



Worser Bay Boating Club  
Inc.

## WBBC Policy: Children and Vulnerable Persons Protection

### PURPOSE

WBBC is committed to the wellbeing of children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families. This policy outlines that commitment and includes the protocols we will follow when abuse is reported to us or suspected by us. It also includes measures we will take to prevent abuse.

This policy will be part of the initial staff induction programme. All staff are expected to be familiar with this policy and to abide by it.

The aim of this policy is to ensure WBBC meets the requirements of the Children's Act 2014 (the Act) and ensures the wellbeing of children and vulnerable persons in our care. WBBC is committed to the prevention of abuse and neglect and to the protection of all children and vulnerable persons. The safety and wellbeing of the child and vulnerable person is our top priority when investigating suspected or alleged abuse.

- We provide a safe environment, free from physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse.
- We support the roles of the New Zealand Police and the Ministry for Children / Oranga Tamariki in the investigation of suspected abuse and will report suspected/alleged abuse to these agencies.
- We support families/whanau to protect their children and other vulnerable dependents.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to everyone working for WBBC - members employees, contractors and volunteers.

### PRINCIPLES

The interest and protection of the child and vulnerable person are paramount in all actions. We will always comply with relevant legislative responsibilities. We recognise the rights of family / whanau to participate in the decision-making about their children and vulnerable dependents.

We are committed to:

- Ensuring that all staff are able to identify the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect and are able to take appropriate action in response.
- Supporting all staff to work in accordance with this policy, to work with partner agencies and organisations to ensure child protection policies are consistent and of high quality.
- Sharing information in a timely way and discussing any concerns about an individual child or vulnerable person with colleagues or the Commodore.
- Promoting a culture where staff feel confident that they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal.



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## Definition of Abuse

Physical, emotional and sexual abuse as well as neglect which is the direct consequence of a deliberate act or omission by an adult and which has the potential or effect of serious harm to the child or vulnerable person.

## Responding to Suspected Abuse or Neglect

To download the 'Child Abuse Reporting Process' flowchart [click here](#).

All suspicions or observed incidents or reports of incidents should be reported directly to the Commodore as soon as possible, who will record the report and immediately take steps to protect the child(ren) or vulnerable person(s). If there is clear evidence or reasonable cause to believe an instance of abuse has taken place, the Commodore shall notify the Ministry for Children / Oranga Tamariki.

In addition to guiding staff to make referrals of suspected abuse and neglect to the statutory agencies (i.e.: Ministry for Children / Oranga Tamariki and the Police), this Child and Vulnerable Persons Protection Policy will also help staff to identify and respond to the needs of the many vulnerable children and persons whose wellbeing is of concern. Staff members will discuss suspicions with the Commodore. Where appropriate, the person making the allegation will be given a copy of this policy. In many of these cases, the involvement of statutory agencies would be inappropriate and potentially harmful to families/whanau. Throughout New Zealand, statutory and non-statutory agencies provide a network of mutually supportive services, and it is important for our organisation to work with these to respond to the needs of children, vulnerable persons and families / whanau in a manner proportionate to the level of need and risk.

## Allegations or Concerns About Staff

When a staff member is suspected, the same processes apply. All suspicions or observed incidents or reports of incidents should be reported directly to the Commodore as soon as possible, who will record the report and immediately take steps to protect the child(ren) or vulnerable person(s). If there is clear evidence or reasonable cause to believe an instance of abuse has taken place, the Commodore shall notify the Ministry for Children / Oranga Tamariki.

If there is a need to pursue an allegation as an Employer, the Commodore will consult with the Ministry for Children / 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. The person concerned should also be informed of their right to seek support from the relevant union / representative body. It is vital to follow ordinary disciplinary policies, guided by the employment contract / collective employment contract and relevant statutory obligations.



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We commit not to use 'settlement agreements', where these are contrary to our culture of protection of children and vulnerable persons. Some settlement agreements allow a member of staff to agree to resign provided that no disciplinary action is taken, and a future reference is agreed. Where the conduct at issue concerned the safety or wellbeing of a child or vulnerable person, use of such agreements is contrary to our culture of protection of children and vulnerable persons.

### **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

The Privacy Act 1993 and the Children, Young Persons, and their Families (CYPF) Act 1989 allow information to be shared to keep children and other vulnerable persons safe when abuse or suspected abuse is reported or investigated. Note that under sections 15 and 16 of the CYPF Act, any person who believes that a child or vulnerable person has been, or is likely to be, harmed physically, emotionally or sexually or ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived may report the matter to the Ministry for Children / Oranga Tamariki or to the Police and, provided the report is made in good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against them.

### **Recruitment and Employment (Safety Checking)**

Safety checking will be carried out in accordance with the Children's Act 2014. This will include: a police vet; identity verification; reference checks, and an interview. A work history will be sought, and previous employers will be contacted. If there is any suspicion that an applicant might pose a risk to children or vulnerable persons, that applicant will not be employed.

### **Training, Supervision and Support**

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

- Understanding abuse and indicators of abuse
- How to reduce the risk of abuse
- Understanding and complying with legal obligations regarding abuse
- Working with outside agencies on abuse issues
- Planning of environment and supervision to minimise risk
- Dealing with children/vulnerable persons/parents/family/whanau

Passed by the General Committee of Worser Bay Boating Club on 02.02.2022

To be reviewed on: 02.02.2023