



# St Margaret's College

## 6. Child Protection Policy

### 6.1 Rationale

St Margaret's College ("SMC") is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and to the prevention of child abuse.

**6.1.1** This Policy aims to uphold the safety and wellbeing of children by ensuring that there are adequate child protection systems in place. The following guidelines will assist the SMC Trust Board, Executive Principal, Designated Person for Child Protection (Executive Principal), Designated Leadership Team (Head of Senior School, Head of Middle School, Head of Junior School, Director of Pre-school) and SMC staff in dealing with child abuse and neglect, and the management of child abuse allegations against any employees.

**6.1.2** Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children formerly known as Child Youth and Family. Oranga Tamariki is a Government Ministry dedicated to supporting children in New Zealand whose wellbeing is at significant risk of harm now, or in the future.

**6.1.3** The Children's Act 2014 made sweeping changes to protect vulnerable children and help them thrive, achieve and belong. This legislation change includes:

(a) One stand-alone Act, The Children's Act 2014

(b) Amendments to the Children's and Young People's Wellbeing Act 1989

(c) "Child Protection" describes activities carried out to ensure that children are safe in cases where there is suspected abuse or neglect or the risk of abuse or neglect. It also recognises the role that organisations play in promoting the wellbeing of children responding to their vulnerability.

**6.1.4** The purpose of this Policy is to establish an agreed approach to the reporting of child abuse and neglect by those working within SMC. The protocol will ensure that:

(a) The welfare and interests of the child or young person are the first and paramount considerations

(b) Suspected and actual abuse of a child is responded to and recorded appropriately

- (c) Effective child protection requires a full, accurate and prompt sharing of information (as permitted within the law)
- (d) Process if a member of the SMC staff is suspected or has allegations/concerns about their behaviour.

**6.1.5** The Oranga Tamariki guide “How we keep children safe” provides more in-depth information and should be read in conjunction with this Policy. Further information is available online at:

<https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/how-we-get-involved/how-we-keep-children-safe/>

**6.1.6 Scope:** This Policy applies to all students, workers, volunteers, visitors and whanau and encompasses all those who work with, care for or help SMC children or young persons.

## **6.2 Definitions**

**6.2.1 Child and Young Person** – means any person under the age of 18 years, or over 18 years but enrolled as a student at SMC

**6.2.2 Child Abuse** – can involve ongoing, repeated or persistent abuse, or may arise from a single incident. Child abuse may take many forms but it can be categorised into four different types :

- (a) Physical abuse
- (b) Sexual abuse
- (c) Emotional abuse
- (d) Neglect

**6.2.3 Family Violence** - can take many forms and may include, but is not limited to, actual physical violence (to a person, pet or property), threats of physical violence (to a person, pet or property), psychological, economic or sexual abuse. Children are always affected either emotionally or physically where there is a family violence even if they are not personally injured or physically present.

**6.2.4 Notification Referral Reporting** - notification, referral and reporting are all terms used to describe making a report of concern to Oranga Tamariki and/or Police.

### **6.2.5 Responsibilities:**

- (1) Designated Person for Child Protection - is a person within the school who is responsible for the safeguarding of children. This person is responsible for ensuring that child protection is a key focus, both at a strategic level and on a day to day basis. This person is the Executive Principal.
- (2) The Executive Principal, Head of Senior School, Head of Middle School, Head of Junior School, Director of Pre-school make up the Designated Leadership Team.
- (3) The Designated Person for Child Protection will:
  - (a) Be available and accessible to staff
  - (b) Be a senior member of staff

- (c) Have the authority to carry out the duties of the Designated Person for Child Protection role
  - (d) Be capable of directing other staff if appropriate
  - (e) Be given comprehensive training and/or have experience of child protection
  - (f) Ensure and safeguard clear, confidential, detailed and dated records on all child protection cases. These must contain all available information relating to the cause for concern and any subsequent action taken, including when it has been decided not to make a notification to Oranga Tamariki or the Police. These records will be kept separate from a student's records for the purpose of confidentiality
  - (g) Establish a close link with the relevant local agencies to ensure clear and effective communication and to be the recognised contact within SMC for agencies to contact regarding concerns
  - (h) Work closely and effectively with the School Counsellor, ensuring information is appropriately shared to effectively safeguard the child
  - (i) Ensure that all staff are supported appropriately when dealing with child protection concerns
  - (j) Maintain a current awareness of the child identified within SMC's guidance team meetings around students of concern
  - (k) Consult with the Executive Principal and Designated Leadership Team regarding all child protection concerns.
- (4) The Executive Principal will:
- (a) Upon receiving information that suggests potential or actual risk of harm to a child who attends SMC, irrespective of whether the alleged abuse is current, past or likely to occur, will advise and support staff and, on the basis of the initial details, will make a decision as to whether or not to delegate the matter to the Designated Person for Child Protection for further action
  - (b) Make or delegate any referrals to the School Counsellor or Oranga Tamariki or the NZ Police as appropriate
  - (c) Be informed of any referrals to external agencies made by the school Counsellor.
  - (d) Ensure that there is no internal investigation without appropriate consultation and a decision on whether a response from Oranga Tamariki or the NZ Police is required
  - (e) Ensure that allegations or complaints are appropriately referred to the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand
  - (f) Ensure all staff:
    - (i) Are aware of the procedures for reporting abuse and the process to be followed
    - (ii) Recruit in accordance with the guidelines identified in the SMC Employment Responsibility Policy.
- (5) The Designated Leadership Team will:
- (a) Discuss and support all suspected concerns and allegations with the Designated Person for Child Protection and the Executive Principal, ensuring that the needs and rights of children come first – the safety and wellbeing of each child is the paramount consideration
  - (b) Ensure that all allegations are managed appropriately

