

# Child Protection Policy

## Contents

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. General Principles .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. What is the scope of this policy? .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4. What does the Experience Wellington Child Protection Policy do? .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>5. Definitions .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>6. Policy .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>7. Creating a Safe Place (Prevention and Minimisation of Risk).....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>8. Responding and Reporting.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>9. Breaches of this Policy .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>10. Training.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>11. Relevant Legislation .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>12. Related Policies .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>13. Review .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Appendix 1: Definition of Child Abuse .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Appendix 2: Responding to Observations, Allegations and Disclosures of Abuse .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Appendix 3: Reporting Procedures - Guidelines for Staff .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Appendix 4: Dealing with Allegations made against Members of Staff Regarding Inappropriate Actions with Children – Procedure .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Appendix 5: Safe Practices for Working with Children.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Appendix 6: Dealing with Lost or Unaccompanied Children – Guidelines for Staff.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Appendix 7: Responsibilities of Teachers, Group Leaders, Parents and Carers of Children Visiting Experience Wellington Institutions, Programmes or Events .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Appendix 8: Child Protection Reporting Form .....</b>	<b>16</b>

## 1. Introduction

Under the Vulnerable Children Act 2014<sup>1</sup>, providers of services to schools, children and their families are required to have a child protection policy that meets criteria outlined by Ministry for Vulnerable Children Oranga Tamariki.

Therefore, Experience Wellington must:

- Adopt a written policy containing provisions on identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect.
- Make the policy available on a website maintained by Experience Wellington<sup>2</sup>.
- Ensure that every contract for the provision of services to children requires the adoption of child protection policies by the individual(s) or organisations party to the agreement.
- Review the policy every three years.

*Further detail and supporting information and resources about child protection policies and safer recruitment can be found on the Children's Action Plan website.*<sup>3</sup>

## 2. General Principles

At Experience Wellington:

- The welfare of children and young people is important.
- All children and young people have the right to be safe when they engage with Experience Wellington.
- People working for Experience Wellington are supported to work safely with children and young people.

## 3. What is the scope of this policy?

The Child Protection Policy pertains to our "staff" i.e. those working at or with Experience Wellington to provide services to children. This includes employees, contactors, consultants, associates and volunteers working on a full time, part time, casual, temporary, paid or unpaid basis and includes visiting professionals. **See Section 5: Definitions.**

Please note that this policy does not cover health and safety matters. These are covered in Experience Wellington's specific Health and Safety Policy<sup>4</sup>.

## 4. What does the Experience Wellington Child Protection Policy do?

This policy:

- Outlines the standards of behaviour relating to children by which all staff will abide.
- Describes the action to be taken by Experience Wellington and its staff to:
  - Keep children, staff and contractors safe from harm.
  - Prevent/minimise the risk of abuse of children while they are engaging with Experience Wellington and its staff.
  - Report any suspicion of any form of abuse or ill-treatment.
  - Respond to actual incidents of abuse, complaints, allegations or disclosure of abuse.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2014/0040/latest/whole.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://experiencewellington.org.nz/our-education-experiences/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://childrensactionplan.govt.nz/whats-new/childrens-workforce-guidelines-available/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://intranet/policies/health-and-safety/>

## 5. Definitions

**“Carer”** for the purposes of this policy is given the same definition as “supervising adult” below.

**“Child”** means anyone under the age of 14 years, **“Young person”** means anyone of or over the age of 14 years but under 18 years; but does not include any person who is or has been married or in a civil union (Children, Young Person, and Their Families Act 1989, Section 2). In this policy “child” is considered inclusive of “young person”.

**“Child Abuse”** is defined by The Children, Young Persons and their Families Act, 1989, as “...the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person”. A full definition appears in Appendix 1.

**“Engage with”** relates to people visiting an institution or public event run by Experience Wellington or who are interacting with Experience Wellington and its staff online, outreach or touring programmes.

**“Parent”** for the purposes of this policy is given the same definition as “supervising adult” below.

**“Staff”** means people working at Experience Wellington and includes employees, contactors, consultants, associates and volunteers whether working on a full time, part time, casual, temporary, paid or unpaid basis and includes professionals visiting from other agencies, working with Experience Wellington.

**“Staff who have direct and/or frequent contact with children”** means learning and programmes team members and some contractors, and visitor services hosts.

**“Supervising adult”** of a child or children means a responsible adult i.e. an accompanying parent, guardian, relative, family friend, carer, teacher, group or tour leader, and/or any adult acting as “parentis in loci”. For example, this could be a teacher leading a trip and remaining with a group, or an Experience Wellington staff member or contractor during a holiday programme where children are left by caregivers.

