



West Melton Gymnastics Club Safeguard Policy

Rationale: The Coaches/Staff/Management and Committee of the Club are committed to the prevention of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse of tamariki. This commitment means that the interests and welfare of tamariki are the prime considerations when any decision is made about suspected abuse.

Purpose:

- To provide a safe environment for all tamariki and coaches/staff.
- To ensure all coaches / staff are aware of the steps to take when dealing with suspected child abuse.
- To ensure all records and conversations remain confidential.
- To ensure all involved at the West Melton Gymnastics Club are aware that anybody can report a suspected abuse situation.

Principles

- The interest and protection of the child is paramount at all times.
- We recognise the rights of families to participate in decisions about their child.
- We have a commitment to all coaches/staff being able to recognise signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect and are able to take appropriate action in response. We will comply with relevant legislation responsibilities.
- We are committed to share information in a timely way and to discuss any concerns about an individual child with coaches/staff and Safeguarding Lead.
- We are committed to promote a culture where coaches/staff feel confident they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal.
- We are committed to working with other organisations to ensure child protection is consistent and of high quality.
- We are committed to supporting coaches/staff to work in accordance with this policy.

Definitions:

- Abuse: the harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually) ill-treatment, neglect or deprivation of any child.
- Closed space: any area where another adult has restricted visual access from the outside.
- Children's Coach: people who work with tamariki or have regular contact with tamariki as part of their role.

PROCEDURES

Prevention of Child Abuse and supporting safeguarding of children

Responsibility of Management

- The Safeguard Lead will undertake to implement all requirements to ensure tamariki are protected from ill-treatment and their health and safety is maintained.
- The Safeguard Lead will undertake to implement the requirements of **The Vulnerable Children Act 2014** to ensure all employees, contractors, people undertaking paid work and volunteer work in the Club undergo a safety check process.
- The Safeguard Lead will undertake to implement the requirements of **The Privacy Act 1993 and the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1993** to keep tamariki safe when abuse or suspected abuse is reported or investigated.

Staff Selection

- The Club will employ coaches/staff only after an interview and thorough checking on the applicant's work history. This will include completing a Safeguarding course.
- All employees, including contractors and volunteers will have been passed through the Police Vet Check Process.
- The Head Coach will ensure when selecting staff that they have the skills and attributes to ensure tamariki's safety.
- When employing temporary or casual staff, the applicant's referees will be contacted prior to employment.
- All staff, including volunteers, will be required to read and abide by the Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy.

Safety Checks for Relievers

- The Club will ensure all checks have been completed for all relief coaches prior to their beginning work in the Club.

Coach Supervision

- Two coaches will be rostered on at all times if ratios permit it 6:1. At no time will a coach be left alone with tamariki in the Club or be alone with tamariki in a closed space in the Club.
- Coaches must be aware of, and review situations they may place themselves in, to ensure children's safety and their own.
- Coaches are solely responsible for their own tamariki if they take them outside of the licensed area.
- If coaches take any tamariki outside of the Club Premises they must do so in line with the Excursion Policy.
- Careful consideration will be taken in the deployment of coaches to ensure tamariki are supervised at all times, and coaches are at all times visible to other coaches.
- If it is necessary for a child to be withdrawn by a coach this should be to an open space in the Club.
- The care of tamariki involves physical contact; this is normal, natural and desirable. It is natural to touch them to show comfort, to reassure them, and to give them praise, as well as taking care of some of their physical needs. However, it is not acceptable to force unwanted affection or touching on a child. Physical contact with tamariki during spotting and lifting for a task should only be done when the coach has asked permission to the child and permission is granted by the child to do so.
- When coaches may need to help with toileting tamariki or helping them change their clothes, other coaches should be made aware that they are carrying out these duties.
- Whenever possible, if tamariki need to change their clothes they will be supported to do this themselves.
- If tamariki are to leave the Club, they are only to leave with their parent or caregiver or if a parent or caregiver has spoken to the head coach/senior coach about the child going with someone else.

Parent Involvement

- The Club has an open-door policy where parents are welcome to visit at any time and to be involved as much as possible within the Club. However, this is at the discretion of the coaches if parents can stay and watch, due to distraction and safeguarding of other children.
- Parents and visitors are not permitted to undertake any caregiving routines with other people's tamariki or be alone with them.
- If any coaches are concerned that a parent/adult collecting a child may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs they will seek support from another staff member and:
 - Ask the parent/adult if anyone can be contacted to take them home or a taxi fare offered.
 - In the case of parents/adults where the above is not satisfactory and the safety of tamariki and staff is at risk, the Police will be informed.
- Tamariki cannot leave the centre without direct permission from parents, except in an emergency. If a non-custodial parent/guardian wishes to collect a child from the Club, the custodial parent will be informed before the child leaves the club.