- (c) Consult with the Executive Principal regarding all child protection concerns.
- (6) The SMC Trust Board will:
  - (a) Support the Executive Principal, the Designated Person for Child Protection and the Designated Leadership Team to ensure that all allegations are managed appropriately
  - (b) Ensure that no investigation occurs without appropriate consultation and a decision whether a response from Oranga Tamariki or the Police is required
  - (c) Support the Executive Principal to ensure that allegations or complaints are appropriately referred to the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand
  - (d) Inform the Executive Principal immediately should any member of the SMC Trust Board be aware of a concern for the wellbeing and safety of a child who attends SMC
  - (e) The Chair of the SMC Trust Board will be directly informed of any allegations of abuse against the Executive Principal. If the allegations are of a serious nature the Chair may convene a sub-committee of the Trust Board to investigate further.
  - (f) Be informed of any issues of serious concern being dealt with by school leadership or the Child Protection Officer

## **6.3 Safe Working Practices**

### **Guidelines for the prevention of child abuse/neglect:**

- 6.3.1** All permanent SMC staff will be familiar with the Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children guide “How we keep children safe” to ensure they are aware of the signs to look out for.
- 6.3.2** The Designated Person for Child Protection and the Designated Leadership Team will be encouraged to attend any courses which aim to support SMC staff to:
  - (a) Understand their role in supporting vulnerable children, and keeping them safe
  - (b) Understand what to look out for
  - (c) Gain a working knowledge of how to respond to vulnerable children
  - (d) Understand the Vulnerable Children’s Act & Children’s Action Plan
  - (e) Understand the process when Oranga Tamariki receive a report of concern
  - (f) Build a network with others in our community
  - (g) Understand the role of “The Vulnerable Children’s Hub” in Christchurch as an important support network – 0800 FOR OURKIDS ( 0800 367 678) or online  
<https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/working-with-children/childrens-teams/referrals/>
- 6.3.3** Volunteering adults and parents visiting or working with students in an educational context will be well supervised and visible in the activities they perform with children.
- 6.3.4** Teachers are expected to act in a professional manner at all times in accordance with the Practising Teacher Criteria. There is also an expectation that all

non-teaching staff will also work within these guidelines when dealing with children and their families. Teachers and non-teaching staff are expected to know the expectations of behaviour (see Appendix 1 - Professional Standards of Behaviour).

- 6.3.5** Staff should promote professionalism in working with children at all times, through clearly established standards of adult behaviour with children.
- 6.3.6** Each member of staff must:
- (a) Be aware of, and alert to, potential indicators of abuse or neglect
  - (b) Record a factual account of any concerns they have, or that are brought to their attention
  - (c) Appropriately seek advice from the Designated Person for Child Protection / or the Designated Leadership Team, who will then contact external agencies if appropriate
  - (d) Work in co-operation with the parents and caregivers, unless this compromises the safety of the child
- 6.3.7** Close relationships with parents are discouraged and staff are to keep their professional and personal life separate. Staff should be aware of “Professional Dangerousness Practices” which means looking after one's own wellbeing at work. This may cause any observation, interaction or disclosure to be "muddied" as the professional is deemed unfit or unwell to report - over-stressed, burnt out etc. This is to ensure objectiveness in the light of any reports or disclosures.
- 6.3.8** It is not good practice to hold images of SMC students on private mobile devices outside the scope of your role at SMC. Photographs and videos of children should never be shared in a public domain (i.e. personal Facebook accounts). Refer to SMC Privacy Policy.
- 6.3.9** It is not good practice to become friends via social media with current students.
- 6.3.10** If at all avoidable, staff should not communicate with students via their personal mobile phones.
- 6.3.11** Planning for activities off-site, including EOTC, should include identification of potential risk to students in public places. Safety Action Plans should include strategies, e.g. children going to public toilets (i.e. always in pairs), safety in motels/cabins at night, safety strategies for activities where there is likely to be general public, strategies for transport arrangements – especially in private or school vehicles.
- It is not good practice for a staff member to transport a student on their own in a private or school vehicle.
- 6.3.12** Appointment of employees and volunteers will be in accordance with the Employment Responsibility Policy and Professional Standards of Behaviour to ensure that there are thorough checks on all staff before employment. Non-registered teachers will be required to be Police vetted.
- 6.3.13** This Policy will be regularly reviewed in consultation with parents and staff to ensure that all parties are aware of this Policy, reporting procedures and the procedure for making any complaints.

## **Guidelines for reporting child abuse/ neglect**

- 6.3.14** The child's safety should always be the paramount consideration in the notification process.
- 6.3.15** No decisions or actions in respect of suspected or actual child abuse are to be made by any staff member in isolation unless there are concerns for the immediate safety of the child. Refer to SMC Privacy Policy.
- 6.3.16** A consultative approach is essential to ensure the safety of the child and the staff member. Staff must discuss their concerns with the Executive Principal, Designated Person for Child Protection or Designated Leadership Team.
- 6.3.17** Decisions about informing parents or caregivers should be made after consultation between SMC and Oranga Tamariki.

