



grace rotorua  
GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ROTORUA  
*A Member of Grace Presbyterian Church of New Zealand*

# Child Protection Policy

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## Overview

“Since God has so loved us, we therefore love Jesus, love the church and love the world”.

We love the church by understanding that God’s church is the people; she is the bride of Christ. Loving the church also means loving each other who make up the church. Therefore, God has given Grace Church Rotorua the responsibility to protect the children and young people by providing a safe and secure environment where they’re safeguarded from any potential harm.

This policy is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at Grace Church Rotorua, including the prevention of child abuse and neglect. This policy will also provide a guide for those who will be involved with our children and young people. Guidelines on prevention and response to concerns about the wellbeing of a child, including possible abuse and neglect, will be outlined in this policy.

When any action is taken, the wellbeing of the child/young person is paramount. This is crucial when dealing with suspected abuse or neglect. Grace Church Rotorua will adhere to support the statutory agencies, Oranga Tamariki and the New Zealand Police, to investigate abuse and report cases and concerns to these agencies as per the process in this policy.

Grace Church Rotorua has appointed a Child Protection Committee<sup>1</sup> to the development of a Child Protection Policy (CPP); Florence Apikotoa, Jean-Pierre (JP) Apikotoa, Catherine Ford and Crystal Henry. They will be responsible for the establishment and yearly review of this policy, including any amendments that should arise in between reviews with regards, but not limited to, the Grace Presbyterian Church New Zealand (GPCNZ) Book of Order<sup>2</sup> and NZ legislation.

Grace Church Rotorua will not put any church member in a position beyond what they are trained and experienced to handle. This will ensure that the necessary training is given to each person who intends to work with children in the church.

## Purpose and Scope

Our child protection policy supports our staff (paid and voluntary) to respond appropriately to potential child protection concerns, including suspected abuse or neglect. It is Grace Church Rotorua’s commitment to protect children and young people from abuse and to recognise the important roles of the congregation in this commitment.

Grace Church Rotorua believes it is of the utmost importance to have competent and committed leadership who develop and maintain a child safe culture. For the policy to be effective, it needs to be read and understood by members of the congregation wanting to work with children and young people. The congregation must have an awareness of the policy’s existence. It requires an understanding that it is a shared responsibility in keeping the children and young people of Grace Church Rotorua safe.

This policy provides a framework and expectations to protect the children and young people at Grace Church Rotorua, including (but not limited to) staff reactions in response to actual/suspected abuse or neglect. It applies to all staff whether they are permanent or

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 4: Contacts

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.gracepresbyterianchurch.org.nz/resources/>

temporary. It is intended to protect all children and young people that staff may encounter, including siblings.

In New Zealand, statutory and non-statutory agencies provide a network of mutually supportive services, and it is important for Grace Church Rotorua to work with these agencies to respond to the needs of the children and families involved in a manner appropriate to the level of need and risk. Contact details for those who have been identified as a support network for Grace Church Rotorua will be provided as an appendix<sup>3</sup> to this policy.

Grace Church Rotorua will work continually to build and maintain a good working relationship with child protection agencies and support our staff to protect children and young people from abuse by consulting with the given experts with specialist knowledge and providing the necessary training and guidance.

This policy must be applied when members of the congregation have responsibility for children and young people. **This includes, but is not limited to, home group meetings, church related sleep overs (such as camp), Sunday school, church outings and transportation of children in private vehicles.**

## Principles

1. To comply with the Grace Presbyterian Church New Zealand Book of Order and NZ legislation associated with the safety of staff, children and young people.
2. To support the roles of the Police and Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki, in the investigation of suspected abuse or neglect.
3. To ensure the safety of children and young people at Grace Church Rotorua.
4. To provide a safe environment for children and young people at Grace Church Rotorua.
5. To ensure all complaints or allegations are dealt with effectively, including full, accurate and prompt sharing of information in the correct manner.
6. To provide training, guidance and support for all staff wanting to work with the children and young people at Grace Church Rotorua. This will include identifying the signs of potential abuse and neglect and appropriate actions in response.

