

WAITANGI LIMITED

Child Protection Policy

Statement of Commitment:

Waitangi Treaty Grounds (WTG) is committed to the prevention of abuse and to the well-being of children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families.

Purpose:

This policy is written under the principle that children and young people have a right to feel safe and comfortable at all times when engaged with WTG and its staff.

Scope:

This policy applies to all staff (whether paid or unpaid), contractors, and professionals visiting from other agencies who are working with WTG.

This policy has a particular application to any staff who during the application of their role will come into contact with children or young adults.

This policy does not cover any health and safety matters that are already covered in the Health and Safety Policy nor does it negate any other policies, obligations, or laws.

Definitions:

A list of definitions can be found in Appendix 1 at the end of this document.

Responsibilities:

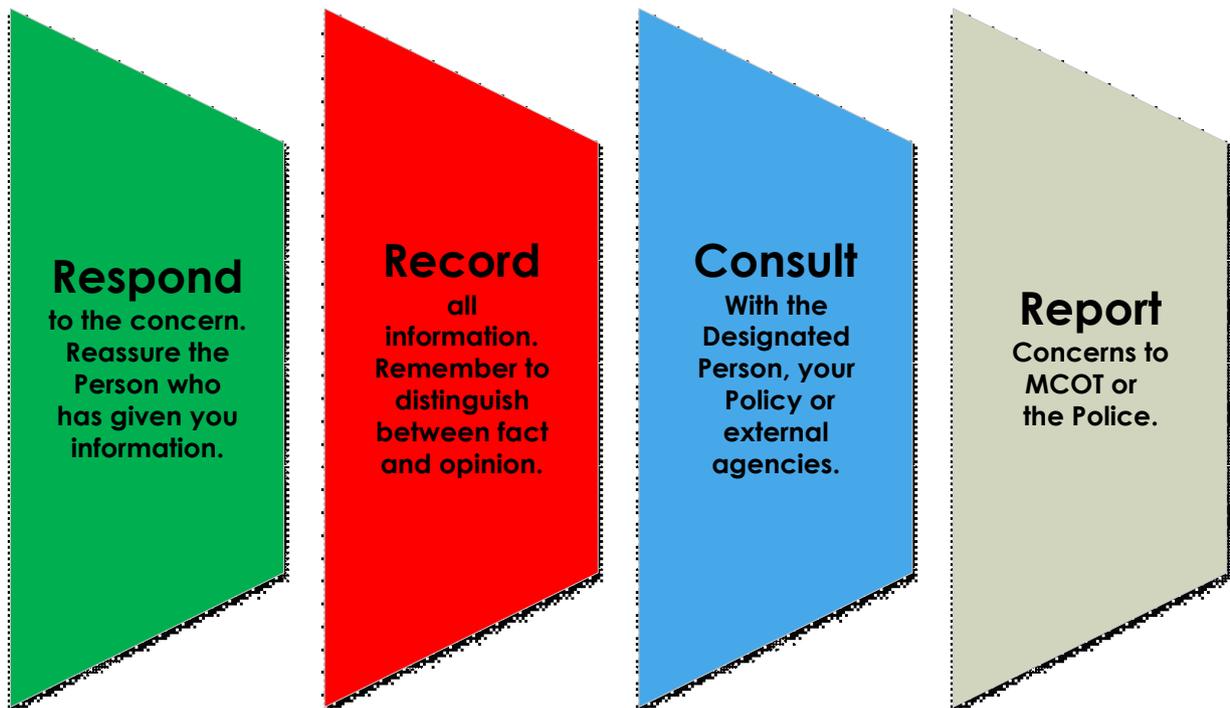
1. WTG has designated staff members, being the Education Manager, Safety Manager, and Health and Safety Representatives for Child Protection who will be available for all matters relating to this policy.
2. All staff:
 - a. are to meet the professional and legal obligations to children and act according to safe work practices.
 - b. respond appropriately and in a timely manner to lost or unaccompanied children or observations of abuse, complaints and disclosures to the Child Protection Officer.
 - c. are to be vigilant, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of neglect, potential or actual abuse and to report any concerns,