### **6.4 Reporting Process for Suspected or Disclosed Child Abuse**

#### **Responding to suspected abuse or neglect:**

- 6.4.1** There is a process to follow when an incident or suspicion of abuse or neglect is reported. See the '*Child Abuse Reporting Process*' flowchart below.
- 6.4.2** All suspicions or reports of incidents will be reported to and discussed with Oranga Tamariki as soon as possible.
- 6.4.3** The Child Protection Officer will make a written report of the incident or concern.
- 6.4.4** The Record of concern of any related discussions including copies of correspondence (where appropriate), a record of any advice received, the action taken and any rationale for this will be securely stored. This concern should be stored with any earlier concerns if the notification is based on an accumulation of concerns. The repository for this will be the Designated Person for Child Protection.
- 6.4.5** If there is clear evidence or reasonable cause to believe an instance of child abuse has taken place, the Designated Person for Child Protection or the Executive Principal will immediately take steps to protect the child and may notify The Vulnerable Children's Hub or Oranga Tamariki or the Police.
- 6.4.6** Staff may not deal with incidents of suspected, alleged or actual abuse without support from the Designated Person for Child Protection or the Executive Principal. Incidents of suspected, alleged or actual abuse shall be dealt with sensitively and with awareness of the need to maintain confidentiality and the privacy of those involved.
- 6.4.7** Sometimes the involvement of statutory agencies will be inappropriate and potentially harmful to families. In these situations, SMC will refer the family to an appropriate statutory or non-statutory agency which can provide supportive services to the family and respond to the needs of the vulnerable children in their care in a manner proportional to the level of need and risk.

### **Allegations or concerns about staff:**

- 6.4.8** All matters involving allegations against SMC staff need to be escalated to the Executive Principal (see Appendix 2 – When an Allegation is made against a member of Staff).
- 6.4.9** Where an allegation has been made against an SMC employee, to ensure the safety of the child or young person, the Executive Principal will notify the employee of the allegation and consider whether it is appropriate for the employee to remain at SMC. This will be done in accordance with the requirements of the applicable individual or collective contract and relevant employment law.
- 6.4.10** If there is a need to pursue an allegation as an employer:
- (a) The Executive Principal will advise the person concerned and inform them that they have a right to seek legal advice
  - (b) The Executive Principal will provide the staff member with an opportunity to respond.
- 6.4.11** The staff member should be informed of their right to seek support from the relevant union/representative body and/or EAP services (Employee Assistance Programme). It is vital to follow ordinary disciplinary policies, guided by the employment contract/collective employment contract and relevant statutory obligations.
- 6.4.12** SMC commits to not using *settlement agreements* where these are contrary to a culture of child protection. Some *settlement agreements* allow a member of staff to agree to resign provided that no disciplinary action is taken, and a future reference is agreed. Where the conduct at issue concerns the safety or wellbeing of a child, use of such agreements is contrary to a culture of child protection. All allegations or concerns should be investigated fully as St Margaret's College is able to do, regardless of the resignation or termination of the staff member concerned. St Margaret's College commits to following legal guidelines around reporting issues to the Teachers Council, as required.

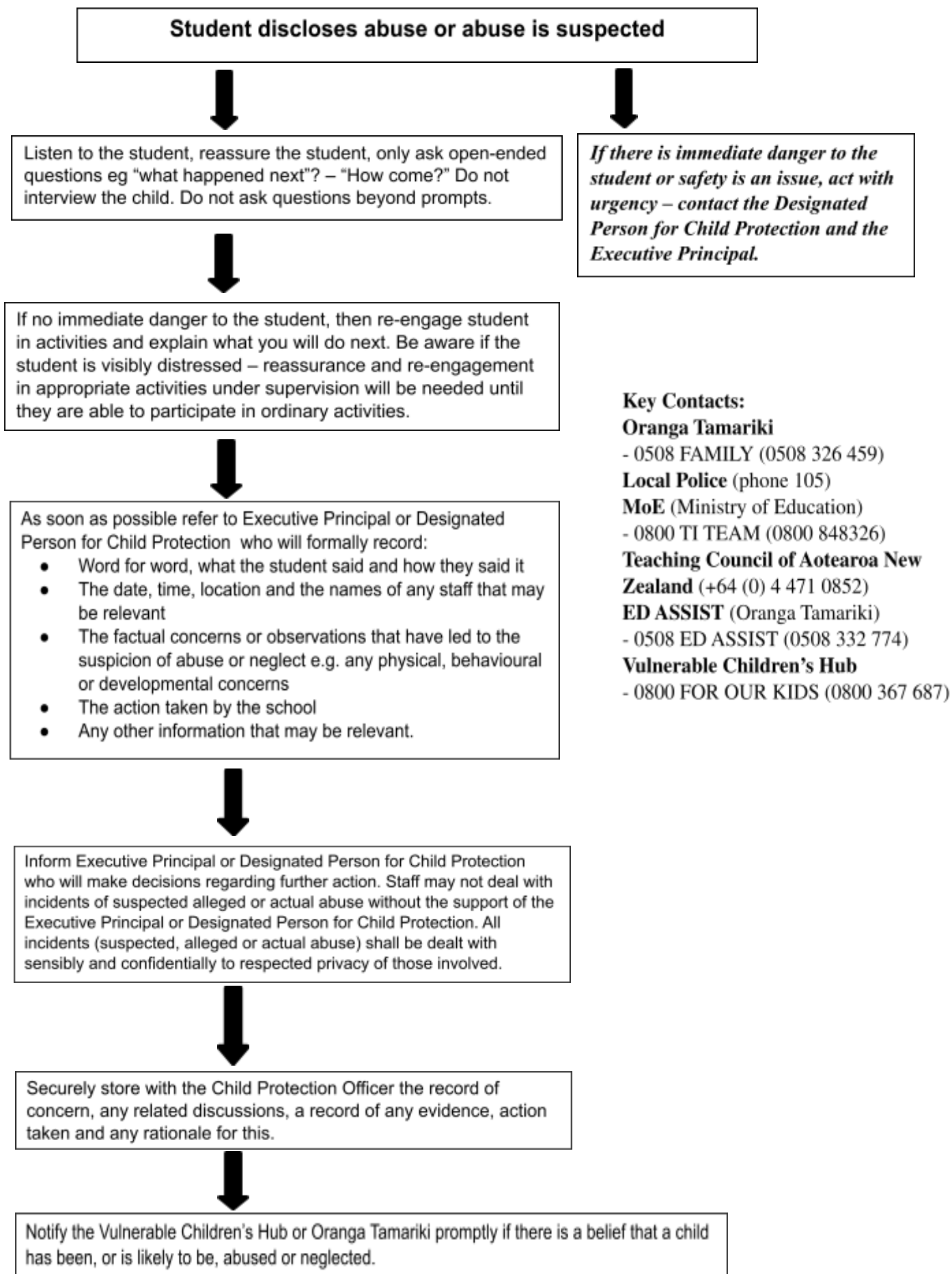
### **Information required for reporting:**