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 4: Support Services

## Definitions

- **Child Abuse** refers to the harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill-treatment, neglect or deprivation of any child or young person. (S2 Oranga Tamariki Act 1989)
- **Physical Abuse** – A non-accidental act on a child that results in physical harm. This includes, but is not limited to, bullying, beating, hitting, shaking, burning, drowning, suffocating, biting, poisoning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse also involves fabrication or inducing of illness.
- **Emotional Abuse** – The persistent emotional ill treatment of a child to cause severe and persistent adverse effect on the child's emotional development. This can include a pattern of rejecting, degrading, ignoring, isolating, corrupting, exploiting or terrorising a child. It may also include age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It also includes seeing or hearing about the ill treatment of others. It may also in discrimination on the grounds of cultural practices, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation.
- **Sexual Abuse** – Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities (penetrative and non-penetrative - rape, kissing, touching, masturbation) as well as non-contact acts such as involving a child or young person to look at pornography such as sexual images, sexual activities and sexual behaviours.
- **Family Violence** – Can take many forms and includes not only acts of physical violence, but also intimidating behaviour such as threatening to harm people, pets or property. Children are always affected either emotionally or physically where there is family violence even if they are not personally injured or physically present. (**A legal definition of family violence** is provided in S9 of the Family Violence Act 2018.)
- **Neglect** – The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, leading to adverse or impaired physical or emotional functioning or development.
- **Child** – A person under the age of 14.
- **Child protection** – Activities carried out to ensure children are safe in cases where there is suspected abuse or neglect or the risk of abuse or neglect.
- **Child Protection Officer (CPO)** – Designated person responsible for providing advice and support to staff (paid and voluntary) where they have a concern about a child or who wants advice about the child protection policy.
- **Disclosure** – Information given to a staff member by the child, parent/caregiver or third party in relation to abuse or neglect.
- **Grooming** – The deliberate action of an adult to befriend a child/young person and establish an emotional connection with him or her.
- **New Zealand Police** – Statutory Agency responsible for responding to situations where there is immediate danger and working alongside with Oranga Tamariki in child

protection work. This may include but not limited to, investigating cases of abuse or neglect where an offence may have occurred.

- **Oranga Tamariki** – Statutory Agency responsible for investigating and responding to suspected abuse and neglect and for providing a statutory response to children found to be in need of protection.
- **Young Person** – A person of or over the age of 14 years up to the age of 18 years.

## **Guidance on Possible Abuse or Neglect**

Where child abuse is known or suspected, everything must be done to ensure the ongoing safety of the child concerned, along with the ongoing safety of any other child who is in close connection to the alleged perpetrator. The child is the primary concern, and all other concerns (including the guilt or innocence of the alleged perpetrator) must be secondary. This does not mean the alleged perpetrator is to be considered guilty without due investigation, but that a child's concern and safety comes first. In no way must any child be left in a harmful, or potentially harmful, situation.

Those at Grace Church Rotorua with responsibility for children and young people should be aware of their "duty of care" which precludes developing a sexual relationship with or grooming<sup>4</sup> of a child. Under no circumstance, will a sexual relationship between a staff member and a child/young person ever be acceptable.

Appendix 1 to this policy contains detailed information about:

- a. Recognising Abuse and Neglect
- b. Disclosure of Abuse
- c. Recording, Reporting and Responding to Suspected Abuse
- d. Procedures for Responding to Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect
- e. Allegations against Staff and Church Leaders
- f. Keeping the Family Informed

## **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Information regarding any abuse is highly sensitive and must be handled with appropriate confidentiality. Grace Church Rotorua will seek advice from Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police before identifying information about an allegation is shared with anyone, other than the Child Protection Officer. Staff should be aware that:

- Under sections 15 and 16 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, any person who believes that a child has been or is likely to be, harmed physically, emotionally, sexually, ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived, may report the matter to Oranga Tamariki or the Police and provided the report is made in good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against them.

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<sup>4</sup> See definitions pg. 4

- When collecting personal information about individuals, it is important to be aware of the requirements of the privacy principles – i.e. the need to collect the information directly from the individual concerned. In doing so, there must be transparency about the purposes for collecting the information and how it will be used, who can see the information, where it is held, what is compulsory/voluntary information, and that people have a right to request access to and correction of their information.
- Staff may, however, disclose information under the Privacy Act/Health Information Privacy Code where there is good reason to do so – such as where there is a serious risk to individual health and safety (see privacy principle 11<sup>5</sup>/Code rule 11). Disclosure about ill-treatment or neglect of a child/young person may also be made to the Police or Oranga Tamariki under sections 15 and 16 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989.

## **Professional development and safe practice**

### **Professional development**

All appointments made by the Church, including volunteers, will follow the requirements of the Church's screening process<sup>6</sup> of this policy. All aspects of the recruitment and screening procedures must be adhered to before any person commences working with children and/or young people. This will help determine the aptness and safety of the potential applicant or volunteer who will look at working with children and/or young people.

All employees and volunteers working with children or young people must go through the police vetting process at least once every three years.

### **Training**

Training, resources and/or advice will be available to ensure that all staff and volunteers can carry out their roles in terms of this policy, particularly:

- Recognising and responding to the signs and indicators of actual or suspected abuse
- Planning of environment, supervision and safe practice to minimise risk
- Understanding and complying with legal obligations regarding child abuse
- Dealing with child/parents/family
- Ensuring new and existing staff understand and can follow the Child Protection policy and the procedures for reporting a concern.

### **Safe Practice**

All staff and volunteers should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and examine the opportunities or possible situations where they may be alone with children. It is important for staff and volunteers who work with children to act in a way that is considered to be safe.