## 6. Policy

1. Experience Wellington will take all practicable steps to ensure the safety of children engaging with it.
2. The primary responsibility for the welfare of children and young people engaging with Experience Wellington rests with the supervising adult. All children under the age of 12 engaging with us are required to be under the care of a supervising adult – this may be a visiting teacher or caregiver. For children aged 12-14 Experience Wellington discretion applies – see Appendix 6. In certain circumstances, such as a holiday programme where caregivers are not present, an Experience Wellington staff member or contractor may become the supervising adult.
3. Experience Wellington staff work together using the procedure in Appendix 3 to respond appropriately to any child protection issues. Reporting suspected cases to external authorities will only be done by a Director in consultation with the Chief Executive after checking all relevant information.
4. Experience Wellington will **NOT** investigate allegations, complaints or disclosures but will refer them to the Ministry for Vulnerable Children Oranga Tamariki<sup>5</sup> or the police, and co-operate fully with their investigations and assessments.
5. Any sexual activity between an adult and child or young person will be regarded as a criminal offence and if this involves a staff member it will always be a matter for disciplinary action which may result in dismissal.
6. If there is a complaint using Experience Wellington’s customer complaint process or another channel which constitutes an allegation that raises a child protection issue, this will be referred directly to the relevant Director who will following the process outlined in Appendix 3.

## 7. Creating a Safe Place (Prevention and Minimisation of Risk)

Experience Wellington will ensure that:

1. The appointment of staff to positions that have direct and/or frequent contact with children or young people is conditional on a satisfactory police check, updated every five years.
2. If an appointee has periods of longer than 6 months working overseas in the last ten years, they will be responsible for providing a police check from the countries in which those periods of work took place.

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.mvcot.govt.nz/>

3. Any contractor working for Experience Wellington who is required to have direct and/or frequent contact with children or young people will be required to provide a satisfactory police check for themselves and/or any staff and sub-contractors, as a condition of their contractual arrangements.
4. Experience Wellington reserves the right to rescind any job or contract offers if a police check reveals undeclared previous or pending convictions.
5. All staff and contractors are aware of the Child Protection Policy and associated procedures and guidelines.
6. All staff are trained to respond appropriately to situations which may present a child protection issue as appropriate to their potential work related contact with children and young persons.
7. Anyone working for Experience Wellington is not placed in situations where they are in sole charge of a child or group of children under the age of 14, or assisting with the toileting or intimate care of children.
8. Anyone working for Experience Wellington, customers and other relevant parties have access to this policy.
9. Teachers, group leaders and other primary carers have access to information about Experience Wellington's expectations and their responsibilities regarding child protection.

## **8. Responding and Reporting**

A procedure for responding and reporting is outlined in Appendix 3 (*Receiving and Reporting Allegations of Abuse – Procedure*). Experience Wellington will ensure that staff and contractors are aware of the Child Protection Policy procedures and guidelines and their roles and responsibilities.

The following staff have specific responsibilities under this policy and procedure:

### ***Director Children and Young People***

- Work with the Executive Leadership Team to monitor the operation of this policy and related procedures and guidelines, and review as needed to meet changes to legislation and ensure consistency of practice.
- In consultation with the Executive Leadership Team identify training and development opportunities for staff, volunteers and contractors as appropriate.
- Develop and maintain a secure file structure for recording issues and responses.
- Support staff who are managing issues covered by this policy.
- Establish a links with relevant local agencies to ensure clear and effective communication.

### ***Directors***

- Ensure that all staff expected to have direct and/or frequent contact with children or young people receive relevant training, are aware of, and meet their responsibilities.
- In consultation with the Director Children and Young People or Chief Executive decide whether to refer any incident that may be considered child abuse to the Ministry for Vulnerable Children Oranga Tamariki and/or the police.
- Expeditiously and sensitively manage allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against staff, working with the Director Children and Young People or Chief Executive to ensure that all relevant Human Resources policies and procedures are followed.
- Ensure that the Chief Executive is kept informed about any incident and the process being followed. The Chief Executive will keep the Board advised and decide whether Council should also be informed.

### ***Managers***

- Ensure that staff expected to have direct and/or frequent contact with children or young people receive relevant training and are made aware of, and have access to, relevant policy and associated guidelines and procedures.
- Ensure that all staff who have direct and/or frequent contact with children have been appropriately police checked, trained, and are aware of the response and reporting procedures.
- Report all incidents to their Director. If their Director is unavailable, the incident should be reported to the Director Children and Young People or Chief Executive.
- Expeditiously and sensitively manage allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against staff ensuring that all relevant policies and procedures are followed.