- 6.4.13** When a notification is made to Oranga Tamariki, SMC needs to provide the following information in the attached notification:
- a. Name of child/children (also known as/nicknames)
  - b. Date of birth (if known)
  - c. Ethnicity (if known)
  - d. Name of caregivers, parents and other family members and current living situation
  - e. Current legal custodians
  - f. Reasons why it is believed that the child or young person is at risk
  - g. Other significant background information
  - h. The name of the contact person for Oranga Tamariki.

## **Working with Agencies:**

- 6.4.14** Interviews on-site with Oranga Tamariki or Police: all enquiries and interview requests must be dealt with in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020, The Children's Act 2014, Children's and Young People's Wellbeing Act 1989 and the Official Information Act 1982. Any enquiries and interview requests must be referred to the Executive Principal or Designated Person for Child Protection. The Designated Person for Child Protection must check the identification of the person enquiring, including physical ID checks or telephone verification. SMC will follow the advice and guidance of the agencies involved.
- 6.4.15** All telephone calls, emails or correspondence with agencies must be verified before any information is shared. This may include asking for a phone number with an extension, evidence of the person communicating with, verification of authenticity of communication. All communication is to go through the Executive Principal or Designated Person for Child Protection in the first instance.

## 6.5 Child Abuse Reporting Process Flowchart



### **6.5.1 Oranga Tamariki Privacy (Child's Individual Information)**

- (a) This is a summarised guidance of information in the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 related specifically to the privacy of sharing of information. (Tamariki refers to children and young people aged under 18 years of age)
- (b) You must share information with Oranga Tamariki or the Police if they request it under Section 66 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, unless it is legally privileged
- (c) Legal privilege means any communication between a professional legal adviser and their clients can't be disclosed without the permission of the client.

### **6.5.2 What Kind of Information is Relevant?**

- (a) The Oranga Tamariki Act itself talks about making sure information is relevant to, or related to the wellbeing or safety of tamariki. There are some requirements of the Privacy Act about sharing information that also apply alongside the Oranga Tamariki Act.
- (b) You must make sure the information is:
  - (i) Relevant to, or related to, addressing or supporting the safety or wellbeing of tamariki (the information sharing provision requires this) and
  - (ii) As accurate as you can make it and not misleading (the Privacy Act requires this) so be clear what is fact, what is your professional view, what is someone else's point of view and what is a worry or concern that hasn't been confirmed yet
  - (iii) As complete as you can make it (the Privacy Act requires this) for example including contextual information to help with understanding. However, balance this with only sharing the minimum necessary to achieve the purpose of sharing
  - (iv) As up to date as you can make it (the Privacy Act requires this) this can include historical or past information if it helps to understand the current concerns or worries.

### **6.5.3 Follow the Requirements of the Privacy Act**

- (a) Section 66Q of the Oranga Tamariki Act explains that many of the principles of the Privacy Act still apply when you are sharing information using the Oranga Tamariki provisions:
  - (i) Making sure information is accurate, up to date and as complete as possible
  - (ii) Keeping information safe and secure and protecting it from misuse
  - (iii) Only collecting information for a lawful purpose
  - (iv) Providing people with the chance to access their information
  - (v) Providing people with the chance to ask for their information to be corrected if they think it is wrong
  - (vi) Only keeping information for as long as required for the purpose it was collected
- (b) The Oranga Tamariki Act and the Family Violence Act go beyond the Privacy Act in some circumstances, but other parts of the Privacy Act still apply – the Privacy Act has thirteen principles agencies must follow when collecting, storing, using or disclosing personal information. While any sharing of information under the Oranga Tamariki Act or Family Violence Act is not restricted by the limits on disclosure of personal information in the Privacy Act, the other requirements in the Privacy Act (such as storage) still apply.
- (c) There are other pieces of legislation that may require you to share information or allow you to, for example Section 22C of the Health Act 1956.

