



This policy is designed and administered to reflect our mission and vision of building outstanding men and educating the whole person in an environment of Christian love and service.

## Child Safety Policy

NAG 5

### Rationale

1. All students have a fundamental right to have their needs met and be safe from abuse and neglect. St Peter's College ensures that it complies by the Vulnerable Children's Act 2014.
2. This policy ensures St Peter's College supports our students and families, and works alongside Government agencies to provide for the well-being of our students.

### Purpose

1. We provide a safe environment, free from physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse.
2. It is the responsibility of all our staff to identify and respond to any suspected child abuse or neglect.

### Guidelines

1. All employment practices comply with the Vulnerable Children's Act 2014.
2. All employees of the College will be police checked before commencing their employment.
3. The College works together with Government agencies to improve the well-being of vulnerable children.
4. Teaching staff and non-teaching staff will be provided with appropriate training to be able to identify and respond to suspected abuse or neglect.
5. The College ensures there are procedures in place to identify and respond to suspected abuse or neglect.
6. The College ensures there are procedures to deal with an allegation involving a staff member (refer to the College's Sexual Abuse Policy for more information).
7. Any external organisation that has a contracting and/or funding arrangement with the College must provide a copy of their Child Protection Policy to the Headmaster.
8. Any external organisation that has a contracting and/or funding arrangement with the College must adhere to the St Peter's College Child Safety Policy, including police checks of employees.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Signed: .....  
Chairperson (on behalf of the Board of Trustees)

Next Review Date: May 2024

# Procedures to be followed in applying the College's Child Safety Policy

1. This policy applies to all staff employed, Board members, contractors with, or people volunteering to, St Peter's College.
2. Staff employed, contracted to, or people volunteering have varying levels of contact with children depending on their role. Staff may have:
  - a. Regular, unsupervised access to children.
  - b. Contact with children where other adults are present.
  - c. Little or no contact with children.

## Definitions

### Physical Abuse

1. Any acts that may result in the physical harm of a child or young person.
2. 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 (see Sexual Abuse Policy)

### Emotional Abuse

1. Any act or omission that results in adverse or impaired psychological, social, intellectual and emotional functioning or development. This can include:
  - a. Patterns of isolation, degradation, constant criticism or negative comparison to others.
  - b. Isolating, corrupting, exploiting or terrorising a child can also be emotional abuse.
  - c. Exposure to family/whanāu or intimate partner violence.

### Neglect

1. 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:
  - a. Physical (not providing the necessities of life, like a warm place, food and clothing).
  - b. Emotional (not providing comfort, attention and love).
  - c. Neglectful supervision (leaving children without someone safe looking after them).
  - d. Medical neglect (not taking care of health needs).
  - e. Educational neglect (allowing chronic truancy, failure to enrol in education or inattention to education needs).

## Procedures and Guidelines

### Training

1. We are committed to maintaining and increasing staff awareness of how to prevent, recognise and respond to abuse through appropriate training. As part of their induction, new staff are made aware of the policy on child protection.

### Identifying Child Abuse and Neglect

1. Our approach to identifying abuse or neglect is guided by the following principles:
  - a. We understand that every situation is different and it's important to consider all available information about the child and their environment before reaching conclusions. For example, behavioural concerns may be the result of life events, such as divorce, accidental injury, the arrival of a new sibling etc.
  - b. We understand when we are concerned a child is showing signs of potential abuse or neglect, we should talk to the Deputy Headmaster (Pastoral) – we must not act alone.
  - c. While there are different definitions of abuse, the important thing is for us to consider overall wellbeing and the risk of harm to the child. It is not as important to be able to categorise the type of abuse or neglect.

### We Recognise the Signs Of Potential Abuse

- a. Physical signs (e.g. unexplained injuries, burns, or bruises).
- b. Developmental delays (e.g. cognitive delays, falling behind in school, poor speech and social skills).
- c. Emotional abuse/neglect (e.g. sleep problems, low self-esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness/loneliness and evidence of self-harm).
- d. Behavioural concerns (e.g. fear of a certain person or place, eating disorders/substance abuse, disengagement/neediness, aggression).
- e. The child talking about things that indicate abuse (an allegation).