### ***Experience Wellington Staff***

#### **Experience Wellington Child Protection Policy**

Approved by the Board: 28 July 2017 – Last Updated: 22 July 2019

- Meet all professional and legal obligations to children and young people and follow the policy, procedures and guidelines.
- Respond appropriately to lost or unaccompanied children or observations of abuse, complaints and disclosures, according to the following:
  - Responding to Observations, Allegations & Disclosures of Abuse (Appendix 2)
  - Reporting Procedures – Guidelines for Staff (Appendix 3)
    - Witnessing Abuse (Appendix 3: A)
    - Receiving and Reporting a Child’s Allegations or Disclosure of Abuse (Appendix 3: B)
  - Dealing with Lost or Unaccompanied Children – Guidelines For Staff (Appendix 6)
  - Report all incidents to their supervisor/Duty Manager who refers the matter to an appropriate Director or the Chief Executive.
  - Recognise that it is NOT the responsibility of Experience Wellington staff or contractors to investigate suspicions, complaints or disclosures.

## **9. Breaches of this Policy**

Staff, volunteers, contractors and professionals visiting from other agencies who are working with Experience Wellington who have direct and/or frequent contact with children or young people must be familiar with this policy. Breaches of this policy will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken which may include a disciplinary process that could result in dismissal.

## **10. Training**

All staff who have direct or frequent contact with children and young people in the course of their work will be given appropriate training covering basic awareness of child abuse and protection. This will include understanding and following roles and responsibility of staff regarding child protection; responding to concerns of potential abuse, allegations, complaints or disclosures of child abuse; and following the procedures for reporting a concern.

## **11. Relevant Legislation**

Children, Young Person, and Their Families Act 1989

Crimes Act 1961

Privacy Act 1993 (Section 11)

Summary Offences Act 1981

UN Convention of the Rights of the Child

Vulnerable Children Act 2014

## **12. Related Policies**

Health & Safety Policy

Recruitment Policy

## **13. Review**

The Director, Children and Young People will initiate a review of this policy every three years or more frequently as needed.

## **Appendix 1: Definition of Child Abuse**

The Children, Young Persons and their Families Act, 1989, defines child abuse as "...the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person".

The definitions set out below provide some indicators of abuse and these should not be seen as an exhaustive list or as a check list.

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is a non-accidental act on a child that results in physical harm. This includes, but is not limited to, beating, hitting, shaking, burning, drowning, suffocating, biting, poisoning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse also involves the fabrication or inducing of illness.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effect on the child's emotional development. This can include a pattern of rejecting, degrading, ignoring, isolating, corrupting, exploiting or terrorising a child. It may also include age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It also includes the seeing or hearing the ill treatment of others.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities (penetrative and non-penetrative, for example, rape, kissing, touching, masturbation) as well as non-contact acts such as involving children in the looking at or production of sexual images, sexual activities and sexual behaviours.

Staff should be aware of their 'duty of care' which precludes developing a sexual relationship with or grooming of a child. A sexual relationship between an adult and a child will always be wrong, unequal and unacceptable.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, causing long term serious harm to the child's health or development. It may also include neglect of a child's basic or emotional needs. Neglect is a lack of: provision of care, appropriate action, support of emotional or basic needs.

## **Appendix 2: Responding to Observations, Allegations and Disclosures of Abuse**

There are a number of ways or situations where concerns or allegations of abuse might be raised. Staff should be alert and aware of the fact that a range of situations could give rise to concerns about child protection.

These could include:

- A staff member may hear or observe something about the child or their behaviour that causes them concern.
- A staff member may witness an incident which raises child protection concerns.
- There may be a report from colleagues.
- An allegation or complaint may be made to a staff member, through the complaints process or anonymous report.
- A child or young person making a direct disclosure.
- A child may make an indirect disclosure e.g. through written or art work or through friends.
- Information may be reported to a member of staff.

Do not deal with observations, allegations or disclosures alone. Consult your manager or a duty manager who will follow the appropriate guidelines and contact the relevant Director as appropriate.

### **Handling Situations in which the Child is in Immediate Danger of Further Harm:**

If there is concern about the immediate safety of a child or young person or anyone else involved you should follow your institutional protocol for dealing with an immediate threat to visitor safety.

### **Handling Situations in which the Child is not in Immediate Danger of Further Harm but Abuse (see Appendix 1) is Suspected:**

In circumstances where there is not a danger of immediate harm but abuse is suspected, inform Oranga Tamariki.

See **Appendix 3** for reporting procedures and guidelines for dealing with hearing/ observing something that raises child protection concerns; and guidelines for dealing with children's direct or indirect allegations/ disclosures.

## Appendix 3: Reporting Procedures - Guidelines for Staff

All concerns of potential abuse must be brought to the attention of the Duty Manager/Supervisor as soon as possible. This applies whether or not these relate to incidents prior to or while engaging with Experience Wellington and whether they relate to actions of staff or visitors. Staff reporting allegations, disclosures or concerns must accurately record in writing the facts as observed or conveyed including all conversations and actions taken.