## **6.6 Identifying the Signs of and Symptoms of Abuse**

### **6.6.1 Indicators of Abuse**

- (a) It is normal to feel uncertain about identifying potential abuse or neglect. The important thing is that staff can recognise when something is wrong, especially if they notice a pattern or several signs that make them concerned. Every situation is different and it is important to consider all available information about the child and their environment before reaching conclusions. The physical and behavioural signs, symptoms and history listed below may indicate abuse or neglect. However, they are not specific to abuse or neglect. In certain situations, contexts and combinations may indicate other conditions. All signs must be examined in the total context of the child or young person's situation. No decision is to be made in isolation.
- (b) The indicators for child abuse and neglect fall into three general categories:
  - (i) Physical indicators: Injuries to a child that are severe, occur in a pattern or occur frequently. These injuries range from bruises to broken bones to burns or unusual lacerations and are often unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given.
  - (ii) Behavioural indicators: The child's reaction, attitudes and emotions can indicate the possibility of abuse or neglect. Behavioural indicators alone are much less reliable than physical indicators, as a child's behaviour may be the result of a variety of other problems or conditions. When observing changes in behaviour, look for the frequency and pattern of the new behaviour, as well as a child's age and stage of development. For example, it is normal for younger children to be wary of adults, as they may have been taught not to talk to strangers. Look for a combination of physical and behavioural indicators.
  - (iii) Caregiver indicators: Caregivers who abuse, neglect or exploit children are either unable or unwilling to provide care and protection in an appropriate way. Those who are unable to provide care and protection may be physically unable to due to their own medical or health condition. They may be overly stressed, tired or working under the influence of drugs or alcohol which limits their abilities. Caregivers who are unwilling to provide children with the appropriate level of care and protection are more aware that what they are doing is wrong but continue to act in that way. These caregivers may not view the child as someone who has feelings and emotions and often have the need to control others or have misplaced aggression towards weaker persons.

### **6.6.2 Physical Abuse Indicators**

Physical Abuse is a non-accidental act on a child that results in physical harm:

- (a) Physical Indicators:
  - (i) Bruises, welts, cuts and abrasions
  - (ii) Burns – small circular burns, immersion burns, rope burns etc
  - (iii) Fractures and dislocations
  - (iv) Multiple fractures at different stages of healing
  - (v) Fractures in very young children
- (b) Behavioural Indicators:
  - (i) Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
  - (ii) Wary of adults or a particular person
  - (iii) Vacant stare or frozen watchfulness

- (iv) Cringing or flinching if touched unexpectedly
- (v) May be extremely compliant and eager to please
- (vi) Dresses inappropriately to hide bruises
- (vii) Runs away from home or is afraid to go home
- (viii) May regress (e.g. bedwetting)
- (ix) May indicate general sadness
- (x) Could have vision or hearing delay

### **6.6.3 Emotional Abuse Indicators**

Emotional abuse is any act or omission that results in impaired psychological, social, intellectual and /or emotional functioning and development of a child or young person:

#### **(a) Physical Indicators**

- (i) Bedwetting or bed soiling with no medical cause
- (ii) Frequent psychosomatic complaints (e.g. headaches, nausea, abdominal pains)
- (iii) Non-organic failure to thrive
- (iv) Pale, emaciated
- (v) Prolonged vomiting and/or diarrhoea
- (vi) Malnutrition
- (vii) Dressed differently to other children in the family

#### **(b) Behavioural Indicators**

- (i) Severe developmental lags with an obvious physical cause
- (ii) Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
- (iii) Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
- (iv) Overly compliant
- (v) Extreme attention-seeking behaviours or extreme inhibitions
- (vi) Running away from home, avoiding attending school
- (vii) Nightmares, poor sleeping patterns
- (viii) Anti-social behaviours
- (ix) Lack of self-esteem
- (x) Obsessive behaviours
- (xi) Eating disorders

#### **(c) Caregiver Indicators**

- (i) Labels the child as inferior or publicly humiliates the child (e.g. name-calling)
- (ii) Treats the child differently from siblings or peers in ways that suggest disliking for the child
- (iii) Actively refuses to help the child
- (iv) Constantly threatens the child with physical harm or death
- (v) Locks the child in a closet or room for extended periods of time
- (vi) Teaches or reinforces criminal behaviour
- (vii) Withholds physical and verbal affection
- (viii) Keeps the child at home in the role of a servant or surrogate parent
- (ix) Has unrealistic expectations of the child
- (x) Involves child and adult issues such as separation or disputes over the child's care
- (xi) Exposes a child to a situation of arguing and violence in the home

### **6.6.4 Neglect Indicators**

Any act or omission that results in impaired physical functioning, injury, and/or development of a child or young person.

- (a) Physical Indicators
  - (i) Dressed inappropriately for the season or the weather
  - (ii) Often extremely dirty and unwashed
  - (iii) Persistent skin disorders
  - (iv) Inadequately supervised or left unattended frequently or for long periods
  - (v) May be left in the care of an inappropriate adult
  - (vi) Does not receive medical or dental care
  - (vii) Malnourished - this can be both underweight and overweight
  - (viii) Lacks adequate shelter
  - (ix) Non-organic failure to thrive
- (b) Behavioural Indicators
  - (i) Severe developmental lags without an obvious physical cause
  - (ii) Lack of attachment to parents/caregivers
  - (iii) Indiscriminate attachment to other adults
  - (iv) Poor school attendance and performance
  - (v) Demanding of affection and attention
  - (vi) Engages in risk-taking behaviours such as drug and alcohol abuse
  - (vii) May steal food
  - (viii) Poor social skills
  - (ix) No understanding of basic hygiene
- (c) Caregiver Indicators
  - (i) Puts own needs ahead of the child's
  - (ii) Fails to provide child's basic needs
  - (iii) Demonstrates little or no interest in child's life - does not attend school activities, social events
  - (iv) Leaves the child alone or inappropriately supervised
  - (v) Drug and alcohol use
  - (vi) Depression

