



Northcote College
Child Protection Policy 2026

Policy Category	Date Approved	Review Schedule	Next Review
Safeguarding and Wellbeing	4 May 2026	Every three years	2029

Introduction:

This policy outlines the board's commitment to child protection and recognises the important role and responsibility of all our staff in the protection of children. It includes the board's expectations when child abuse is reported or suspected by us.

The board has an obligation to ensure the wellbeing of children in our care so they thrive, belong and achieve. 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. We will act early to support positive outcomes and reduce harm. We acknowledge that everyone in the school community shares responsibility for safeguarding children from abuse.

All staff members (including contractors and volunteers) are expected to be familiar with this policy, its associated procedures and protocols and abide by them.

Anyone who has concerns about the well-being of a child or young person or believes that a child or young person has been, or is likely to be, harmed, ill-treated, abused, (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), neglected, or deprived, must follow school procedures and may report the matter to Oranga Tamariki or the Police.

Teaching staff are required to maintain ethical and professional relationships with students that respect appropriate professional boundaries. Teachers have a professional responsibility to promote the wellbeing of students and protect them from harm. This responsibility includes remaining vigilant to concerns about student wellbeing and safety, and promptly reporting any concerns, suspicions, or allegations of abuse, neglect, or professional misconduct involving a student to the designated child protection lead(s).

Responsibilities and guidelines:

Although ultimate accountability sits with the board, the board delegates responsibility to the principal to ensure that all child safety procedures are implemented and available to all staff, contractors, volunteers and parents. Therefore, the principal must:

1. Develop appropriate procedures to meet child safety requirements as required and appropriate to the school.
2. Comply with relevant legislative requirements and responsibilities.
3. Make this policy available on the school's website or available on request.
4. Ensure that every contract, or funding arrangement, that the school enters into requires the adoption of child protection policies where required.
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 staff are able to identify the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect, deal with disclosures by children and allegations against staff members and are able to take appropriate action in response.

8. Support all staff to work in accordance with this policy, to work with partner agencies and organisations to ensure child protection policies are understood and implemented.
9. Promote a culture where staff feel confident they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal.
10. Consult, discuss and share relevant information, in line with our commitment to confidentiality and information sharing protocols, in a timely way regarding any concerns about an individual child with the board or designated person.
11. Seek advice as necessary from relevant agencies where child safety issues arise.
12. Make available professional development, resources and/or advice to ensure all staff can carry out their roles in terms of this policy.
13. Ensure that this policy forms part of the initial staff induction programme for each staff member and there are yearly reminders for all staff.

Review schedule: Every 3 years

Legislation

- Children's Act 2014
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- Children, Young Persons, and Their Families (Oranga Tamariki) Legislation Act 2017
- Privacy Act 2020
- Education and Training Act 2020

Resources

- Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga:
 - [Child protection in schools](#)
 - [School child protection policy](#)
- Oranga Tamariki | Ministry for Children:
 - [Worried about a child? Tell us](#)
 - [Safer Organisations Safer Children: Guidelines for child protection policies to build safer organisations](#)
- New Zealand Police | Nga Pirihimana o Aotearoa: [Child protection guidelines](#)
- Ministry of Social Development | Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora: [The Child and Youth Strategy 2024-2027](#)
- United Nations Human Rights: [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [Children's Action Plan guideline Safer Organisations, Safer Children](#)
- [Vulnerable Children \(Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers\) Regulations 2015](#)
- [Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand's Ngā Tikanga Matatika | The Code of Professional Responsibility](#)
- [Northcote College Staff Guidelines](#)

Updated and re-adopted May 2026

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Trina Lincoln - Presiding Member

Other related Northcote College Policies:

- Schedule of Delegated Authority

Child Protection Policy Responsibilities at Northcote College 2026

Responsibilities:	Responsibility of and action required by:
Report concerns regarding any child's safety or well-being to the Principal, Head of Counselling, Head of Deans and/or SLT and/or Oranga Tamariki or Police	All staff and volunteers
Ensure staff handbook refers to the Child Protection responsibilities of all staff and volunteers	Senior Leader i/c Staff Handbook
Wellbeing/case study meetings regarding student well-being and safety	Deans, Senior Leader i/c Student Well-being, Head of Counselling
Reporting child safety and well-being concerns to other agencies (as appropriate)	Nurses, Head of Counselling, Principal
Ensure that sports coaches and managers who are not school staff are safety checked and are aware of their responsibility to report concerns regarding any child's safety or well-being.	Senior Leader i/c Sport, Director of Sport, Sports Co-ordinator
Ensure that new staff induction includes child protection responsibilities	Senior Leader i/c induction Teacher i/c pre-service teachers
Remind all staff of child protection responsibilities at the start of every year	Principal
Ensure that every time we enter into a funding or contractual arrangement with an organisation/individual that the issue of the need for a child protection policy (for that organisation) is considered and acted upon where necessary.	Principal, Executive Officer
Identity and safety checks through the teacher registration process ie. that all teachers are registered.	Principal, Senior Leader with responsibility for relief teachers
Police vets for International Home Stays	Home Stay co-ordinator, Director of International Students
Police vets for support staff, volunteers and contractors	Executive Officer
Ensure that staff contractors and volunteers are safety checked/police vetted	Board, Principal, Senior Leaders, Executive Officer, Director of Sport
Have a Child Protection Policy and review it every three years	Northcote College Board

Definitions of abuse, neglect and harm

<https://practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/practice-approach/practice-standards/ensure-safety-and-wellbeing/definitions-of-abuse-neglect-and-harm/>

Physical abuse

Physical abuse involves situations where a tamaiti has an injury or was at serious risk of injury. The harm could be deliberate or unintentionally result from a deliberate action.

[Definition of physical abuse](#)

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is any action where a tamaiti is used for a sexual purpose

[Definition of sexual abuse](#)

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is when the mental health and social and/or emotional functioning and development of te tamaiti has been damaged by their treatment.

[Definition of emotional abuse](#)

Neglect

Neglect is failing to meet the basic needs of te tamaiti.

[Definition of neglect](#)

Serious differences

Te tamaiti can suffer serious harm when there are serious differences in the relationship between te tamaiti and their parent or caregiver, or between parents, guardians or caregivers of te tamaiti.

[Definition of serious differences](#)

Harmful behaviour

What distinguishes age-appropriate exploration from 'harmful behaviour' is the extent of the behaviour and the impact on te tamaiti.

[Definition of harmful behaviour](#)

Cumulative harm

Cumulative harm is the outcome of exposure to multiple episodes of abuse and/or neglect and/or family violence experienced by te tamaiti.

[Definition of cumulative harm](#)

Family violence

The emotional, psychological and physical wellbeing of te tamaiti can be affected when they're exposed to family violence.

[Definition of family violence](#)

Unable or unwilling to care for or have abandoned te tamaiti

Parents are sometimes unable or unwilling to care for their tamaiti.

[Definition of unable or unwilling to care for or have abandoned te tamaiti](#)