NB: Advice can be sought from the Ministry for Vulnerable Children Oranga Tamariki or the police if it is unclear if the concern that has been raised constitutes child abuse.

*The Duty Manager/ Supervisor will:*

- Respond as soon as possible to any requests for support from members of staff who are dealing with a child protection issue.
- Involve the police if there is a situation in which a child is in immediate danger of further harm.
- Support the reporting staff member to compile a report using the form in **Appendix 8** including any other relevant material, for example CCTV footage.
- Make their Director, the Director, Children & Young People or, if neither are available, the Chief Executive aware of the situation as soon as possible.
- Establish and manage a confidential incident file for all material relevant to the incident if neither a Director nor the Chief Executive are available.
- Provide appropriate feedback on the outcome to the staff member reporting the event.

*The Director will:*

- Ensure that the police have been informed if there is a situation in which a child is in immediate danger of further harm.
- Establish and manage a confidential incident file to keep all material relevant to the incident.
- Ensure that with the reporting staff member has completed a report using the form in **Appendix 8** and all relevant supporting material has been captured.
- Using the report and any supporting material, work with the Director, Children & Young People/ Chief Executive to decide an appropriate course of action i.e. has the child in question has been abused (see **Appendix 1**)?
- Involve the Ministry for Vulnerable Children Oranga Tamariki where applicable i.e. the child is not in immediate danger of further harm but abuse (see **Appendix 1**) is suspected.
- Ensure that all appropriate steps have been taken as per this policy. This may include identifying the child's supervising adult if appropriate.
- Record in writing any decision not to proceed with notifying the Ministry for Vulnerable Children Oranga Tamariki or the police, and the reason and ensure this is placed on the incident file.

### Keeping the Child's Supervising Adult Informed and Involved

The supervising adult of the child will usually be informed of concerns by the Director. Any decision not to initially inform the supervising adult and the reason for it will be recorded in writing and placed on the incident file. Reasons for not initially informing the supervising adult may include:

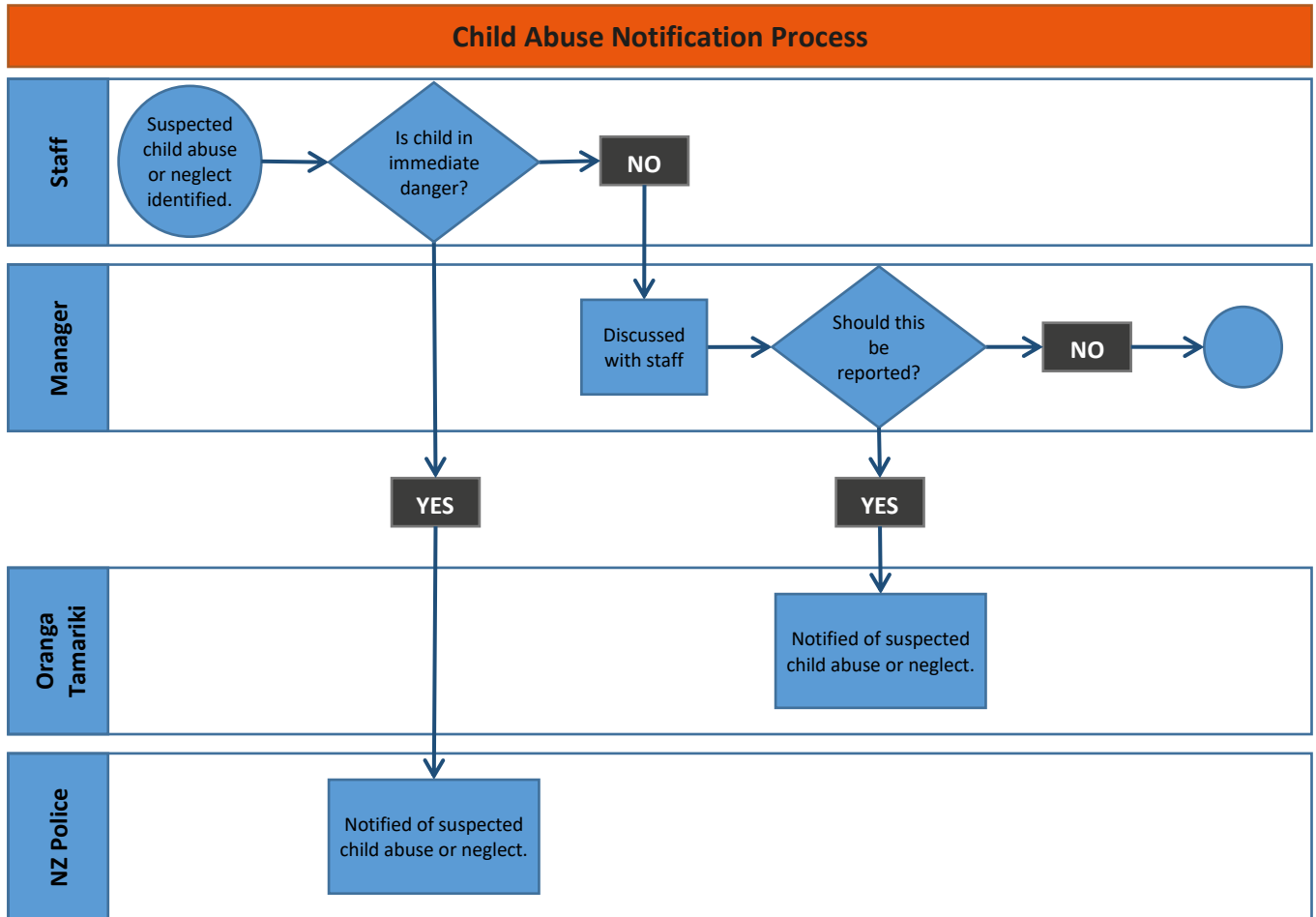
- The supervising adult is the alleged perpetrator.
- It is possible that the child may be intimidated into silence.
- There is a strong likelihood that evidence will be destroyed.



