

CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON PROTECTION POLICY

RATIONALE

Baradene College of the Sacred Heart provides an education with a Special Character reflecting its Catholic faith and five goals.

The Goals of Sacred Heart education are founded on the belief in the dignity of each person.

In terms of the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989, Education Act 1989 and Vulnerable Children Act 2014, the College has a responsibility for promoting the best interests of vulnerable children and taking measures aimed at ensuring the wellbeing and safety of children and young persons in its care, including the prevention of abuse or neglect. The interests of the child and young person will be the paramount concern in accordance with these Acts.

This policy provides a set of guidelines for the College to deal with protection issues relating to children and young persons, in this context, hereafter referred to as students.

OBJECTIVES

1. In recognising the safety of students as paramount, ensure student safety and protection from potential or further abuse or neglect.
2. To ensure that all staff are familiar with the Child and Young Person Protection Policy, its guidelines and related policies.
3. To educate all staff to be observant of and vigilant to indicators of suspected abuse or neglect of students and the procedures for managing cases of suspected abuse or neglect of students.
4. To ensure all staff are confident and have the appropriate training to raise issues of or concerns around student safety..
5. For all employees of the College to fulfill their responsibility for the safe management of identified and suspected abuse or neglect of students.
6. To treat all incidents with confidentiality and respect of privacy, sensitivity and within the procedural guidelines and the requirements of the law.
7. To document and report matters in accordance with the policy guidelines.
8. To undertake appropriate safety checks as required by law, for all individuals who come into contact with students at the College in accordance with policy guidelines.
9. To ensure that third parties that provide services to students by way of contract have a child protection policy. .

GUIDELINES

1. All concerns or observed incidents or reports of incidents should be reported directly to the Counsellors or Senior Management of the College immediately.
2. The Counsellors and/or Senior Management will take immediate steps to protect the student, document the report and where necessary, refer the concern. If a referral is made to Child, Youth and Family Services, the Principal will be informed.
3. Where a staff member (other than the Principal) is accused of abuse of a student, the complaint will be made to the Principal.
 - a. The Principal shall inform the staff member and the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. The procedures outlined in the Complaints Policy will be followed.
 - b. If necessary, the Principal will seek advice from an appropriate agency. Any staff member so accused shall, at the time of being informed of the allegations made against them, have the right to professional support from NZEI, PPTA or any other agency they choose.
4. Where the Principal is implicated, this complaint will be made to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. The Chairperson will inform the Principal and Board. If necessary, the Board will seek advice from an appropriate agency. Any Principal so accused has the right to appropriate professional support.
5. At any point, anyone may report a case of suspected abuse or neglect directly to the police or appropriate external agency. However, it is expected that the Senior Management and Counsellors be informed so support can be put in place for the student concerned.
6. The Principal may direct the Counsellor to refer a disclosure to the police and/or other appropriate external agency.
7. Where there is a clear concern for a student's immediate safety and welfare, the school will expedite the process during the school day, as far as is practicable, so that the student is in a safe and protected environment at the end of the school day.
8. Strict confidentiality must be preserved – the situation and names of all involved (student, family and other) must be discussed only with those who need to know.
9. During discussions about any complaint, all involved in the process must act, listen and respond in a non-judgemental way. The school's role is to respond to facts.
10. In making assessments, staff need to be mindful of their own level of experience or training.
11. Staff will be made aware of the guidelines in the detection of abuse or neglect of a student and the procedures for managing disclosures.

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12. A staff member will be designated as the student safety advocate and trained in child and young person protection management. At Baradene, this person is a Counsellor.
13. Third parties that provide services to students by way of contract are deemed to be those service providers that have direct interactions with students. In the event that a service provider does not have a policy as required by the Vulnerable Children Act 2014, that party is deemed to adhere to this Policy and must report any concerns relating to student safety or well-being immediately, to a member of staff of the College or Senior Management.
14. This policy will be made available on the College's website and will be reviewed at three yearly intervals.

INTERPRETATION

For the purposes of this Policy, the following terms have the corresponding meanings:

Abuse means the harming (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person. ¹

Neglect means the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

CONCLUSION

This policy is to ensure that Baradene College complies with its responsibilities under the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989, Education Act 1989 and Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

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¹ Section 2 (1), Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989