Professionalism Procedures

- Management will encourage coaches/staff to keep their personal and professional lives separate. Confidentiality is to be maintained at all times.
- At least once each year, the Child Protection Policy will be reviewed by the coaches /staff and will be discussed at a coaches/staff meeting to ensure coaches/staff are familiar with the policy and are continually reminded of their responsibilities.
- The management team is committed to ensuring coaches/staff are familiar with this policy, and is aware of how to prevent, recognise and respond to abuse. All new coaches/staff will familiarise themselves with this policy and the safeguarding booklet during their induction process.
- If parents have concerns about the treatment of a child by our coaches/staff, they are encouraged to make this known to the Head Coach, Operations Manager, or Safeguard Lead, who will ensure that the matter is investigated and acted on immediately as per the Complaints Procedure.

Preventative Education

- All will promote positive guidance of tamariki's behaviour.
- Coaches/staff work as a team to ensure they can support each other in managing tamariki's challenging behaviours. If a coach is feeling stressed by the behaviour of a child, they should immediately communicate this to another member of the coaching team.
- Information is provided on the prevention and recognition of child abuse as set in safeguarding children.
- Education of tamariki and parents/whanau is important in the prevention of child abuse. We encourage parents to make use of education programmes organised by agencies in the community.

Using Professional Agencies

- The management team and coaches/staff will be aware of the professional agencies to contact in the case of suspected child abuse. The staff could contact the Community Public Health Nurse, or Parent-line for support, or contact the Care and Protection division of the Oranga Tamariki. In a serious case, the staff may have contact with the Police.
- Staff should not assume responsibility beyond their level of expertise, and the Safeguard Lead should contact a professional agency for support where necessary.

Protection from Exposure to Inappropriate Material

Definition:

- Inappropriate material is anything of an explicitly sexual or violent nature.
- All coaches/staff will be made aware of cyber safety practices when using ICT with tamariki.
- Any magazines and other materials provided for tamariki to use will be checked for inappropriate images.

RESPONDING TO SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Any Person in the Centre is able to Report Suspected Child Abuse

- Always believe what tamariki tell you, and what you see.
- Always take action in the short term to ensure the immediate safety of the child. This will mean contacting Oranga Tamariki or the Police if you think there is an immediate risk of the child being abused again.
- Record your concerns or communication with the child. All records will be stored confidentially and securely, in the Clubs filing system and made available only to people directly dealing with the abuse.
- Do not make decisions alone. Consult with someone experienced. If there is no short-term risk, take time to consult thoroughly in order to make a well-informed decision. If you are certain that the suspected child abuse has occurred outside the family or by a person not closely known to the family, speak to the parents before you report the suspected abuse. Be sure you have the skills, help and support to present the information to the parents.
- If you suspect that the abuse may have been perpetrated by a family member or someone close to the family, do not contact them. Obtain support from an appropriate person who will inform them at an appropriate time.
- If you suspect that child abuse has been perpetuated by a coach/staff member or other person assisting at the club, you should report the matter promptly to the Safeguard Lead who will then report the matter to statutory authorities. This procedure does not preclude the right of any staff member to report instances of child abuse directly to Oranga Tamariki or the New Zealand Police.
- Act on your concerns. Don't leave it to someone else or hope it won't happen again. If you have told the person you believe is responsible for taking action and they do not act, take further action yourself.
- The situation can be stressful. Seek support for yourself by informing the Safeguard Lead. The Safeguard Lead will obtain support from agencies and organisation's that specialise in abuse situations.
- Outside organisation's which offer support are Oranga Tamariki, Police, Community Public Health Nurse, Area Health Boards, Child and family counselling Services, Awhina Wahine, Child help lines, Community Mental Health. (Clubs should include contact numbers for local services here).

Guidelines for Staff to Follow when a Child Discloses Abuse

Staff must:

- **LISTEN** to the child.
- Believe what they say.
- Say that you are glad they told you.
- Say "Sorry it happened".
- Let them know it was not their fault.
- Let them know you will help.
- Record and date the disclosure.

Most importantly you are there to support the child.