Outlined in Appendix 3 provides safe practice guidelines to those working with children and establishing boundaries in a range of situations.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1993/0028/latest/DLM297038.html>

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix 2: Procedures for Recruitment and Screening Process

## **Related documentation and review**

This Policy will be reviewed annually and updated regularly, to ensure it is kept up to date with changes that may have been made to the GPCNZ Book of Order, legislation, related policies and procedures, and in light of operational experience.

The overall responsibility for review of this policy rests with the Child Protection Committee.

## **Relevant Legislation**

- Care of Children Act 2004
- Children's Act 2014
- Children's (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) Regulations 2015
- Crimes Act 1961
- Family Violence Act 2018
- Education Act 1989
- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Human Rights Act 1993
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- Privacy Act 1993
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC)
- Vulnerable Children Act 2014

# Appendix 1

## Procedures for dealing with possible Abuse or Neglect

### a. Recognising Abuse and Neglect

#### Indicators of Abuse

The indicators for child abuse and neglect fall into three general categories:

- **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
- **Behavioural indicators:** The child's actions, 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.
- **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 due to their own medical or health condition. They may be overly stressed, tired, working or caring for children 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 displaced aggression towards weaker persons.

The indicators alone do not prove child abuse or neglect. Likewise, the absence of indicators does not exclude the possibility that abuse is occurring. If you have any concerns about the wellbeing of a child, seek advice from your Child Protection Officer, Reverend or Oranga Tamariki.

#### Emotional Abuse Indicators

##### Physical Indicators:

- Bed wetting or bed soiling with no medical cause
- Frequent psychosomatic complaints (e.g., headaches, nausea, abdominal pains)
- Non-organic failure to thrive
- Pale, emaciated
- Prolonged vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Malnutrition
- Dressed differently to other children in the family

**Behavioural Indicators:**

- Severe developmental lags with obvious physical cause
- Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
- Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
- Overly compliant
- Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
- Running away from home, avoiding attending at school
- Nightmares, poor sleeping patterns
- Anti-social behaviours
- Lack of self esteem
- Obsessive behaviours
- Eating disorders

**Caregiver Indicators:**

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

**Neglect Indicators****Physical Indicators:**

- Dressed inappropriately for the season or the weather
- Often extremely dirty and unwashed
- Severe nappy rash or other persistent skin disorders
- Inadequately supervised or left unattended frequently or for long periods
- May be left in the care of an inappropriate adult
- Does not receive adequate medical or dental care
- Malnourished - this can be both underweight and overweight
- Lacks adequate shelter
- Non-organic failure to thrive

**Behavioural Indicators:**

- Severe developmental lags without an obvious physical cause
- Lack of attachment to parents/caregivers
- Indiscriminate attachment to other adults
- Poor school attendance and performance

- Demanding of affection and attention
- Engages in risk taking behaviour such as drug and alcohol abuse
- May steal food
- Poor social skills
- No understanding of basic hygiene

#### **Caregiver Indicators:**

- Puts own needs ahead of those of the child
- Fails to provide for the child's basic needs
- Demonstrates little or no interest in the child's life; does not attend school activities, social events
- Leaves the child alone or inappropriately supervised
- Drug and alcohol use
- Depression

### **Physical Abuse Indicators**

#### **Physical Indicators:**

- Bruises, welts, cuts and abrasions
- Burns - small circular burns, immersion burns, rope burns etc.
- Fractures and dislocations - skull, facial bones, spinal fractures etc.
- Multiple fractures at different stages of healing
- Fractures in very young children

#### **Behavioural Indicators:**

- Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
- Wary of adults or a particular person
- Vacant stare or frozen watchfulness
- Cringing or flinching if touched unexpectedly
- May be extremely compliant and eager to please
- Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
- Runs away from home or is afraid to go home
- May regress (e.g., bedwetting)
- May indicate general sadness
- Could have vision or hearing delay
- Is violent to other children, or to animals

#### **Caregiver Indicators**

- Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
- May appear unconcerned about the child's wellbeing
- May state the child is prone to injuries or lies about how they occur
- Delays in seeking medical attention
- May take the child to multiple medical appointments and seek medical treatment without an obvious need

## **Sexual Abuse Indicators**

### **Physical Indicators:**

- Unusual or excessive itching or pain in the genital or anal area
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
- Bruises, lacerations, redness, swelling or bleeding in genital, vaginal or anal area
- Blood in urine or stools
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy
- Discomfort in sitting or fidgeting as unable to sit comfortably

### **Behavioural Indicators:**

- Age-inappropriate sexual play or language
- Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge
- Refuses to go home, or to a specific person's home, for no apparent reason
- Fear of a certain person
- Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
- Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
- Overly compliant
- Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
- Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
- Eating disorders
- Compulsive behaviours

### **Caregiver Indicators:**

- May be unusually over-protective of the child
- Accuses the child of being sexually provocative
- Misuse's alcohol or drugs
- Invades the child's privacy (e.g., during dressing, in the bathroom)
- May favour the victim over other children