#### **6.6.5 Sexual Abuse Indicators**

Sexual Abuse or any act or acts that result in the sexual exploitation of a child or young person, whether consensual or not:

- (a) Physical Indicators:
  - (i) Unusual or excessive itching or pain in the genital or anal area
  - (ii) Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
  - (iii) Bruises, lacerations, redness, swelling or bleeding in the genital, vaginal or anal area
  - (iv) Blood in urine or stools
  - (v) Sexually transmitted infections
  - (vi) Pregnancy
  - (vii) Discomfort in sitting or fidgeting as unable to sit comfortably
- (b) Behavioural Indicators
  - (i) Age-inappropriate sexual play or language
  - (ii) Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge
  - (iii) Refuses to go home or to a specific person's home for no apparent reason
  - (iv) Fear of a certain person
  - (v) Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
  - (vi) Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
  - (vii) Overly compliant
  - (viii) Extreme attention-seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
  - (ix) Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries

- (x) Eating disorders
- (xi) Compulsive behaviours
- (c) Caregivers Indicators
  - (i) May be unusually over-protective of the child
  - (ii) Accuses the child of being sexually provocative
  - (iii) Misuses alcohol or drugs
  - (iv) Invades the child's privacy (e.g. during dressing, in the bathroom)
  - (v) May favour the victim over other children

#### 6.6.6 Family Violence Indicators

- (a) Indicators in the Child:
  - (i) Physical injuries consistent with the indicators of Physical Abuse
  - (ii) Absenteeism from school
  - (iii) Bullying of aggressive behaviour
  - (iv) Complaints of headaches or stomach ache with no apparent medical reason
  - (v) Talking or describing violent behaviours
- (b) Indicators in the Victim
  - (i) Physical injuries including bruising to chest and abdomen
  - (ii) Depression and /or anxiety
  - (iii) Inconsistent explanations for injuries
  - (iv) Fearful
  - (v) Submissive
- (c) Indicators in the Offender
  - (i) Isolates and controls partner and children
  - (ii) Threatens, criticises, intimidates, uses aggressive and physical abuse towards partner and children
  - (iii) Minimises and denies own behaviour or blames the victim for the perpetrators own behaviour

**6.6.7 Please note** – The statutory responsibility to investigate allegations of child abuse rests with Oranga Tamariki and the NZ Police. No member of SMC including staff, SMC Trust Board, Executive Principal, Designated Leadership Team or Designated Person for Child Protection are permitted or mandated to investigate allegations of abuse.

#### 6.7 Review and link to other Policies and Documents

**6.7.1** This Policy is to be reviewed at least every three years.

**6.7.2** This Policy is available on the website and in printed format from the Executive Principal.

**6.7.3** This Policy links to:

- (a) EOTC Policy
- (b) Privacy Policy
- (c) Professional Standards of Behaviour Guidelines
- (d) Employment Responsibility Policy
- (e) Staff Handbook
- (f) Staff induction procedure
- (g) School ICT agreement
- (h) Whanau and Other Volunteer Help

# Child Protection Policy

Approved by:

Executive Principal Print Name: DIANA PATZHETT

Signature: 

Compliance Print Name: Nicola Church

Committee Chair: Signature: NCh

Trust Board Chair: Print Name: D. Humphries

Signature:  25/3/24

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Next Review: 2026



### Professional Standards of Behaviour at St Margaret's College

Thank you for the contribution you make to the wider life of St Margaret's College (SMC). It is the diversity of engagement with our school that enhances the holistic education we aspire to provide. Since its foundation in 1910, SMC maintains high expectations and a commitment to reflect the values that align with our special character. By understanding and supporting these professional standards of behaviour, we ensure that all who engage with SMC share these aspirations and add to our rich tradition of excellence.

If you have any concerns or would like any support with upholding these standards, please see a member of the SMC Leadership team.

#### Communication

- Treat others with respect and fairness
- Speak positively, be supportive and non-judgemental to students/parents/guardians and value their relationships with SMC
- Act in a reasonable manner with students and/or parents/guardians
- Avoid any situations in which your words or actions could be open to misinterpretation by students, parents or others and bring SMC into disrepute, particularly in tutoring, counselling, coaching and written communication
- Be respectful of others and of the environment, especially in shared and public places.

#### Health and Safety

- Take care not to compel or coerce any student or tutor to carry out duties for which they are untrained or unqualified
- Actively support SMC policies and procedures for ensuring:
  - the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of all students and parents/guardians  
<https://www.stmargarets.school.nz/school-policies/>
  - the prevention of harassment or discrimination against any person on the grounds of colour, race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religious or political belief or any other grounds
- Ensure that SMC resources and equipment, keys etc are maintained to a high standard and returned to SMC at the conclusion of use.

#### Reputation

- Maintain professional and ethical standards at all times, for example, a professional appearance, language and general deportment
- Be organised and punctual to all commitments and attend appropriate meetings and events
- Deliver the responsibility/activity effectively, with a high level of competence
- Protect yourself as a professional by self-monitoring your on-line behaviour and your face to face physical behaviour with parents/guardians
- Ensure student dress regulations are met and that students show pride in wearing the SMC uniform.