## A. Witnessing Abuse – Procedure

The guideline for safely responding to observations of abuse is set out below as per recommendations from the Ministry of Justice Child Protection Policy 2015.

Please refer to Appendix 1 to see definitions of abuse that should be reported to the police or the Ministry for Vulnerable Children Oranga Tamariki.



## **B. Receiving and Reporting a Child's Allegations or Disclosure of Abuse – Procedure**

There are a number of ways or situations where concerns or allegations of abuse might be raised. Staff should be alert and aware of the fact that a range of situations could give rise to concerns about child protection.

These could include:

- An allegation or complaint may be made to a staff member, through the complaints process or anonymous report.
- A child or young person making a direct disclosure.
- A child may make an indirect disclosure e.g. through written or art work or through friends.
- Information may be reported to a member of staff.

### **Safely Handling Disclosures from a Child**

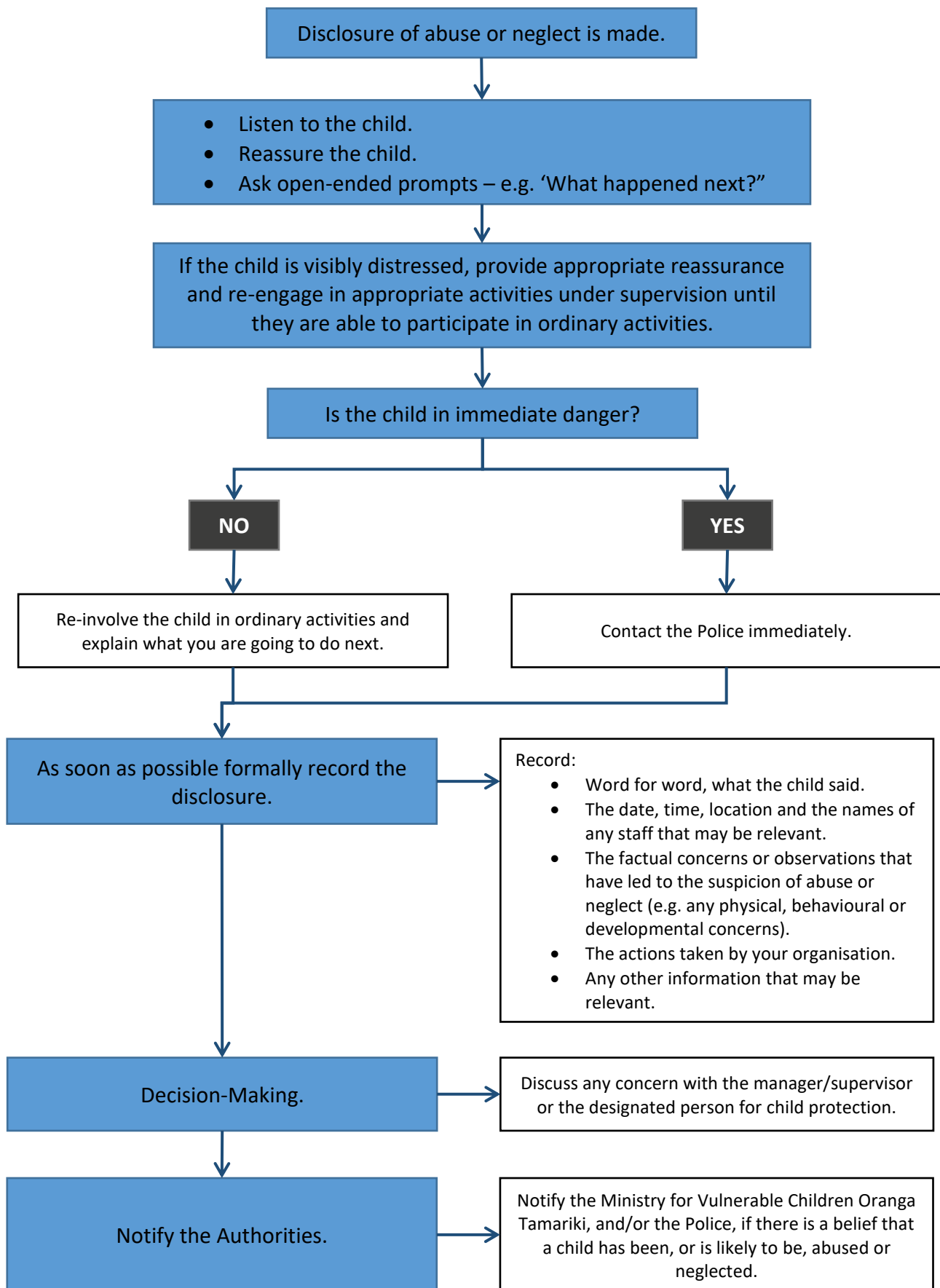
Remember that making a disclosure or a complaint against someone in a position of power and authority is always difficult. The child may reconsider and express a wish to retract their allegation. At the outset it must be clearly communicated with the child and any adults that their concern is being taken seriously and will be responded to in accordance with Experience Wellington's Child Protection Policy.