## **Family Violence Indicators**

### **Indicators in the child or young person:**

- Physical injuries consistent with the indicators of physical abuse
- Absenteeism from school
- Bullying or aggressive behaviour
- Complaints of headaches or stomach aches with no apparent medical reason
- Talking or describing violent behaviours

### **Indicators in the Victim:**

- Physical Injuries including - bruising to chest and abdomen, injuries during pregnancy
- Depression and/or anxiety
- Inconsistent explanations for injuries
- Fearful
- Submissive

### **Indicators in the Offender:**

- Isolates and controls partner and children
- Threatens, criticises, intimidates, uses aggressive and physical abuse towards partner and children
- Minimises and denies own behaviour, or blames victim for the perpetrator's own behaviour

### **b. Disclosure of Abuse**

Only a minority of children actively disclose abuse. Most child abuse is disclosed accidentally or through observation by an adult of a child's behaviour, words and physical appearance. When a child does disclose abuse, this needs to be taken very seriously. This applies irrespective of the setting, or your own opinion on what is being said. When a child tells you what has been happening to them, or when you witness or suspect child abuse, it is important that you, as the adult, remain **calm** and **confident**. The procedures below will help you respond to any disclosure that a child or adult makes to you, or any concerns that you have for a child's safety.

### **c. Recording, Reporting and Responding to Child Abuse**

Children do not generally have the power to stop abuse. They rely on others to help them. We must act in their best interest and take all reasonable steps to ensure their safety. Our legal obligations vary according to differing legislation, but our moral responsibility is to report suspected or disclosed child abuse. The Church and all individuals must report concerns or allegations of child abuse to the Child Protection Officer, Jean-Pierre Apikotoa, at the first possible opportunity to best ensure the safety of the child. If the child protection officer is unavailable, then consultation should occur with the minister.

Through consultation, a decision will be made as to whether to notify Oranga Tamariki or the Police. This could include a discussion with Oranga Tamariki regarding concerns and whether a formal report of concern should be made. If an immediate response is required to ensure the child's safety, contact should be made with Oranga Tamariki and/or the NZ Police directly.

Child abuse can involve ongoing, repeated or persistent abuse, or it may arise from a single incident. It can occur in many different settings and forms and may come to light in a variety of different ways. These can include, but are not limited to:

- Direct or indirect disclosure by the child or someone known to the child;
- Suspicions of abuse by those involved with the child;
- Allegations and/or direct observations or signs displayed in the child's physical or emotional behaviour;
- Direct witnessing of abuse.

#### **d. Procedures for Responding to Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect**

If a child reveals abuse to an adult:

- **RESPOND:**

- ▶ stay calm; Listen carefully
- ▶ Ask open-ended questions
- ▶ Don't rush the child through the conversation. Give the child or adult time to say what they want.
- ▶ Be patient and don't be scared of the child's/adult's emotions.
- ▶ Reassure them that they were right to tell and that they are not to be blamed
- ▶ Explain that you may have to pass on what the child or adult has told you as soon as you are aware that the child/adult is making a disclosure
- ▶ Give an age-appropriate explanation to a child of what the child can expect to happen next
- ▶ Record in writing what was said as soon as possible, using the child's own words where possible
- ▶ Report the concern to the appropriate statutory agency, in consultation with the Child Protection Officer

**DO NOT:**

- ▶ Re-interview the child
- ▶ Promise to keep secrets
- ▶ Enquire into the details of the alleged abuse. Let the child's next conversation be with a trained professional - Oranga Tamariki or the Police
- ▶ Ask leading questions
- ▶ Ask the child to undress to show bruises or markings

**Think "What if I'm RIGHT?" ... Not "What if I'm WRONG?"**

- **SAFETY:**

- ▶ Ensure the safety of the child.
- ▶ Always take action in the short term to ensure the immediate safety of a child.
- ▶ Contact **Oranga Tamariki (0508 326 459)** or the **Police (111)** if you think there is an immediate risk to the child.

- **RECORD:**

- ▶ After the conversation, the adult should document the details of the conversation. Do NOT write things out during the conversation, your focus should be on the child.

*The write-up should include:*

- ▶ Information about the child and alleged perpetrator
- ▶ Any details from the conversation, including the nature and frequency of the abuse
- ▶ The date the report was written

- ▶ Bruises or injuries that are visible on the child
- ▶ Any emotions displayed in the conversation.

- **CONSULT:**

- ▶ Do not make decisions alone. Consult with the Child the Protection Policy and the Child Protection Officer.

In the context of Grace Church Rotorua, the person who has “reasonable suspicion” (where reasonable people have sufficient general knowledge of appropriate and inappropriate interactions to be suspicious about a particular incident<sup>7</sup>), needs to consult and report the alleged abuse with the church leaders and the Police. The first person of contact should be the Child Protection Officer, Jean-Pierre (JP) Apikotoa. This person is ready to receive and respond to allegations of abuse. If this person is not available, consultation is to occur with the Minister, Paul Henry.