#### Privacy

- Recognise the need to respect privacy and use information responsibly and professionally
- Share information and SMC resources in a fair and reasonable manner
- Be discreet and able to keep confidences.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Head of Faculty/Person in Charge

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

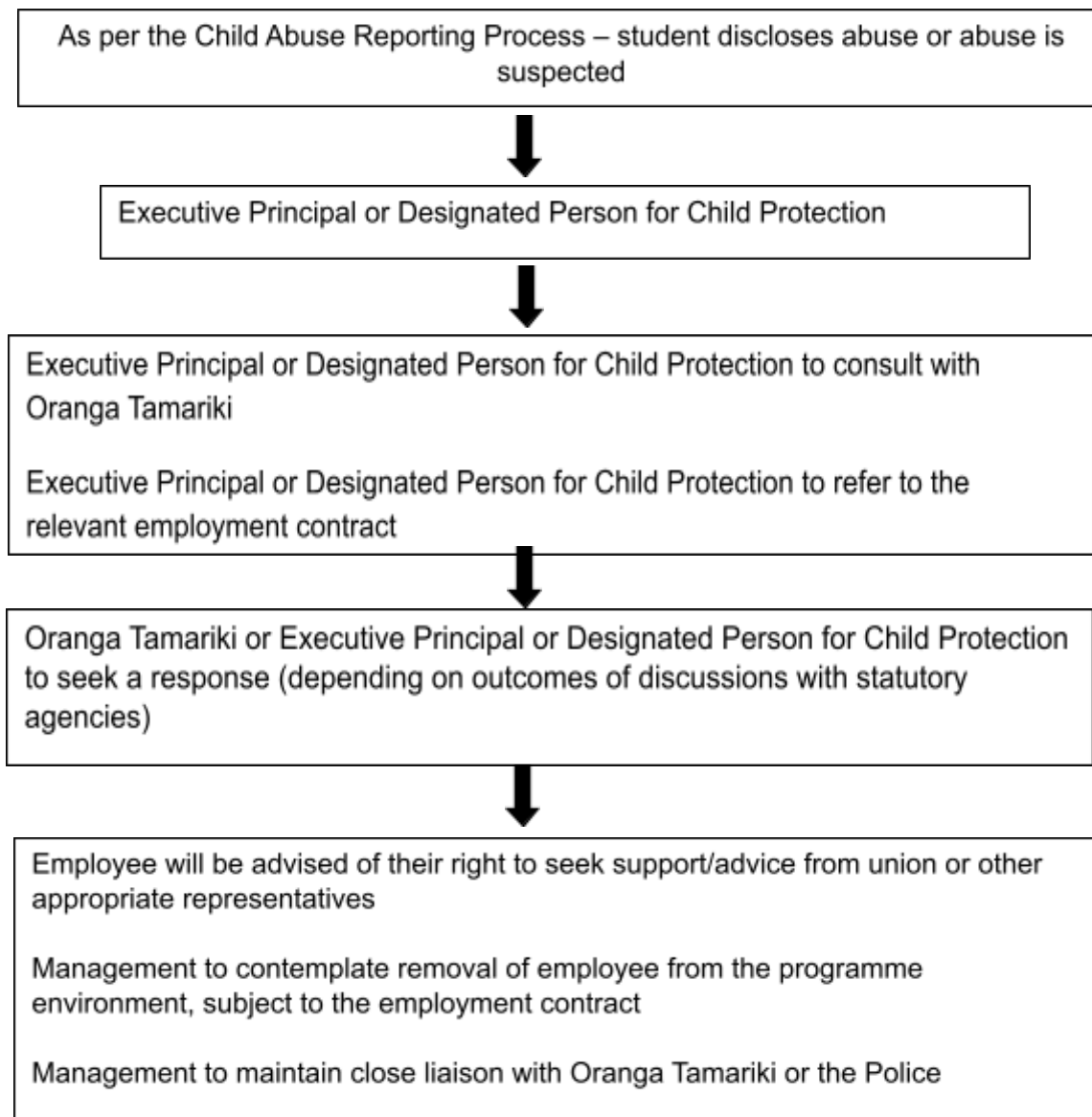
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix 2 When an Allegation is made against a Member of Staff

All matters involving allegations against staff need to be escalated to the management team

To ensure the child is kept safe, management may take steps to remove the staff member against whom an allegation has been made from the environment, subject to the requirements of the applicable individual or collective employment contract and relevant employment law.

### Disclosure / Allegations of Child Abuse by a Staff Member



## **Appendix 3      When should a concern be taken to the Child Protection Officer (CPO)?**

Reports of concern or disclosures of harm may come from a number of different sources.

A disclosure of harm refers to any matter which has previously resulted in or may result, in future, in serious harm to a student, whether physical or emotional. This may include, but is not limited to, disclosures of physical or sexual assault or reports of suicidality.

In any one of the situations below, the CPO will open a confidential and secure Child Protection File to record relevant information and steps taken.

1. If report of concern or harm notification is received from an external agency:
  - a. Report is passed to CPO
  - b. CPO discusses with Executive Principal
  - c. On agreement with the Executive Principal, CPO will likely check in with School Counsellors and appropriate Head of School as to whether any concerns have been raised around the child; and ask them to be on a watching brief for any concerns around the child.
2. If a disclosure is made to the School Counsellor of serious harm to a student:
  - a. The Counsellor is bound by a separate set of ethics and legal requirements around client confidentiality, and may choose not to pass this disclosure onto the Head of School, Executive Principal or CPO if there is no serious or imminent harm to the child.
  - b. Where the Counsellor is uncertain as to whether they should break confidentiality or refer this disclosure on, they may first discuss the matter with their external supervisor.
  - c. If the Counsellor decides that the child is at risk of serious or imminent harm, they may choose to make their own disclosure to:
    - i. The child's parents or caregiver, and/or
    - ii. The NZ Police, and/or
    - iii. Oranga Tamariki, and/or
    - iv. Child and Adolescent Family Services (CAF)
  - d. Where the Counsellor has chosen to make a disclosure or report of concern to a child's parents or caregiver, they should always notify the relevant Head of School that they have done so.
  - e. Where the Counsellor has chosen to make a disclosure to the Police, Oranga Tamariki, or CAF; they should always notify the CPO that they have done so.
3. If a disclosure is made to a staff member (teaching, pastoral, or leadership) of serious harm to a student, the staff member should make a report to the CPO.