It is important that you take what the child says seriously. This applies irrespective of the setting, or your own opinion on what the child is saying. If a child discloses information regarding actual or suspected child abuse:

- Stay calm - If a child sees that you are upset or not able to cope with what they are telling you they may not continue to tell you what has been happening or take back the original statements they have made.
- Listen and remember: do not ask questions.
- Give time to the child to say what they want without interrupting.
- Reassure him/her it was OK to tell.
- Tell the child that they are being taken seriously and that they are not to blame.
- Explain that you have to pass on to appropriate authorities what the child has told them as soon as you are aware that the child is making a disclosure.
- Give an age-appropriate explanation to the child of what the child can expect to happen next.
- Record in writing the circumstances that prompted the disclosure and what was said as soon as possible, preferably immediately, using the child's own words where possible. Also record any input or action taken by you. Include the date, time and place and who was present.
- While it would be of use to have some contact details, asking a list of questions will be daunting for the child so instead just glean and record what the child tells you (for instance their name, suburb school, first name of adult involved).
- As soon as possible contact the Supervisor/Duty Manager who can provide you with support to deal with the disclosure, notification of the Ministry for Vulnerable Children Oranga Tamariki, the police and management of actions arising from the disclosure.
- You must not:
  - Indicate that you disbelieve the child. Your facial expressions and your tone of voice are as important as what you say to the child.
  - Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily.
  - Try to correct, confront, change, challenge or influence what they say.
  - Promise to keep secrets.
  - Enquire in to the details of the alleged abuse.
  - Ask leading questions or ask questions in a way that introduces words, phrases, people's names or concepts.
  - Under no circumstances should you deal with the problem alone or attempt to conduct an investigation.

The guideline for safely responding to children's allegations and disclosures of abuse is set out below as per recommendations from the Children's Action Plan.

# Guideline for Safely Responding to Allegations and Disclosures of Abuse



## **Appendix 4: Dealing with Allegations made against Members of Staff Regarding Inappropriate Actions with Children – Procedure**

Allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against staff (including includes employees, contactors, consultants, associates and volunteers whether working on a full time, part time, casual, temporary, paid or unpaid basis and includes professionals visiting from other agencies, working with Experience Wellington) must be taken seriously and reported to the Duty Manager/ Supervisor as soon as possible.

Experience Wellington should deal with a complaint immediately, sensitively and expediently within the procedures outlined in this Section.

It is **NOT** the responsibility of any staff member to investigate allegations of child abuse; any investigation will be undertaken by the Ministry for Vulnerable Children Oranga Tamariki or the police.

If the police decide to undertake a criminal investigation then any member of staff against whom allegations have been made may be suspended, without prejudice, as a precautionary measure. It is important that no internal investigation is undertaken, and no evidence gathered that might prejudice the criminal investigation.

If there is insufficient evidence to pursue a criminal prosecution, then a disciplinary investigation may still be undertaken if there is "reasonable cause to suspect" that abuse may have occurred. The allegation may represent inappropriate behaviour of poor practice by a member of staff which needs to be considered under internal disciplinary procedures.

