**5.15 Child Protection Policy**

***Purpose***

Swanson School is committed to the protection of children. The staff and Board of Trustees have an obligation to ensure the wellbeing of children in our care so they thrive, belong and achieve. We are committed to the prevention of child abuse and neglect and to the protection of all children. The safety and wellbeing of the child is our top priority. Advice will be sought through appropriate agencies in all cases of suspected or alleged abuse.

***Relevant Legislation/Regulation***

Vulnerable Children Act 2014

Children, Young Person and Their Families Act 1989

Crimes Act 1961

NAG 5

***Guidelines***

1. Reporting

* Any person in our school who believes that any child or young person has been, or is likely to be, harmed (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually) ill-treated, abused, neglected, or deprived must follow school procedures and may also report the matter to a social worker or the local police.

1. Staff will:

* Ensure the interests and protection of the child are paramount in all circumstances
* Recognise the rights of family/whanau to participate in the decision-making about their children
* Ensure that they are able to identify the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect, deal with disclosures by children and allegations against staff members and are able to take appropriate action in response

1. The Principal will:

* Promote a culture where staff feel confident they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal
* Consult, discuss and share relevant information, in line with our commitment to confidentiality and information sharing protocols, in a timely way regarding any concerns about an individual child
* Seek advice as necessary from NZSTA on employment matters and other relevant agencies where child safety issues arise
* Make available professional development, resources and/or advice to ensure all staff can carry out their roles in terms of this policy
* Ensure that this policy forms part of the initial staff induction programme for each staff member
* Ensure that a Police vet is completed for all people employed or engaged in work that involves regular or overnight contact with children.
* Where practicable, ensure Police vets are completed for volunteers
* Ensure that student teachers are safety checked by the education organisation they attend.
* Ensure that periodic checks are completed on anyone who is employed or engaged at the school within three years of their last safety check.

1. Interviewing of Prospective Staff

* Interviews for any applicant should be done face to face
* As well as qualifications and experience, interviews must ascertain if the person would pose a risk to children
* Reference checking may uncover any gaps or differences from what the applicant has disclosed

1. Identity Confirmation

* All people employed must provide the following documentation:
  + One primary form of identification, for example:
    - NZ or overseas passport
    - NZ full birth certificate that is issued on or after 1 Jan 1988 with a unique ID number
  + A secondary form of official identification, for example:
    - NZ drivers licence
    - Community Services Card
    - IRD number
  + NB:
    - One of the forms of identification must include a photo
    - If the name of the person differs from the name on the documentation they provide, e.g. marriage or deed poll, they will need to produce a supporting document that shows evidence of the name change

1. Policy Review

* This policy must be reviewed within three years of its first adoption or its most recent review

***Related Information***

1. New Zealand Legislation website: <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/default.aspx>
2. Definitions:

* Employee – a person of any age employed to do any work for hire or reward
* Engaged – someone other than an employee who is engaged to do any work for gain or reward – e.g. a contractor
* Volunteer – a person of any age who assists in the supervision of children for no gain or reward

Reviewed: 14 March 2016