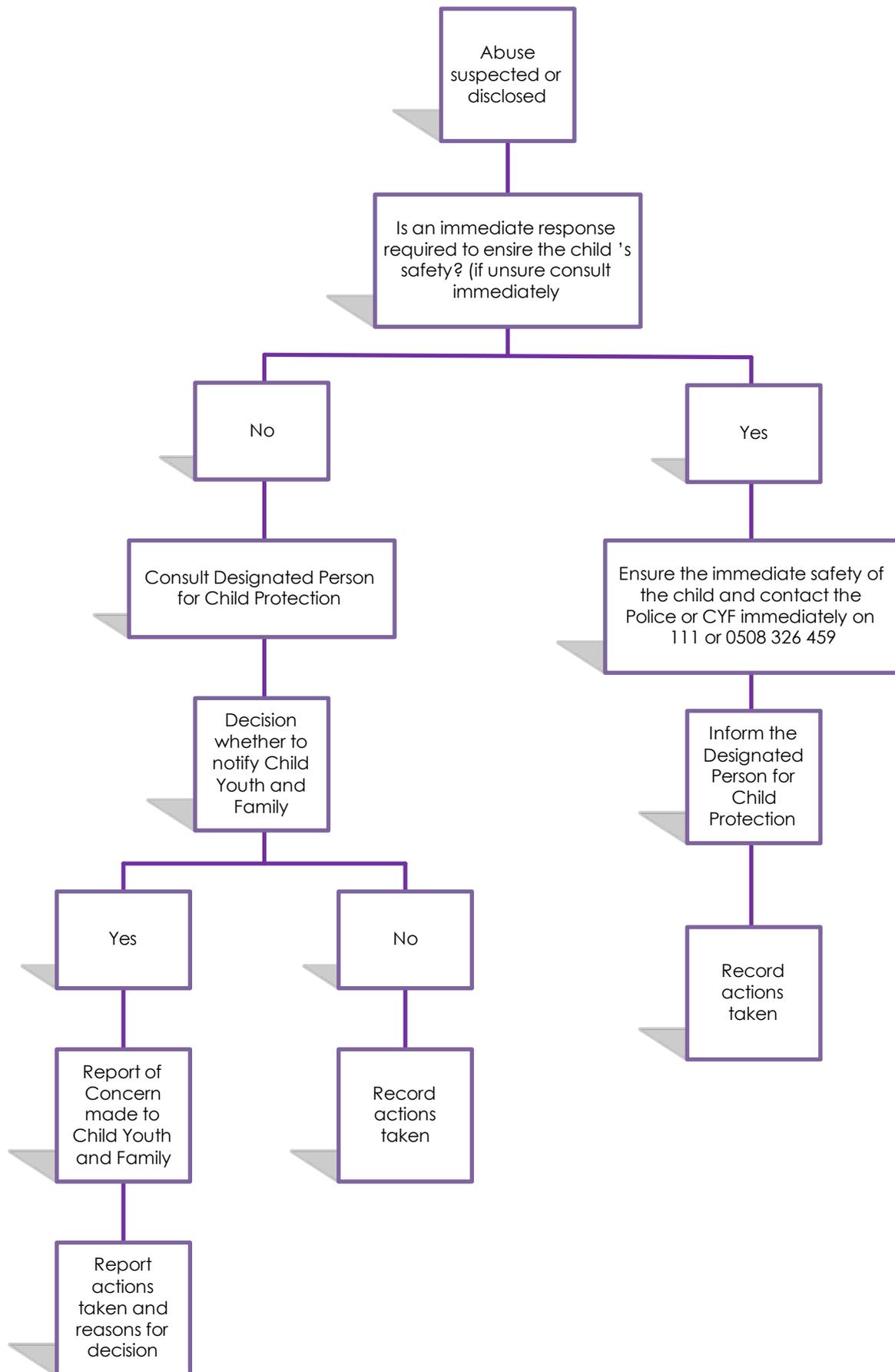


suspicions, or allegations of suspected abuse immediately and ensure that the concern is taken seriously and reported.

3. The primary responsibility of the welfare of children visiting WTG rests with the supervising adult who brought the child to WTG.
4. WTG will NOT investigate allegations, complaints or disclosures but will refer them to Ministry of Children, Oranga Tamariki (MCOT) for investigation.
5. WTG will co-operate fully with investigations and assessments undertaken by MCOT or the Police.
6. WTG will ensure that all staff are employed on the basis that a satisfactory police check / safety check is undertaken prior to the completion of the 90 day trial period.