The Chief Executive will provide advice on any action to be taken in response to allegations against Experience Wellington staff. Appropriate disciplinary action will be pursued, and may result in dismissal.

## **Appendix 5: Safe Practices for Working with Children**

Adults should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. Adults who work with children must therefore act in a way that is considered to be safe practice.

The giving of gifts or rewards to children or young people should be part of a plan agreed with a line manager for supporting positive behaviour or recognising particular achievements.

Communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phone, text or other messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites, social networking and blogs. Adults should not share any personal information with a child or young person. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child or young person other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Written consent from the supervising adult must be sought for all photographs taken of children or young people, whether they are intended for internal or external use. A child's permission should also be obtained should they be of an age to provide their permission. Only the child's first name should be used in any text.

Do not engage in unwarranted physical contact with a child or young person. This includes any 'rough and tumble' or 'horseplay'. Do not physically restrain a child or young person except in exceptional circumstances i.e. to prevent injury or damage to property. At all times you must use the minimum restraint necessary.

When physical contact is made with a child this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. For example, some physical contact might occur as part of a dance or theatre programme. Adults should use their professional judgement at all times, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the child for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Plan to ensure that there are other staff within the vicinity or other supervising adults present when working with children. Avoid being in a closed area by yourself with a child.

Never accompany children to the toilet facilities or administer any intimate or personal care of the child or children. A supervising adult such as a teacher must be asked to do this.

Recognise that it is not your role to decide on or investigate concerns, allegations or complaints.

It is your role to:

- Pass on any concerns, allegations or complaints to a Manager or an appropriate Director or the Chief Executive.
- Consistently apply these safe working practices guidelines and to advise your manager, Director or the Chief Executive if you observe instances of non-compliance.

## **Appendix 6: Dealing with Lost or Unaccompanied Children – Guidelines for Staff**

### **Lost Children**

A lost child is defined as one who has become separated from their supervising adult who is currently onsite or at an event or programme. They may identify themselves to staff, be found upset or distressed or a concern is raised by a member of staff.

In the event of a child being lost, staff will:

- Reassure the child that staff will assist in finding the supervising adult.
- Ask the child for a description of their supervising adult.
- Contact the Duty Manager/ Supervisor with information including name, age and description of child, where the child was found, name and description of supervising adult.
- If the supervising adult is not located the child should be accompanied to a central, public place such as a visitor services desk. Staff in the vicinity should be informed of your intention.
- Ask the child if they know their supervising adult's phone number or a relative's contact details.
- Try ringing the supervising adult.
- If the supervising adult is not located and any attempt at phone contact is unsuccessful, then consideration must be given to contacting the police.
- If possible, once the child is located verify with the child or young person that the supervising adult is indeed who they say they are before reuniting them by asking simple questions: 'Who are you visiting with today?', 'What's their name?'. However, this may be impractical due to a child's age or ability.

A supervising adult may raise a concern that they cannot locate a child in their care. In this event staff will:

- Obtain details of the child including name, age, school, physical description, where and when the child was last seen.
- Reassure the supervising adult. Inform them that most children are found within 10 minutes.
- Ensure that a cell phone number is obtained should the supervising adult wishes to look for their child themselves.
- Inform the Duty Manager/ Supervisor.
- Walk with the supervising adult and check the area in the immediate vicinity to locate the lost child.
- Identify when a sufficient time has passed with the child not being found. Once this is identified the Supervisor/Duty Manager will inform the police in consultation with the supervising adult. Where possible staff will remain with the supervising adult until the child is found, otherwise the supervising adult will be escorted to a central point such as the visitor services desk and asked to take a seat until the child is found or the police arrive.
- If possible, once the child is located verify with the child or young person that the supervising adult is indeed who they say they are before reuniting them by asking simple questions: 'Who are you visiting with today?', 'What's their name?'. However, this may be impractical due to a child's age or ability.

### **Unaccompanied Children**

An unaccompanied child has no supervising adult onsite or with them at a programme or event. If the child is under the age of 12 this child is considered to be abandoned with no provision for adequate supervision. Children under the age of 12 are required to be under the care of a supervising adult – this may be a visiting teacher or caregiver. For children aged 12-14 Experience Wellington discretion applies.

If it comes to the attention of a staff member that a child may be unaccompanied the staff member should:

- Ask the child for contact details of their supervising adult.
- Contact the Duty Manager/ Supervisor who will make every effort to contact the supervising adult. If contact is successful then an arrangement must be made for the prompt collection of the child. Should contact with a supervising adult or other identified adult be unsuccessful then the police will be notified.
- Explain to the child that every effort is being made to identify an appropriate supervising adult to collect the child.
- If a supervising adult cannot be located in a reasonable time, then the police should be informed and the child transferred into their care. Keep the child informed about what is happening.
- Once the supervising adult arrives to collect their child inform them that children up to the age of 14 must not be left unsupervised.

