policy. They are expected to ensure that their staff have undertaken appropriate training associated with this policy.

## Designated Officers

are responsible for ensuring Napier City Council meets its obligations under the Children's Act 2014. A designated officer has a responsibility to provide advice and support to an employee or other person who is concerned about a child or who wants advice about this policy.

A designated officer is selected by the role that they do at council and the likelihood of them coming into contact with or being notified of, a concern regarding a child suffering abuse or neglect.

*Please see designated officer list in Appendix 4.*

## Policy

### 1. Recruitment

When recruiting people to Napier City Council, a robust recruitment and screening process is undertaken to ensure child safety, which includes:

- i. Interviewing prospective candidates
- ii. Sighting photographic identification at the interview
- iii. Reference/character checking
- iv. Ministry of Justice Criminal records checking

In addition to the above we complete further checks for roles that specifically engage with children, these include;

- i. When interviewing, including specific questions in the area of child protection
- ii. When completing reference checking, including specific questions in the area of child protection

- iii. Police vetting check
- iv. An assessment of any risk the prospective employee or volunteer may pose to a child. This may include consideration of an exemption under s35 of the Children's Act 2014.

## 2. Categories of children's workers at Napier City Council

- a. Core workers – are all staff employed, contracted to, or people volunteering with Napier City Council who work with children as part of their role e.g. educators and holiday program staff.
- b. Limited – are all staff employed, contracted to, or people volunteering with Napier City Council who proactively engage with children during the course of their work e.g. Community Advisors.
- c. Auxiliary – are all staff employed, contracted to, or people volunteering with Napier City Council who have very limited contact with children out in the public, during the course of their work e.g. gardeners, parking wardens.
- d. Nil – are all staff employed, contracted to, or people volunteering with Napier City Council with no contact with children e.g. back room / support workers.

## 3. Contractor / third party engagement

Where outside providers are used for Napier City Council programmes that involve children, contract documents for engagement will include a process to ensure the organisation has adequate child protection policies and procedures in place, including safety checking of workers as set out by the Children's Act 2014.

It is the responsibility of the manager contracting this work out, to ensure the correct documentation and checks have been completed.

## 4. Guidance, Training and Support

Napier City Council is committed to ensuring that staff have the necessary skills and resources to support them in identifying suspected child abuse or neglect. The level of training, resources and support required will vary depending on:

- a) the amount of contact the staff member has with children
- b) the opportunity that the staff member may have to identify suspected child abuse or neglect or be advised of such suspicions
- c) whether the staff member is likely to be expected to provide support to others who suspect child abuse or neglect.

### ***Training***

**All core workers** will undertake the Child Protection for Local Government Children's Workers eLearning course.

**All Designated Officers (DO's)** will complete;

- a) the Child Protection for Local Government Children's Workers eLearning course
- b) Designated People training
- c) The police vetting form

### ***Support***

- Napier City Council has access to free and confidential support from OCP for all staff.
- Designated Officers have a responsibility to check in with staff that have reported alleged concerns.

- If you are needing support following reporting a concern of a child or having a report made to you, please let your line manager / designated officer or People & Capability know and they will be able to advise you further.

## 5. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

The Privacy Act 2020 and the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 allows information to be shared to keep children safe when abuse or suspected abuse is reported or investigated.

Generally, advice should be sought from Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police before information about an allegation that may identify an individual is shared with anyone, other than the appropriate Supervisor/Manager/Director, designated officer for child protection or People & Capability.

Under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 any person who believes that a child has been or is likely to be harmed physically, emotionally or sexually or ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived must report the matter to a social worker or those listed in this Policy. No civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against the person who makes the report, provided it is made in good faith.

The Office of the Privacy Commissioner has published a set of guidelines **“Sharing information to protect vulnerable children”** which includes advice about confidentiality and information sharing:

<https://www.privacy.org.nz/blog/vulnerable-children/>

## Policy Review

The review timeframe of this policy will be no longer than every two years.