- **REPORT:**

- ▶ **IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS, REPORT THESE TO ORANGA TAMARIKI (0508 326 459) OR THE POLICE (111).** Inform the Child Protection Officer as soon as possible. Oranga Tamariki will require the child’s name, date of birth, address, and any details about the alleged perpetrator.
- ▶ Allegations made need to be made known to Oranga Tamariki and the Police.  
The church’s role is NOT to decipher the legitimacy of the abuse claims. Therefore, no church investigation should happen as these often make things worse, not better.
- ▶ Resolve doubts in favour of reporting - If members of the church disagree with the need to report, a responsible adult/staff member who has reasonable suspicion about abuse will report to Oranga Tamariki and the Police.

- **SUPPORT:**

- ▶ Seek support for yourself. Responding to a child protection issue can be stressful.
- ▶ Do NOT let doubts, fears or concerns slow you down.
- ▶ Do NOT be quick to suspect the child of lying. It is possible that some adults are lying in order to stop abuse from being brought out into the light<sup>8</sup>.
- ▶ Do NOT discuss the situation with the alleged perpetrator. This could compromise any investigation and could result in additional abuse, shame, etc. Again, let the authorities take care of this.

**Think “What if I’m RIGHT?” ... Not “What if I’m WRONG?”**

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<sup>7</sup> (Reju, Deepak. On Guard: Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse at Church (pg. 125). New Growth Press. Kindle Edition.)

<sup>8</sup> Crossway, ESV Study Bible Hard Cover - English Standard Version: Ephesians 5:3-13 (pg. 2270)

## **e. Additional guidance on Allegations or Concerns about Staff**

### **Allegations against Elders and Church Leaders**

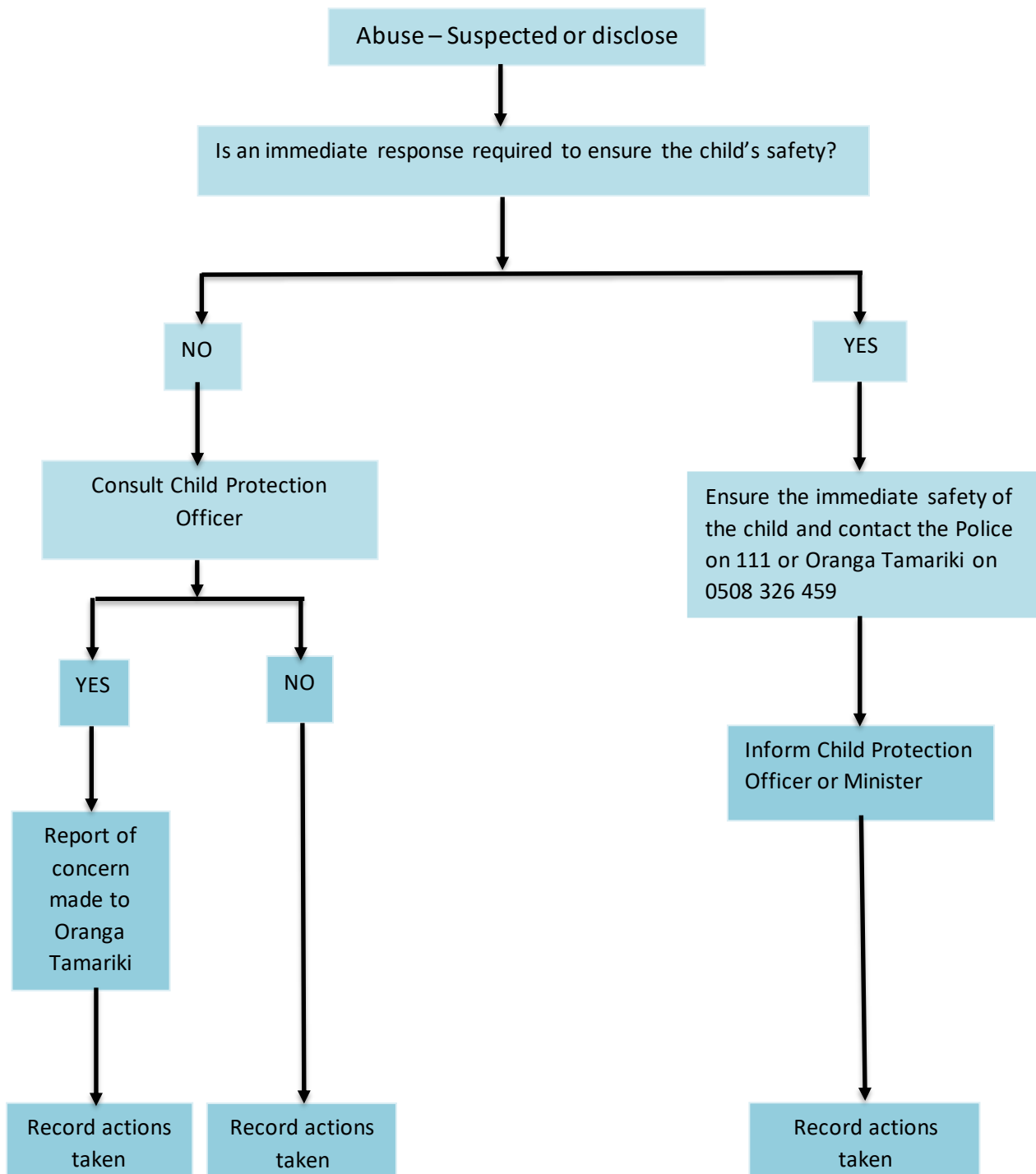
All allegations of abuse against children and young persons must be reported to the Police/Oranga Tamariki. Chapters 27-34 of GPCNZ Book of Church Order outlines the process for dealing with complaints against ministers (Teaching Elders). The church process may need to be initiated if there is a need to ensure the immediate safety of people through suspension of a minister pursuant to 34-4a, b. The Child Protection Officer is responsible for notifying the Moderator of the Northern Presbytery, Tony Bracefield, of the offence.