## **Appendix 4      Process for handling a CPO file:**

1. Any matter brought to the CPO will result in the opening of a file (see Appendix 1), even if no further action is decided on or carried out. If no further action is required, this will be noted on the file and the file may immediately be closed.
2. On opening a file, the CPO will report to the Executive Principal within 24 hours to advise that a file has been opened.
3. The CPO, in conjunction with the Head of School or person making the disclosure (eg. staff member, Counsellor, or student) will complete the initial sections of the Child Protection Incident Form, recording student details and the nature of the incident or harm.
4. If the initial report is made by a member of staff who is not a Counsellor or a Head of School, the matter will be moved to sit with the CPO once this file has been opened, and they will not proceed with any further investigation or action unless asked to do so by the CPO or Head of School.
5. Once the student details and the nature of the incident or harm has been completed, the CPO will work through the rest of the form to decide what further action to take. Where possible, this decision will be made in consultation with the Executive Principal and Head of School.
6. The CPO may contact Oranga Tamariki to ask for advice before proceeding, but will not contact the NZ Police, CAF or parents without discussing the matter with the Executive Principal and agreeing on the next course of action.
7. As far as practicable, the process around notification and further communication of an incident, and the decisions around who to involve in the matter, should be led by the child. Their wishes and best interests should drive any decisions to communicate on the matter with: parents, teachers, pastoral staff, and outside agencies.

## Appendix 5 Child Protection Incident and Follow Up

*This form is to be completed by or in conjunction with the Child Protection Officer. It should sit in any child protection file opened by the Child Protection Officer, and will be stored securely and confidentially.*

<b>Student Name:</b>
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<b>Student Date of Birth:</b>
<b>Age at date of form completion:</b>

<b>NSN Number:</b>
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<b>Is the student a boarder?</b>	Yes / No
----------------------------------	----------

<b>Parent and Caregiver Information:</b> <i>Include name, phone number and physical addresses</i>		
<b>Mother</b>	<b>Father</b>	<b>Other</b>

<b>Emergency Contact details (from student file):</b>
---

<b>Current Custody Arrangement:</b>
<b>Student's living arrangement at time of form completion:</b>

**Notes of any existing serious pastoral concerns around the child:**

**Notes of any existing other agencies or medical professionals (including counsellors) currently known to be working with the child or family:**

**Person making disclosure to the Child Protection Officer:**

**Date and time of first disclosure:**

**Reasons for considered risk or summary of report of concern or disclosure of harm:**

*Additional space for use if required*

**Reasons for considered risk or summary of report of concern or disclosure of harm:**

**Sections below to be completed by Child Protection Officer**

**1. Notification to Executive Principal**

**Date/Time:**

**Immediate action:**

**2. Consideration of next steps:**

<b>Communication with:</b>	<b>Decision made:</b>	<b>Date and brief details of communication:</b>
Oranga Tamariki	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> <li>● No or N/A</li> </ul>	
NZ Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> <li>● No or N/A</li> </ul>	
CAF or other mental health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> <li>● No or N/A</li> </ul>	
Parents or guardians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> <li>● No or N/A</li> </ul>	
Emergency contact on student file	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> <li>● No or N/A</li> </ul>	
Head of School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> <li>● No or N/A</li> </ul>	
School Counsellor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> <li>● No or N/A</li> </ul>	
School Nurse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> <li>● No or N/A</li> </ul>	
Boarding House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> <li>● No or N/A</li> </ul>	
Deputy Head of School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> <li>● No or N/A</li> </ul>	
Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> </ul>	

<b>Communication with:</b>	<b>Decision made:</b>	<b>Date and brief details of communication:</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No or N/A</li> </ul>	
Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No or N/A</li> </ul>	
Classroom teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No or N/A</li> </ul>	
School reception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No or N/A</li> </ul>	
Attendance officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No or N/A</li> </ul>	
Finance office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No or N/A</li> </ul>	
Trust Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No or N/A</li> </ul>	
Other students or their families (eg. parents of a friend making the disclosure)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No or N/A</li> </ul>	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No or N/A</li> </ul>	

**3. Further notes:**

**Conversation with Oranga Tamariki:**

**Other conversations or follow up:**

**4. Follow up:**

**Communication back to student around next steps and wider sharing of information:**

**Communication back to Head of School and/or Counsellor around next steps and wider sharing of information:**

**Development of safety plan for return to school (if applicable):**

**5. Regular check-ins scheduled as appropriate:**

Number/frequency of follow-up check-ins:

Date(s):

Check-in with (eg. student, Head of School, parents, Oranga Tamariki):

Calendar notification made by CPO:

**OR**

Check-in delegated to:

**Follow-up or check-in notes:**

## **6. Closure of file:**

*File may be closed after:*

- Successful resolution of concern or incident
- Student leaving the school

*CPO to complete*

- Summary of file uploaded to secure CPO notes section of Kamar
- Physical file passed to Executive Principal