## Document History

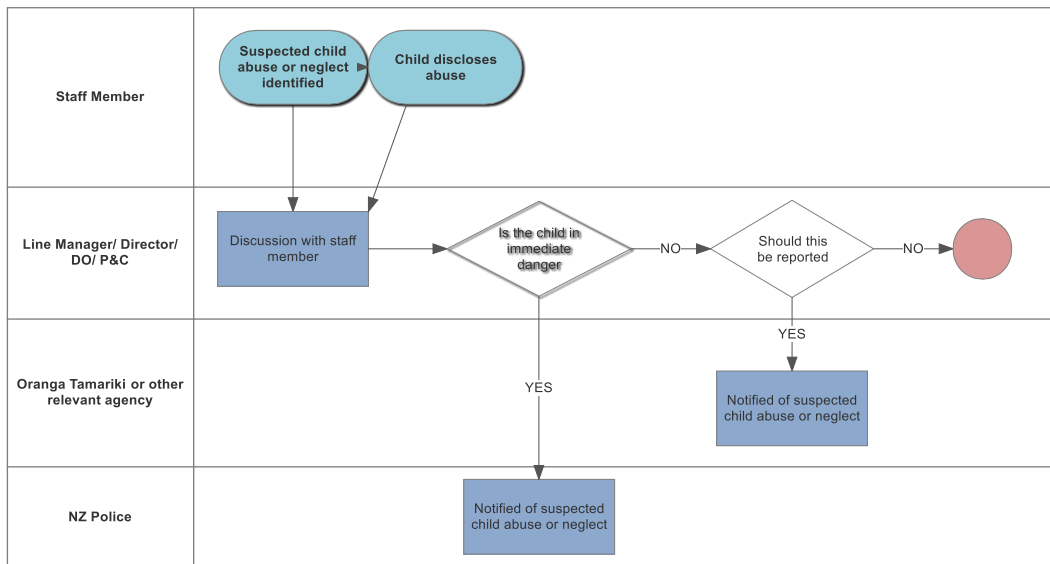
Version	Reviewer	Change Detail	Date
2	Manager People and Capability	Full review	June 2021

# Appendix 1: Child Protection Procedures

## 1) Procedure for Identifying and Reporting suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

If a staff member has a concern about a child’s safety or wellbeing they will be required in all instances to report this to their line manager, who informs director, who informs P&C/DO and CE.

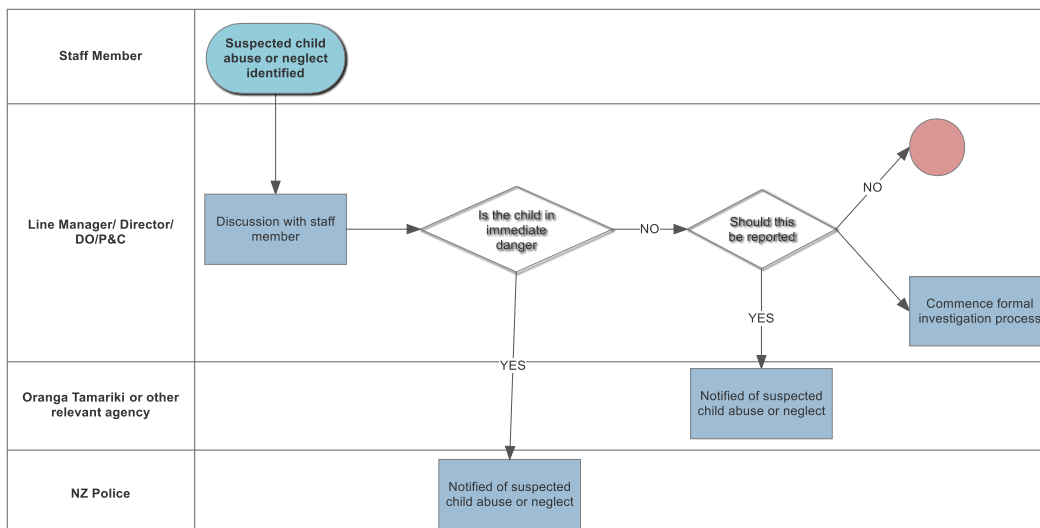
### a) The suspected or alleged abuser is not a staff member:



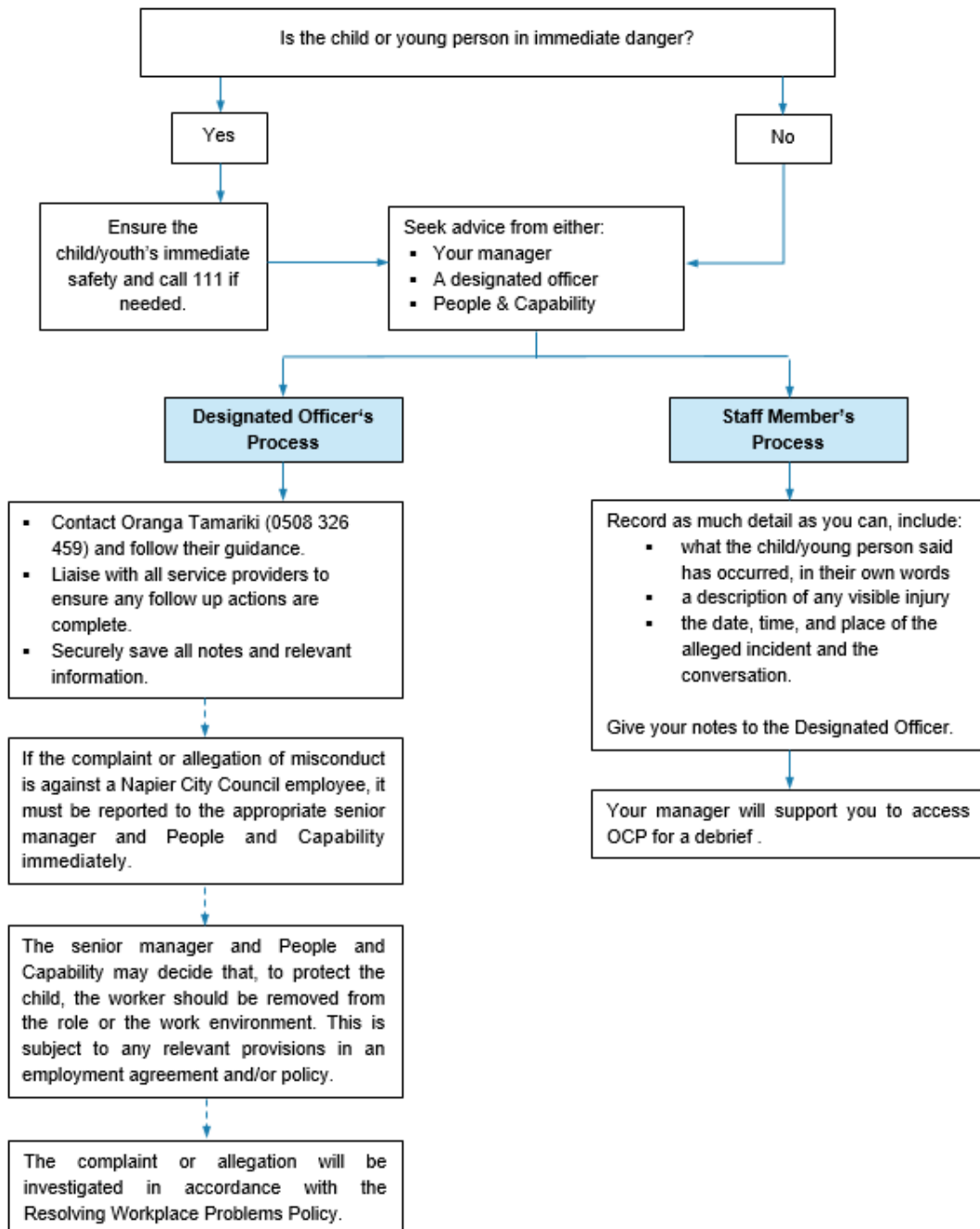
Please note:

- No staff member, contractor or volunteer should act without seeking support of others.
- The severity of the suspected abuse or neglect is not up to the individual to determine.
- In consultation with their line manager, designated officer & People & Capability, staff should always respond if they suspect abuse or neglect of a child, regardless of who may be involved.

### b) The suspected or alleged is a staff member:



**2 Procedure for recording and notifying the relevant people and next steps;**



**\*\*Failure to make a complaint or report an allegation immediately will be treated as a very serious matter\*\***

### 3. Guide to responding to a Child When the Child Discloses Abuse or neglect;

<b>Listen to the child</b>	Disclosures by children are often subtle and need to be handled with care, including an awareness of the child's cultural identity and how that affects interpretation of their behaviour and language.
<b>Reassure the child</b>	Let the child know that they are not in trouble and have done the right thing. While reassuring the child it is important that you do not agree 'not to tell anyone'.
<b>Ask open ended prompts, e.g. "What happened next?"</b>	Do not interview the child (do not ask questions beyond open prompts for the child to continue).
<b>If the child is visibly distressed</b>	Provide appropriate reassurance and engage in appropriate activities under supervision until they are able to participate in ordinary activities.
<b>If the child is not in immediate danger</b>	Re-involve the child in activities and explain what you are going to do next.
<b>As soon as possible formally record the disclosure</b>	Record: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Word for word, what the child said on our Child Protection Form (<i>appendix 3</i>)</li></ul>

## Appendix 2 Child Protection Form

<p>Child Protection Policy</p> <p><b>Form to record information from Child/witness/third party</b></p>	
Date, Time, Location	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name of person taking the record,</li> <li>• Job Title,</li> <li>• Company</li> </ul>	
Other relevant people / organisations involved	
Child's name	
What did the child say (word for word if possible)	
<p>The factual concerns or observations that have led to the suspicion of abuse or neglect</p> <p>(e.g., any physical, behavioural)</p>	
The action taken	
Any other information that may be relevant	



## **Appendix 3 Definitions:**

The following definitions apply to this policy:

### **Abuse**

the harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill-treatment, neglect or deprivation of any child.

### **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.

### **Child/Tamariki**

Individuals aged 0-14 years.

### **Young person/Rangatahi**

Individuals aged 15-17 years

### **Child protection**

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

### **Designated officer for child protection**

the manager/supervisor or designated officer responsible for providing advice and support to staff where they have a concern about an individual child or who want advice about the Child Protection Policy.

### **Disclosure**

information given to a staff member by the child, parent or caregiver or third party in relation to abuse or neglect.

### **Child, Youth and Family**

the agency responsible for investigating and responding to suspected abuse and neglect and for providing a statutory response to children found to be in need of care and protection.

### **New Zealand Police**

the agency responsible for responding to situations where a child is in immediate danger and for working with Oranga Tamariki in child protection work, including investigating cases of abuse or neglect where an offence may have occurred.

### **Children's services**

any organisation that provides services to children or to adults where contact with children may be part of the service. These organisations should have child protection policies. Organisations that provide services to adults who may be caring for or parenting children should also consider developing a policy, e.g., adult mental health and addiction services.

## **Safer recruitment**

following good practice processes for pre-employment checking which help manage the risk of unsuitable persons entering the children's workforce.

## **Standard safety checking**

the process of safer recruitment that will be mandatory for organisations covered by the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

## **Workforce restriction**

a restriction on the employment or engagement of people with certain specified convictions under the Children's Act 2014.

## **Children's workforce/children's workers**

people who work with children, or who have regular contact with children, as part of their roles.

## **Physical abuse**

any acts that may result in the physical harm of a child or young person. It can be, but is not limited to: bruising, cutting, hitting, beating, biting, burning, causing abrasions, strangulation, suffocation, drowning, poisoning and fabricated or induced illness.

## **Sexual abuse**

any acts that involve forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse can be, but is not limited to:

- Contact abuse: touching breasts, genital/anal fondling, masturbation, oral sex, penetrative or non-penetrative contact with the anus or genitals, encouraging the child to perform such acts on the perpetrator or another, involvement of the child in activities for the purposes of pornography or prostitution.
- Non-contact abuse: exhibitionism, voyeurism, exposure to pornographic or sexual imagery, inappropriate photography or depictions of sexual or suggestive behaviours or comments.

## **Emotional abuse**

any act or omission that results in adverse or impaired psychological, social, intellectual and emotional functioning or development. This can include:

- Patterns of isolation, degradation, constant criticism or negative comparison to others. Isolating, corrupting, exploiting or terrorising a child can also be emotional abuse.
- Exposure to family/whānau or intimate partner violence.

## **Neglect**

neglect is the most common form of abuse, and although the effects may not be as obvious as physical abuse, it is just as serious. Neglect can be:

- Physical (not providing the necessities of life, like a warm place, food and clothing).
- Emotional (not providing comfort, attention and love).
- Neglectful supervision (leaving children without someone safe looking after them).
- Medical neglect (not taking care of health needs).
- Educational neglect (allowing chronic truancy, failure to enrol in education or inattention to education needs).

## Appendix 4 Designated Officers;

Kyle Hamilton, Bayskate
Justin Dwyer, Bayskate
Sue Matkin, People & Capability
Nicola Saunders, People & Capability
Karen Molloy, People & Capability
Natasha Mackie, Community Strategies
Emma Morgan, Community Strategies
Darran Gillies, Libraries
Chi-Chi Yeh, Napier Aquatic Centre
Renee Baarspul, Napier Aquatic Centre
Sue Robertson, National Aquarium
Karlie Lett, National Aquarium
Jacque Wilton, National Aquarium
Amy Stevens, National Aquarium
Megan Bloomfield, Municipal Theatre
Dawn Pattullo, i-Site/Par2 Mini Golf
Margy Pope, i-Site/Par2 Mini Golf
Hayden Henderson, Kennedy Park
Lauree Lythgow, Kennedy Park
Lisa Kirby, MTG

## Appendix 5

### Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

- If I report a concern about a child what will happen to me?  
You will be provided with support and counselling as you require.
- If I report a concern about a child can I find out what happens to the child?  
It is not possible to divulge any information after the report has been made, to protect the privacy of the child.
- Will I have to go to court/police?  
You may have to attend court or speak to Police depending on the particular case. In the event this is required all efforts will be made to protect your anonymity.
- I am really concerned about the family finding out it was me that made the report?  
Is my identity kept confidential? All efforts will be made to keep your identity confidential.
- What support is available for me?  
OCP, free confidential advice and counselling, debrief following reporting of concerns. Other more specific support depending on your individual needs. This will be assessed with your medical practitioner.
- I have been threatened by the family, what do I do?  
Report to the police immediately.
- I have concerns about a colleague, what do I do?  
Speak to your Line Manager, P&C or a Designated Officer for support and advice regarding next steps.