Allegations or Concerns about Staff

If an allegation of abuse is made about a coach/staff member, the Club will follow the procedures as outlined in Appendix A:

- If a coach/staff member is aware that an allegation of abuse of a child has been made against them they are strongly advised to follow this procedure:
 - Contact a lawyer specialising in allegations of abuse of tamariki.
 - The Club will follow the procedures set out in Appendix A.
 - Should allegations of abuse against a coach/staff member be proven this will be treated as serious misconduct.

Appendix A

If a Staff Member is accused of Abusing a Child, the Procedures below will be followed.

The Safeguard Lead will:

- Make sure that the child is safe and protected in the club environment.
- Inform the employee of their right to support from a person/s of their own choosing, such as a legal representative, family member or friend.
- Inform the Operations Manager and Committee as soon as possible.
- Keep records of any formal discussions regarding the matter.
- Contact the child's parents/caregivers when appropriate.
- Contact insurer and/or legal advice.

The Head Coach/Operations Manager and Committee will:

- Grant the employee discretionary leave.
- Conduct the initial investigation.
- Inform Oranga Tamariki and the Police if necessary. The decision to follow up on any allegations should be made in consultation with these agencies.
- Invoke disciplinary procedures as per the coaches/staff member's Employment Contract.
- The Centre will treat employees accused of child abuse fairly and according to their contract.

**PROCEDURES WHERE
Child Abuse is Suspected / Discovered**



ABUSE SUSPECTED / DISCOVERED
Advise the Safeguard Lead/Head Coach and
Operations Manager



*If in immediate danger (i.e. child cannot return home)
act with urgency. Contact Oranga Tamariki*

*All staff have the right to take any concerns for the
safety and well-being of a child directly to Oranga
Tamariki and/or the Police.*



FACTS RECORDED



CONSULT WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES (HEALTH NURSE, Oranga Tamariki)

Concerns Confirmed

1. Report to OT / Police.
Await further contact before taking any action.
2. Seek support for yourself.
3. Advise Safeguard Officer/Head Coach /Operational Manager

Concerns not Confirmed.

Continue to closely monitor the situation
in consultation with others.

NOTE: The Safeguard Lead/Coaches/Staff/Operations Manager/Committee have the right to ask for confidentiality when reporting a suspected case abuse to OT / Police. This must be stated clearly in the first contact with OT / Police.

Appendix C

Children's Worker Safety Checklist

Checks Required for Children's Workers

The following checks must have been completed for all people a specified organisation is seeking to employ or engage as a children's worker (including as a contractor) from 1 July 2015 for core children's workforce roles, and from 1 July 2016 for non-core children's workforce roles.

1. Identity confirmation, either by:
 - A. Use of an **electronic identity credential** (e.g., the RealMe identity verification service), and a search of personnel records to check that the identity has not been claimed by someone else.
 - B. Following the regulatory process to provide confidence that:
 - The identity exists (i.e. that it is not fictitious) by **checking an original primary identity document**.
 - The identity is a 'living' identity and the potential children's worker uses that identity in the community by **checking an original secondary identity document**.
 - The potential children's worker links to the identity either by checking an identity document that contains a **photo**, or by using an **identity referee**.
 - Searching **personnel records** to check that the identity has not been claimed by someone.
2. An **interview** of the potential children's worker. The interview may be conducted via telephone or other communications technology.
3. Obtaining and considering a **work history**, covering the preceding five years, provided by the potential Children's worker.
4. Obtaining and considering information from at least one **referee**, not related to the potential Children's worker or part of their extended family.
5. Obtaining and considering information from a **New Zealand Police vet**.
6. Evaluation of the above information to **assess the risk** the potential Children's worker would pose to the safety of tamariki if employed or engaged, taking into account whether the role is a core Children's worker or non-core Children's worker role.

Checks Required for Periodic Rechecking

Every three years following their checks at the required standard, the following checks must be complete for each person an organisation continues to employ or engage as either a core or non-core Children's worker.

1. Confirmation that the Children's worker has not changed their name from the name on the documents produced during the initial identity confirmation (i.e., the presented primary or secondary document). If there has been a change to the person's name since he or she was last safety checked, the person must reconfirm his or her identity by producing a supporting name change document relating to his or her name change.
2. Obtaining and considering information from a **New Zealand Police vet**.
- 3.. Evaluation of the above information to **assess the risk** the Children's worker would pose to the safety of tamariki if employed or engaged, taking into account whether the role is a core Children's workforce or non-care Children's worker role.

Ref: Children's worker safety checking under the Vulnerable Children Act 2014 RC v 1.00 May 2015

Links: <http://Childrensactionplan.govt.nz/whats-new/Childrens-workforce-guidelines-available/>