

Exemplar	Policy
	Policy Category: GMA
	Date Created: June 2021
	Policy Name: Staff Safety Checking Policy

This operational policy describes our procedure to ensure all those working at our childcare centre meet the safety check requirements specified in the Children’s Act 2014. This policy also contributes to the human resource management policies operated by this centre and ensures we comply with the Ministry of Education’s Early Childhood Education Licensing Criteria HS31 and GMA7a.

Position Statement

Our centre ensures the safety of children through a robust staff selection process. We want our staff to:

- be safe to work with our children;
- understand the needs and development of children and know how to act to ensure these are met;
- actively contribute to our culture of child protection; to support and adhere to our child protection and child abuse policies
- be prepared to make child safety at our centre their top priority.

A breach of this policy will be regarded as serious misconduct and subject to disciplinary action.

Issue Outline

Not all children have the support and protection of a trusted adult, but they must do so at our centre.

Policy principles

To ensure our children are safe, we undertake a series of safety checking steps when appointing all staff at this centre:

- verification of identity
- recruitment interview
- information about work history
- referee information
- information from the Teaching Council where a teacher is certificated
- acceptance of a satisfactory Police vet check report.

On the basis of these safety checking steps, we will then form a view about the suitability of staff to work as a “Children’s Worker” under the Act (a Risk Assessment). This view, along with copies of all original documents described above, will be recorded on the staff member’s personnel file.

Detail

Verification of identity

We require two forms of identity from prospective staff when applying for roles with us: a primary and a secondary document as specified in the Children's Regulations 2015. These documents must be current, the originals seen. A copy kept (both sides of the driver's licence if used) and annotated with the words "Original sighted **DATE** by **NAME**"

Recruitment interview

All prospective staff are expected to participate in a full recruitment interview. The interview not only examines the background of the candidate, but also their suitability to demonstrate the values of our centre and in a manner that meets the expectations of this policy.

Information about work history

We look for a work history that is clear and transparent. Any issues are noted and followed up in the candidate's interview.

Referee information

We undertake a minimum of two telephone referee checks, one of which must be with a recent employer, and will examine matters of safe practices as part of the discussion.

Information from the Teaching Council

For all teaching staff with a current practicing certificate, we will check with the Teaching Council to ensure there are no endorsements that reflect concerns over the safe practice with children.

Acceptance of a Police vet check report

We will obtain a current Police vet check report for all staff at our centre to identify any issue in the individual's recent background that would reflect children at our centre might be at risk
OR

We accept a registered teacher's current practicing certificate as evidence that a current Police vet check report has been obtained by the Teaching Council and that this has met their criteria for being of good character and fit to be a teacher. We will obtain a current Police vet check report for all other staff at our centre to identify any issue in the individual's recent background that would reflect children at our centre might be at risk.

All staff will be required to undertake a periodic safety check every three years.

Personnel records

We retain information gathered to comply with this Staff Safety Checking Policy in individual personnel files. Police vet check reports, where gathered, are retained even where replaced with a more current version. All personnel records are kept strictly confidential in secure storage.

Allegations or concerns about staff

When a staff member is suspected, we will follow the procedure outlined in our Child Protection and Human Resource policies.

If there is a need to pursue an allegation as an employer, consult with Oranga Tamariki or the Police before advising the person concerned, informing them that they have a right to seek legal advice and providing them with an opportunity to respond. We will otherwise follow ordinary disciplinary policies.

We commit not to use settlement agreements, where these are contrary to a culture of child protection. In addition, we observe the following:

- Give no persons, other than employed staff over the age of 17 years, tasks that involve nappy changing, toileting or responsibility for the supervision of children.
- Ensure that staff and other adults visiting or working in the centre are well supported and visible in the activities they perform with children. While the centre respects the privacy of our children, staff and visitors, visibility will be given priority to ensure the safety of all concerned.
- Ensure the centre's procedures protect staff from unjustified allegations of abuse.

The Manager will:

- Always prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the child.
- Carry out staff safety checking (including Police Vetting) in accordance with the Children (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) Regulations 2015.
- Maintain appropriate records.

Staff will:

- Always prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the child.
- Familiarise themselves with this centre policy.
- Maintain confidentiality.

Protected Disclosure

When a staff member or associate brings a case of child abuse to the attention of the center or the authorities, our centre will not disclose the name of the person without their permission unless it is to Oranga Tamariki or the Police and is necessary to do so in the interests of the child.

Alignment with Other Policies

- Personnel policies – police checks and careful employment of temporary staff, casual staff, friends of friends, volunteers
- Outings and excursions policy
- Information & Complaints policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Goals for Adulty Behaviour

Relevant Background (including legislation/regulation references)

Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008

Ministry of Education Early Childhood Education Licensing Criteria Governance and Management GMA7a

Children's Act 2014 and associated regulations.

Impacts of Policy on Staff, Parents, Children

Comprehensive safety checking of all staff will give assurance to parents, staff and children that our centre takes child protection seriously and that our centre is a safe centre for children.

Alignment with the Centre Philosophy

This policy is aligned with the centre's philosophy.

Implications and/or Risks

In making an appointment we apply a risk assessment by weighing up all of the information gathered and select a person who we believe;

- is a safe person to work with children.
- understands the needs and development of children and knows how to act to ensure these are met.
- supports and adheres to our child protection and child abuse policies
- will make the safety of children at our centre a priority.

Implementation

The implementation of this policy influences the centre's recruitment and HR policies and will form part of all staff induction and in-service training.

Review

Review annually or when there is a significant change in the area of the policy topic.

Authorised:	
Date:	June 2021
Review Date:	
Consultation Undertaken:	