



Child Abuse Policy – 20.01.16

Purpose

The management and teaching staff will keep themselves informed about 'child abuse', its indicators and possible action to be taken where there is reason to believe a child has been abused.

Rational

Evidence indicates a significant number of young children are victims of some form of suspected abuse- emotional, physical, sexual or neglect.

Our management/staff may be in a position to recognize indicators of abuse, or are among those that a young child may turn to for help. The following guidelines are to assist if required to face the task of responding to such situations, and meeting the obligations towards all children in the Centre.

Our intentions

The interests and welfare of the child are our prime considerations when any decision is made about suspected abuse. We recognize our responsibility and commitment in the support of the families whose children we care for.

Practices

Delegated teaching staff members will attend appropriate courses/workshops and feedback to other teaching staff so as to remain informed, thus able to be effective when dealing with the prevention of abuse, and have the knowledge of services able to help in this area.

Responding to child abuse

The staff of the Aroha Early Learning Centre will respond by:

- Writing down observations, impressions and communications that cause concern (Centre form to be used)
- Teachers who are alerted to indications of possible abuse will seek a colleague's support/advice for a second opinion
- When suspected child abuse occurs the person who suspects the abuse can then report to Child Youth and Family and/or the Public Health Nurse who then may refer the case to the police
- If suspected abuse has occurred within the Centre, staff or parents/whānau will report either to management or appropriate agencies, where action will be taken
- All those who are involved will receive support, a knowledge of the relevant individuals, agencies and organizations in our community will be maintained
- At anytime persons may go direct to CYF or police

Employment

(Refer to Employment Procedure folder)

Guidelines for the teaching staff to follow:

Recorded observations should include: child's behavior, play, physical health as well as any attempts at verbal communication.

Any attempt at verbal communication should be supported by:

1. Listening without blaming

2. Do not add your own interpretations
3. Do not ask questions (these may mislead &/or have additions added that were not there in the first place)
4. Do not ask to see any signs on the child's body
5. Talk about what behavior is NOT appropriate
6. Keep observing and recording as appropriate

- This sort of thing happens to other children too sometimes
- DO NOT OVER REACT- a child's initial disclosure of any abuse is a critical moment, he or she will be monitoring every reaction
- DO NOT PANIC- if the child judges you as unable to handle the situation, he or she may not disclose any more
- DO NOT CRITICISE- do not say: you should have told me sooner or/ why did you let him/her?
- ENSURE THE CHILD'S IMMEDIATE SAFETY- try not to alert the alleged abuser
- SEEK ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE- the people who are running the 'feeling safe' programme will have an up to date list of support services
- FIND SUPPORT FOR YOURSELF- dealing with any abuse is hard, especially when it involves someone you care about; discuss the matter with someone you feel comfortable with, you trust and who will respect confidentiality
- PEOPLE SHOULD BE OBSERVING MORE THAN ONE INDICATOR OF ABUSE

Review date- 20.01.16

Consultation- Teaching staff, Parents/guardians through All About Me Tool & display, Mrs. Dickison (CYFs Gore Branch), at meetings and written documentation.

Monitoring- daily

Budget- courses/written materials/wages for meetings

Next review date- June 2017