### **f. Keeping the Family Informed**

Although the parent or caregiver of the child will usually be informed of concerns, there may be times when those with parental responsibility may not be initially informed. This may happen in circumstances when:

- The parent or caregiver is the alleged perpetrator
- It is possible that the child may be intimidated into silence
- There is a strong likelihood that evidence will be destroyed
- The child does not want the parent or caregiver involved and they are of an age where they are competent to make that decision.

## Child Abuse and Neglect Intervention Flowchart



N.B. Anyone who is worried about a child or young person can make a report of concern to Oranga Tamariki or the Police.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Report of Concern: <https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/about-us/how-we-work/how-we-keep-children-safe/report-of-concern/>

## **Appendix 2:**

### **Procedures for the Recruitment and Screening Process**

As part of Grace Church Rotorua's duty of care, we must ensure that suitable and appropriate staff and volunteers adhere to the recruitment and screening procedures provided below before working with children and young people. If there is any suspicion that an applicant might pose a risk to a child/young person that applicant will not be employed.

The screening process will be carried out in accordance with the Children's Act 2014.

#### **1. Identity Verification**

To Confirm the identity of the applicant, two forms of ID must be sighted. This will be based on requirements set out in the Children's Act Regulations 2015<sup>10</sup>:

##### **a. Primary Identification**

Primary Identification establishes that the applicant's identity exists. These include the following:

- Original Birth Certificate
- Passport
- Citizenship certificate
- NZ certificate of identification
- NZ firearms licence

##### **b. Secondary Identification**

Secondary Identification establishes that the applicant's identity is used in the community. These include (but not limited to) the following:

- Driver's licence
- Marriage certificate
- Name change certificate
- Kiwi access card/18+ card

#### **2. Police Vetting**

Employees and volunteers will be vetted using the New Zealand Police Vetting service at least every three years.

For Vet Request and Consent Forms:

<https://www.police.govt.nz/advice-services/businesses-and-organisations/vetting/forms-and-guides>

For more details on what information Police may release go to:

<https://www.police.govt.nz/advice-services/businesses-and-organisations/vetting/information-about-vetting>

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2015/0106/latest/DLM6482207.html>

### **3. Interview**

During the interview process, questions will be asked of an applicant to assess any risks that may be posed to the safety of children.

### **4. Reference Checks**

All likely applicants will provide a minimum of 2 referees of where one must not be related to them. This will help verify the applicant's suitability.

### **5. Evaluation and Risk Assessment**

The child protection committee must be convinced the potential applicant:

- Is a member/or will become a member
- Actively contribute to a culture of child protection
- Support and adhere to the Child Protection Policy
- Undergo training
- Be prepared to make the safety of children a priority

### **Teenage Workers/Helpers**

Grace Church Rotorua recognises that there may be times when it is necessary or desirable for babysitters/helpers (paid or volunteer) who are themselves under age 18 to assist in caring for children during programs or activities.

The following guidelines apply to teenage workers:

- Must be 14 years but under 18 years.
- Must be screened as specified above (if applicable). If a teenager has not worked, then they will be asked to provide 2-character references from unrelated persons to verify suitability.
- Must be under the supervision of an adult and must never be left alone with children.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Safe Practice Guidelines**

Safe Practice is promoting an atmosphere which respects and acknowledges the dignity of each human being thus creating a safe environment for our children and staff/volunteers.

#### **1. Supervision**

2 non-related adults will supervise the kids at all time. The reason for this is to increase accountability with adults and decrease isolation with children. Under circumstances where there is shortage of staff assigned that day, another volunteer who is not rostered on will assist for particular jobs i.e. toilet duty, grabbing drinks, nappies. The idea that one volunteer may have to be alone with children temporarily takes us onto our next step.

