

Child Protection Policy

Category:	<i>Company Wide</i>	Approval date:	<i>March 2023</i>
Last Reviewed:	<i>August 2016</i>	Next Review	<i>February 2026</i>

Authorised by: *Chief Executive*

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people under the age of 18 years. Vision College Limited (Vision College) will work with staff and students to provide guidance on the identification of suspected child abuse or neglect. This policy outlines the processes by which suspected child abuse may be prevented and reported.

Scope:

This policy applies to:

- a) All Vision College staff members engaged directly with children and young people
- b) Any contractors who come in contact with children and young people on campus

Note: Volunteers will not need to be safety checked or police vetted under the Children's Act 2014 or the Education and Training Act 2020. Vision College can choose whether to safety check volunteers that support children and young people under the age of 18 years.

Policy Statement:

Vision College is committed to keeping children and young people safe. To support this commitment, Vision College will comply with the Children Act 2014 and all relevant legislation. Vision College will put in place procedures, resources and training to create a safe environment.

Principles:

The guiding principles for this policy are:

- a) The interest, safety and wellbeing of children and young people is always the paramount consideration in the process for notifying abuse or neglect
- b) All staff who provide a service to children or young people will undergo safety checks in line with the legislative requirements
- c) All staff who provide a service to children or young people are able to identify the signs of potential abuse or neglect, and are able to take appropriate action in response. Any actions taken will be in line with Vision College's policy, procedures and training
- d) A commitment to share information in a timely way and to discuss any concerns about children or young people with their Manager without fear of reprisal.

Guidelines and Procedures:

1. Staff Awareness

All staff who provide a service to children or young people will be made aware of the Vision College Child Protection Policy and Procedures

2. Safety Checks

- a) Safety checks will be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the New Zealand Police, Children's Act 2014, and the Education and Training Act 2020
- b) Staff safety checking may include police vetting and references checking
- c) Safety checking is carried out prior to employment and/or at regular intervals during employment

- d) The New Zealand Police Vetting Service Request and Consent Form (VSRC Form) is to be completed, and can be downloaded from the NZ Police website:
[Forms and Guides - NZ Police Vetting Service website](#)
- e) Police vetting will be carried out with the signed consent of the person being vetted. Consent is provided by completing the VSRC Form
- f) The VSRC Form will be submitted by the CEO's nominee through the NZ Police Vetting online service
- g) The Police Vetting Report will be reviewed by the CEO and in their absence, the General Manager (GM) or the Quality Manager (QM) when received. A Police Vetting Report will provide information regarding any convictions, dates of those convictions, types of offences and the sentence imposed. The report will advise whether the Police recommend that an individual does not have access to children and young people due to behaviour of a violent or sexual nature
- h) The CEO, GM or QM will determine whether to approve or decline the above access to the person vetted, or determine what conditions will be placed on access. A register of the outcome will be maintained
- i) Vision College will inform the person vetted of the final decision if this involves declined access to children and young people, or conditions with access, or concerns regarding the access
- j) Vision College will carry out safety checks every two to three years, at the discretion of the CEO or their nominee, for a person continuing in a role which involves child contact
- k) Vision College will store the safety check or police vetting information documentation securely.

3. Identifying and Responding to Child Abuse or Neglect

Information on the identification and response to suspected child abuse is available from Child Matters website: <https://www.childmatters.org.nz/>

4. Reporting Child Abuse

- a) Where a staff member or student is concerned for the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person, that staff member or student must immediately report the matter to the appropriate Manager
- b) The CEO will be notified where child abuse has been carried out by a staff member
- c) Vision College will notify the following agencies promptly if there is a belief that a child or young person has been, or is likely to be abused or neglected:
 - 1) The New Zealand Police
 - 2) Oranga Tamariki (Ministry for Children)

Privacy and Confidentiality

All personal information collected and actions taken will be treated with appropriate care to maintain confidentiality. The collection, use and storage of personal information will comply with the Children's Act 2014 and the Privacy Act 2020. Information will only be shared where there is good reason to do so, such as where there is a serious risk to the child's health and safety.

References

- Children Act 2014
- Privacy Act 2020
- Education and Training Act 2020
- Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021
- Health Information Privacy Code 2020
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 (Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989)
- Human Rights Act 1993
- 'Keeping Children Safe' Poster (for Campus H&S Notice Board)

Records:

Policies will be kept in this location:

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Amendments to this Policy

Vision College reserves the right to change this Policy from time to time.

Disclaimer:

Vision College reserves the right to change or replace this policy at any time. Where there is a dispute with regards to the interpretation of this policy or any part thereof, Vision College reserves the right to clarify the intention and meaning of this policy. The clarification as provided by Vision College will be seen as the final decision on the interpretation of this policy.