### **Unaccompanied Older Children (eg. 12 – 14 years)**

There may be times when older children do not have a responsible adult obviously in attendance. If a staff member becomes aware of this they should consider the following before following the Dealing with Lost or Unaccompanied Children – Guidelines for Staff.

- The perceived age of the children.
- Whether the children are upset or causing upset to others.
- Whether there is provision for adequate supervision (able to contact a supervising adult access to food or the means to buy it, an understanding of when they will reconnect with the supervising adult).
- Whether the child or children are regularly at Experience Wellington institutions, programmes or events without responsible adult supervision.

If the staff member is concerned they should speak to the Duty Manager/ Supervisor who will make a decision as to whether to deal with this as an unaccompanied child issue.

NB: Under New Zealand law, a child aged under 14 is not permitted to be responsible for other children.

### **Advice and Reporting**

If in doubt the Duty Manager/ Supervisor should contact a senior Manager or Director. In the case of regular visits without supervision the matter will be brought to the attention of a Director to decide whether to refer the matter to the Ministry for Vulnerable Children Oranga Tamariki or the police.

## **Appendix 7: Responsibilities of Teachers, Group Leaders, Parents and Carers of Children Visiting Experience Wellington Institutions, Programmes or Events**

### **Responsibilities of Supervising Adults**

The primary responsibility for the welfare of children visiting our institutions, programmes or events rests with the carer, guardian, teacher or other adult who brought the child – or the staff member responsible for a programme where teachers and/or caregivers are not present, such as a holiday programme. An unaccompanied child has no supervising adult onsite or with them at a programme or event. If the child is under the age of 12 this child is considered to be abandoned with no provision for adequate supervision. For children aged 12-14 Experience Wellington discretion applies (see Appendix 6).

Supervising adults are required to:

- Remain in close vicinity of their child or children during their visit.
- Report any lost child or young person to a staff member.
- Accompany children to toilet facilities or administer any intimate care.

*Experience Wellington staff and contractors should not place themselves in a situation where they are in sole charge of a child or group of children under the age of 14 or assisting with the toileting or intimate care of children.*

### **Responsibilities of Teachers or Group Leaders**

The primary responsibility for the welfare and supervision of the children and young people remains at all times with the teachers and group leaders. In bringing a group to an Experience Wellington institution, programme or event, teachers and group leaders are acknowledging that they have read and accepted these responsibilities.

Teachers and group leaders are required to:

- To book programmes and visits in advance in order to receive pre-visit information. Experience Wellington provides Risk Assessment Management documents (RAMs) to enable schools and organisations to plan their visit to ensure the safety of children in their care.
- Inform their group to observe fire evacuation and other emergency procedures.
- In the case of an accident or emergency contact a member of staff.
- Remain with their class or group in order to provide supervision and manage the behaviour and interaction of the children.
- Report any lost child or young person to a staff member.
- Accompany children to toilet facilities or administer any intimate care.

Teachers and group leaders are responsible for the behaviour of children in their care. This includes NOT:

- Eating or drinking in areas other than designated areas for school parties to eat their own refreshments.
- Having in their possession or consuming alcoholic beverages outside designated areas.
- Using illegal drugs or smoking cigarettes on Experience Wellington premises.
- Verbally or physically abuse or bully anyone, using bad language or make any sexist, racist or other offensive remarks toward any person or other group.
- Vandalising property.
- Leaving litter on Experience Wellington premises.
- Entering areas that are restricted or cordoned off.

### **Consequences of inappropriate behaviour**

In the event that a group member does not behave appropriately Experience Wellington reserves the right to refuse admission and/or ask the group to leave. Any concerns regarding the behaviour of a group member will be communicated with the teacher or group leader in charge. These concerns may also be reported directly to the school or organisation. Experience Wellington reserves the right to contact security or the police regarding concerning behaviour of a group member.

### **Child Protection Policy**

A copy of Experience Wellington's Child Protection Policy is available on our website: [www.experiencewellington.org.nz/our-education-experiences](http://www.experiencewellington.org.nz/our-education-experiences)

## Appendix 8: Child Protection Reporting Form

### RECORD OF ISSUE OR CONCERN

<b>Child's Name:</b>	
<b>Any Contact or Identifying Information Obtained:</b>	
<b>Date and Time:</b>	
<b>Notes:</b>	
<b>Is there any other supporting material accompanying this record? Please list.</b>	
<b>Action:</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Position:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	