#### **2. Open door rule**

Staff/volunteers will be operating in an open environment to which parents and other adults have free access. Doors must remain open at all times.

#### **3. Toilet**

There is no one best way to handle toileting. Before any activity, staff/volunteers should:

- Take children to the toilet first before any activity i.e. Sunday School.
- Pre-schoolers aged between 2-5 will be escorted to the toilet by two adults.
- One adult will call out and make sure that no one is in the toilet before a child/children enter. Both adults must wait outside with the door closed. If a child needs help, door must be opened visible to the other adult and then assist the child.
- Kids aged 6-13 years old preferably 1 or 2 male adults should escort the boys to the toilet and 1 or 2 female adults escort the girls to the toilet.
- Same rule applies as above with entering and exiting the toilet. Staff should never take a child to the bathroom alone.
- Avoid letting unsupervised children go to the bathroom alone.

#### **4. Infants in Nappies**

When an infant in the care of a staff/volunteer requires a nappy change then all efforts will be made to call upon the parents to undertake this task. If all reasonable attempts have failed to find the parents, a staff member/volunteer will change the nappy with another volunteer present.

#### **5. Check In/Out**

Only those who have been authorised can pick up the kids. Authorisation form will be completed by parents and guardians allowing certain people to drop off and/or pick up their child/children. Visitors are not authorised to access children unless permission from parent/guardian has been given.

## **6. Transportation**

- Adults should only be required to drive children when activities have been planned in advance.
- Parents should be notified and complete a permission form allowing their child/children to go on these activities.
- 2 adult rule still applies. If that's not possible, make sure that a child is never alone with the adult. Have the driver bring along their own children or pick up and drop off kids as a group.

## **7. Overnight stays**

This can pose a risk, but the following can be applied:

- add extra adults - male and female adults to chaperone with different sleeping areas
- No sharing of beds between minor and adult, except for family members (caution must be taken when allowing minors, of the same gender, to share beds)
- Also, consider separate toilets and showers.
- Be careful at mixing age groups as the older kids can be a risk to younger ones.

## **8. Touching:**

While appropriate physical contact with children can be an effective means of aiding in communication, redirecting attention, calming restlessness, or showing godly love and care, it can also be misinterpreted. Particularly in our interaction with children, we want to be blameless and above reproach. The following guidelines can help workers avoid any compromise or concerns in this area:

- Always remain in open sight of other adults.
- Appropriate physical contact will vary according to the age of the child. What is appropriate for nursery children, 0-5 years old (holding, rocking, sitting on laps, etc.) will not be appropriate for primary school children 6+ years.
- Staff/volunteers should refrain from rough-housing, wrestling, shoulder or piggy-back rides, rubbing, massaging, or any physical activity that might make a child feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Only touch children in "safe" areas and for a brief time. "Safe" areas generally include hands, arms, shoulders, upper back, or gentle pats on the top of the head. Never touch a child on or near any region that is private or personal, unless when necessary while assisting in a diaper change or toilet visit.

Inappropriate touch involves, but is not limited to, coercion or other forms of physical contact which exploits the child's lack of knowledge, satisfies adult physical needs at the expense of the child, violates laws against sexual or physical contact between adult and child, and any attempt to modify child behaviour with physical force.

## **Child Management Behaviour**

Children's behaviour, and response of leaders and staff to challenging behaviour, is guided by this Scriptural principle:

**'LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOU LOVE YOURSELF' Matthew 19:19**

Guiding a child/young person's behaviour is an important part of caring for them. There will be instances where staff/volunteer will need to act appropriately when a child's behaviour becomes challenging.

### **1. Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour**

- Physically and verbally hurting another person.
- Damaging or defacing property or equipment.
- Inappropriate language
- Not listening to caregivers

### **Handling of Unacceptable Behaviour**

- Explain to the child why their behaviour is unacceptable (cite the rule to remind them of the behaviour guideline).
- Show them the proper way to behave.
- Praise the proper behaviour when it occurs.

*If this does not change the behaviour or the behaviour is sufficiently serious, the staff/volunteer rostered on will:*

- Notify the parents of the situation at hand
- Ensure the safety of all children where the child will be sent back into church to sit with their parent(s) as appropriate.
- Provide comfort and reassurance, if appropriate, to the other children.
- Reinforce what is acceptable behaviour

### **Handling Persistent Unacceptable Behaviour**

- Keep a record of incidents.
- Inform parents of incidents and actions taken.
- Seek advice from the Child Protection Officer or Minister.
- Suspension from attending Sunday school and/or activities will be considered if behaviour continues on.

### **2. Disciplining Principles**

- Always focus on the behaviour not the child.
- Maintain the child's self-esteem at all times.
- Never smack. Do not shout.
- Maintain confidentiality.