Procedures for Responding and Reporting Child Abuse:





- It is very important that any suspected child abuse is taken seriously and handled in an appropriate manner. This includes but is not limited to a public act of abuse towards a child, verbal disclosures from a child, adult, or other staff member or an observed act.
- When abuse is suspected, or an allegation is made against another person, the first consideration will be to ensure the safety of the child.
- When abuse is suspected, staff will follow the process for *Responding to Suspected Child Abuse* as outlined above.
- Under no circumstance should any member of staff attempt to conduct an investigation or deal with the concerns regarding child abuse alone, contacting the DP or other specified persons is a must.
- Staff will not extensively question a child who has disclosed abuse, or who is displaying signs of possible abuse. However, it is important that a child is listened to and responded to appropriately.
- All concerns of potential, suspected, or alleged abuse must be brought to the attention of the Designated Person (DP) for Child Protection. If the DP is not available, then consultation should occur with an alternative appropriate person being a Health and Safety Representative (HSR) or a supervisor.
- Any and all decisions taken, including if the concern does not require the notification of MCOT, must be recorded in writing and kept securely in a Child Protection file with the reasons clearly identified and explained.
- Although the parent or supervising adult of the child will usually be informed of concerns, there may be times when those with parental responsibility may not be initially informed. This may happen when:
 1. The parent or supervising adult is the alleged perpetrator
 2. It is possible that the child may be intimidated into silence
 3. There is a strong likelihood that evidence will be destroyed
 4. The child does not want their parent or supervising adult involved and they are of an age where they are competent to make that decision
- In all cases of suspected abuse, the information and concerns will be made available only to those staff who have to know. This will be determined by the Designated Person for Child Protection.
- All staff members involved will kept informed as far as possible within the limits of confidentiality and the need to protect the best interest of the child. This will be determined by the Designated Person for Child Protection.



- If an allegation is made against a staff member of WTG, the staff member will be subject to the disciplinary clause in their employment contract.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing:

Keeping children safe requires the appropriate sharing of information subject to legal restrictions and the best interests of the child.

Waitangi Treaty Grounds recognises that all staff must act within the legal requirements of the Privacy Act 1993, Children, Young Person's and their Families Act 1989, Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and other statutes. There are provisions within each of these acts for sharing information needed to protect children and enable other people to carry out their legitimate functions. In general staff will not share information if they believe that by doing so this will endanger the child.

WTG encourages the sharing of information when appropriate steps have been taken.

Staff may be asked to provide information to MCOT, the Police, Court or Lawyers and Psychologists.

Information sharing will be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to protect any children.

Information will only be given after the staff member has identified the person making the request, the actual purpose of the request, what use the information will be put to, and who will see the information.

Relationships with External Agencies:

WTG and its staff will not act alone and will refer all suspected situations of child abuse to Police, or MCOT. The safety of the child will be the primary consideration, and no person in this organisation will collude to protect an adult or an organisation.

Training of Staff:

All new staff will receive the Child Protection Policy as part of their induction pack as well as having access to the policy at any time.

WTG is committed to the ongoing training and upskilling of staff every three years or more frequently as required.

Specialty trained staff will take the role of Designated Person for Child Protection and will be trained in the understanding of the wider context of legislation in New Zealand.



Review:

WTG is committed to the ongoing improvement and updating of its policies, the Child Protection Policy will undergo review at least 3 yearly in accordance with the Vulnerable Children Act 2014, or more frequently as required.

Document Control:

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Appendix A

Definitions:

“Child” means a boy or girl under the age of 14 years **“Young Person”** means a boy or girl of or over the age of 14 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). For the purpose of this policy **“Child”** is inclusive of **“Young Person”**.

“Staff” means people working at WTG 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 WTG.

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

“Supervising adult” of a child or children means a responsible adult that is a parent, guardian, relative, family friend, carer, teacher, group or tour leader, and/or an adult acting as “in loci parentis”.

“Designated Person” Waitangi Treaty Grounds Education Manager, Health and Safety Representatives, Facilities and Safety Manager

“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 action, emotion or basic needs.