### We Are Aware Of The Signs Of Potential Neglect

- a. Physical signs (e.g. looking uncared for, without appropriate clothing, underweight).
- b. Developmental delays (e.g. cognitive delays, falling behind in school, poor speech and social skills).
- c. Emotional abuse/neglect (e.g. sleep problems, low self-esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness/loneliness and evidence of self-harm).
- d. Behavioural concerns (e.g. disengagement/ neediness, eating disorders/substance abuse, aggression).
- e. Neglectful supervision (e.g. out and about unsupervised, left alone, no safe home to return to).
- f. Medical neglect (e.g. skin disorders or other untreated medical issues).

Every situation is different and staff will consider all available information about the child and their environment before reaching conclusions. For example, behavioural concerns may be the result of life events, such as divorce, accidental injury, etc.

This organisation will always act on the recommendations of statutory agencies, including Oranga Tamariki and the Police. We will only inform families about suspected or actual abuse after we have discussed this with these agencies.

When we respond to suspected child abuse or any concerning behaviour, we write down our observations, impressions and communications in a confidential register. This is kept separate from our other records and access will be strictly controlled by the Deputy Headmaster (Pastoral).

Staff involved in cases of suspected child abuse are entitled to have support. We will maintain knowledge of such individuals, agencies and organisations in the community that provide support.

### Confidentiality And Information Sharing

1. We will seek advice from Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police before identifying information about an allegation is shared with anyone, other than with the Headmaster.

### Child Safe Practice Guidelines

1. To avoid situations where staff may be alone with children, all staff should examine the opportunities or possible situations where staff may be alone with children.
2. Wherever possible, an open door policy for all spaces should be used (excluding toilets).
3. Staff should be aware of where all children are at all times.
4. Visitors should be monitored at all times by staff and volunteers and outside instructors should be monitored by staff.
5. If activities require one-to-one physical contact (i.e. classes in swimming, weights etc), parents should be advised.
6. Where a child or young person requires assistance, if possible involve the parents/caregivers and outside agencies to assist. If this assistance is not available, ensure that the staff members are aware of the appropriate procedures when giving assistance.
7. Staff should avoid being alone when transporting a child, unless an emergency requires it.
8. Except in an emergency, children are not to be taken from College premises, or from the programme we provide, without written parental consent.

9. When disclosure of abuse or neglect is made:
  - a. Listen to the child.
  - b. Reassure the child.
  - c. Ask open-ended prompts – e.g. “What happened next?”
10. If the child is visibly distressed, provide appropriate reassurance and re-engage in appropriate activities under supervision until they are able to participate in ordinary activities. If the child is not in immediate danger, re-involve the child in ordinary activities and explain what you are going to do next. Involve the Deputy Headmaster (Pastoral) as soon as possible.

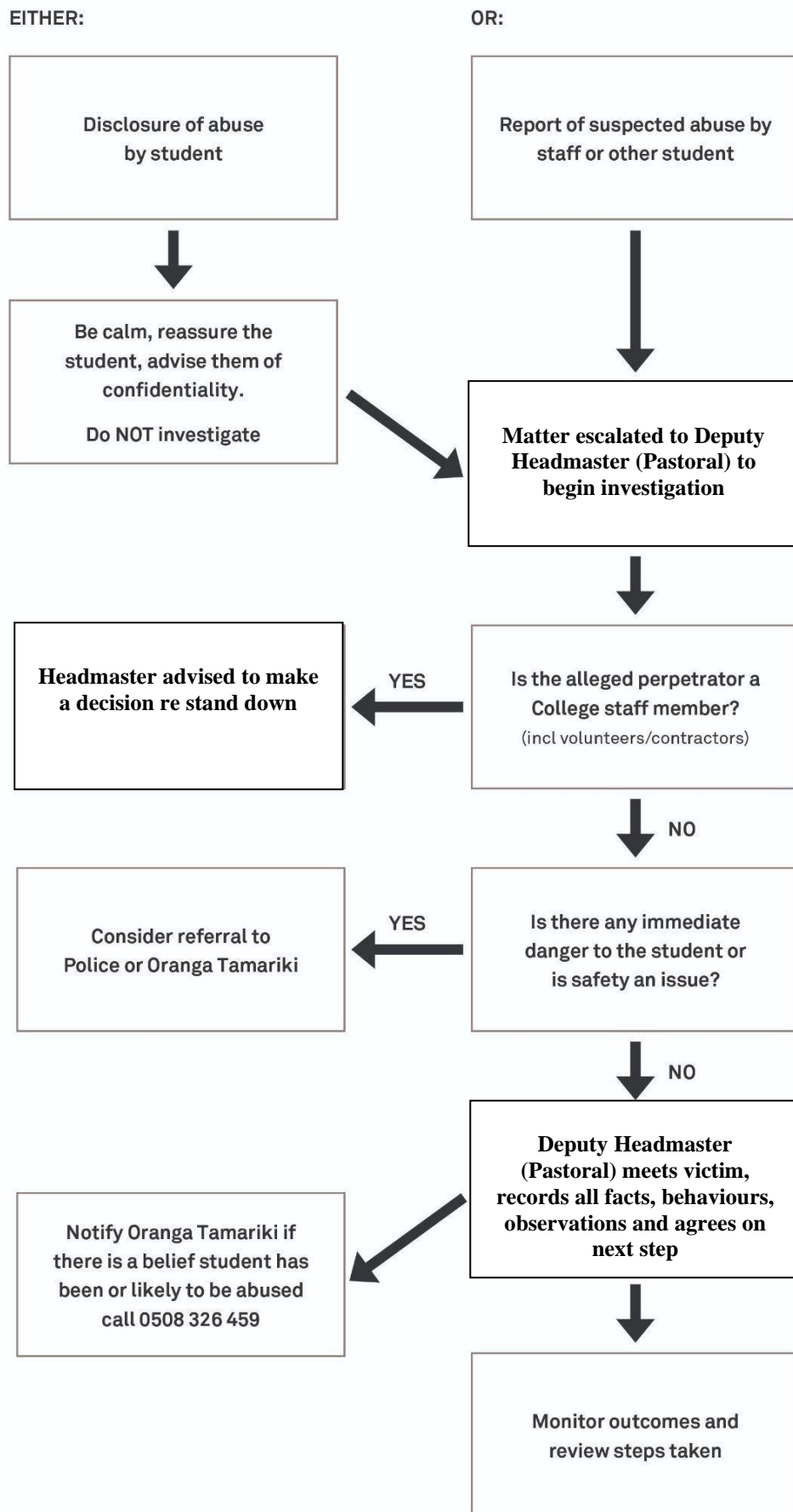
#### Responding To Instances Where Abuse Or Neglect Is Suspected

1. All staff have a responsibility to keep children safe and have a role in reporting concerns of potential or actual abuse. Any person may report suspected abuse to the Deputy Headmaster Pastoral. This includes, but is not limited to, staff, students, Board, contractors, visitors, wider College families and members of the general public.
  - a. An established process in a flow chart form is shown below – see *reporting process*.
  - b. All suspicions of, or reports of abuse and neglect will be referred to the Deputy Headmaster (Pastoral)
  - c. It is **not** the responsibility of staff to investigate any allegations of child abuse.
  - d. If there is strong primary evidence that abuse has been, or is occurring, Deputy Headmaster (Pastoral) will take measures to protect the child.
  - e. If the child is in immediate danger, the Deputy Headmaster (Pastoral) will contact the Police immediately, and as soon as possible formally record the allegation.

#### When An Allegation Is Made Against A Member Of Staff

1. All matters involving allegations against staff need to be escalated to the Headmaster. To ensure the child is kept safe, the Headmaster may take steps to remove the staff member against whom an allegation has been made from the environment, subject to the requirements of the applicable individual or collective employment contract and relevant employment law.

## Reporting Process



## Recruitment Safety Checking

1. Employee safety checks include:
  - a. identity verification
  - b. police vetting
  - c. reference checks
  - d. employment verification checks
  - e. checks with professional registration bodies or licensing authorities
  - f. interviews
  - g. a risk assessment that considers specific child safety related risk.
2. It is a requirement that personal identity and qualifications are verified by College pre-employment.

### Contractors

1. Vetting could already form part of Site Specific Safety Plan, which requires that a contractor may already have been police vetted if the work is a major project.
2. Police vetting will occur for contractors who will have unsupervised access to students at school.

### Volunteers

1. Volunteers don't need to be safety checked under the *Vulnerable Children Act 2014*. The position of College is that casual volunteers won't be vetted or safety checked unless that person is to have unsupervised and/or **overnight access to children**.

## Staff Conduct

1. Staff are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with pastoral values of St Peter's College. It is recognised that relationships between adults and children is not one between equals therefore there is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable children.
2. Adults are expected to ensure their unequal balance of power is not used for improper relationships or to create harm. There is the expectation that our staff maintain appropriate professional boundaries and shun interactions which could be viewed as questionable by others.