### **To protect both children and adults:**

- Leaders and staff agree to and sign a code of conduct<sup>11</sup>.
- Having sufficient staff and/or volunteers for the number of children and restrict the number of children if the child/adult ratio is inappropriate. This ratio varies depending on the situation of risk.
- Teaching is conducted in an open environment to which parents have free access.
- Visitors are not allowed access to children without the supervision of an approved worker.

### **Protection of Children from Other Children:**

Some children may exhibit inappropriate behaviour towards other children in the group

- Emotional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

*(refer to Appendix 1 – Indicators of abuse, for more information)*

No form of physical, emotional or sexual abuse is acceptable. Where any child persistently abuses other children, his/her parents will be asked to withdraw the child from the programme.

### **Protection of Adults Working with Children**

- Support services provided to staff and Leadership Team.
- Provide legal advice and protection for all staff and Leadership Team.
- Provide training in how best to interact with children including:
  - ▶ Clear perception of roles of Leadership and staff
  - ▶ Boundary issues
  - ▶ Asking Leaders and Staff to agree to code of conduct

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<sup>11</sup> See Appendix 4: Code of Conduct

## Appendix 4:

### Support Services

Statutory and Non-Statutory Agencies that provide services to assist with child abuse:

#### **Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC)**

Phone: 0800 222 822  
Email: [www.findsupport.co.nz](http://www.findsupport.co.nz)

#### **Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)**

Phone: 0800 367 222  
Email: [www.cab.org.nz](http://www.cab.org.nz)

#### **Counselling: Eileen McGoon**

Phone: 020 4089 2433  
Address: Business Hub; 1209  
Hinemaru Street, Rotorua

#### **New Zealand Police**

Phone: Emergency: 111  
Non-Emergency: 105  
Email: [www.information@police.govt.nz](mailto:www.information@police.govt.nz)

#### **Oranga Tamariki**

Phone: 0508 326 459  
Email: [www.enquiry@ot.govt.nz](mailto:www.enquiry@ot.govt.nz)

#### **Psychologist: Karen Allsopp**

Phone: 027 777 8444  
Email: [thepsychologyplace@gmail.com](mailto:thepsychologyplace@gmail.com)

### Contacts

Grace Church Rotorua will make this policy readily available to all who work with children and young people. Contact details for any queries or concerns regarding the policy:

#### **Child Protection Officer:**

Name: Jean-Pierre (JP) Apikotoa      Phone: 029 650 0372

#### **Minister:**

Name: Paul Henry      Phone: 027 278 9768

#### **Child Protection Committee:**

Name: Florence Apikotoa      Phone: 021 261 8561  
Name: Catherine Ford      Phone: 021 0866 4918  
Name: Crystal Henry      Phone: 027 358 1038



## **Code of Conduct**

### **For those working with children**

We, Grace Church Rotorua, commit ourselves to a standard of responsible and ethical behaviour which is expected in our church and will bring honour and glory to God. Our code is underpinned by trust and a belief that everyone should be treated with respect and dignity.

This Code of Conduct gives guidance in protecting children and young people from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults and people in leadership. It will also help staff and volunteers understand and maintain the standard of behaviour expected of them.

The Code of Conduct is not exhaustive and does not foresee every set of circumstances that may arise across the variety of church events and activities.

I \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge that I have read and understand Grace Church Rotorua's Child Protection Policy, and agree that **I will:**

- Treat all children and young people with dignity, avoiding favouritism and respecting their privacy, culture, home background, age, physical and mental abilities.
- Ensure that safe practice guidelines regarding the safety and protection of children and young people are adhered to.
- Encourage open communication between all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers with any decisions that may affect them.
- Follow and report any concerns of child abuse in accordance with Grace Church Rotorua's Child Protection Policy.
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding abuse by an adult via the guidelines outlined in the Child Protection Policy (refer to Appendix 1(e))
- Comply with the obligations of the Church and authorities as well as all relevant NZ legislation

**I will not:**

- Engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, young people, members of the church, staff and volunteers.
- Use inappropriate, offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with a child or young person.
- Seek to make contact and or spend time with any child/young person that I come in contact within my role as a representative of Grace Church Rotorua. This will also include outside of the designated times and activities set for performing my role as a representative.
- Hit or physically assault children. This includes refraining from physical punishment or discipline of children.
- Develop inappropriate relationships with children/young people.
- Release or discuss any personal information about suspected or proven child abuse cases other than with the Child Protection Officer, Minister and other parties involved in accordance with the Child Protection Policy.

I am responsible for my own actions and utilise child protection standards and best practices to avoid actions and behaviours that could be in breach of this Code of Conduct and the Child Protection Policy of Grace Church Rotorua.

I have read and understood the guidelines outlined in the Child Protection Policy and the Code of Conduct. I agree to agree to implement the standards of behaviour described in the Code of Conduct. I understand that disciplinary measures and legal steps may be taken if I am found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct.

Name:

Witness Name:

Signature:

Witness Signature:

Date:

Date: