



## **REPORTING ON SEXUAL AND PHYSICAL ABUSE POLICY**

**No 503**

### **Rationale**

It is the responsibility of every school to ensure the safe emotional health of children in its care. It is required of schools that they report cases of abuse to appropriate agencies once a suspicion is aroused.

### **Policy Statement**

To safeguard the physical and emotional safety of children all reasonable steps will be taken by staff of the school to handle appropriately cases of suspected abuse and to alert relevant agencies in accordance with legislation outlined in the Vulnerable Children's Act 2017.

### **Policy Guidelines**

1. Where a complaint is received against a staff member the appropriate procedure as laid down in the relevant employment contract and in school complaints policy will be followed.
2. The school's insurance company is to be informed should any complaint be laid against a member of staff.
3. In cases of complaints against the principal the appropriate contract clauses will be involved.
4. Every staff member will be trained in recognising signs of sexual abuse.
5. Staff who suspect abuse must report the matter to the designated support person or to a relevant agency such as Oranga Tamariki or police.
6. Suspected abuse may be reported to the management staff or to an appropriate agency.
7. Confidentiality of the informant is protected at all stages.
8. Students who wish to lay a complaint or who wish to alert someone to abuse they are suffering will be made aware of processes to follow.
9. The school's health programme will include aspects of dealing with abuse.

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Ratified by Board: 4 September 2023

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Next Review: September 2026

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