

**Child Protection Policy for the**

**Baroque Music Community and Educational Trust of New Zealand**

**Updated November 2023**

The Children’s Act 2014 requires the Baroque Music Community and Educational Trust of New Zealand (“BMCETNZ”) as an organization providing government-funded services to children and families to have a Child Protection.Policy (CPP).

The Act requires the CPP to:

* Explain how child abuse can be identified and reported.
* Be available for download from the BMCETNZ website.
* Be reviewed within 3 years.

**The Purpose of the CPP**

When the BMCETNZ provides services to children the CPP guides the actions of all staff, including part-time or temporary roles, volunteers and contractors in promoting a culture of child protection that always safeguards and promotes the wellbeing of children.

**The BMCETNZ Commitments**

BMCETNZ will not tolerate abusive behaviour being committed to the principles of its CPP which are visible to parents and the community on the BMCETNZ website.

The BMCETNZ will ensure management and staff have the necessary training to identify the signs of possible abuse or neglect and take appropriate action.

BMCETNZ will ensure the welfare of a child or young person is the primary consideration when it makes a decision to respond to actual or suspected abuse.

BMCETNZ acknowledges the right of the child’s Family/Whanau to participate in this decision making.

BMCETNZ will support the child protection roles of statutory agencies (the Police and Oranga Tamariki) including consultation with them to ensure any of its responses under the CPP meet its statutory reponsibilities.

The tri-annual review will include the following;

* Whether the CPP needs to be updated based on any incidents and lessons learned, and feedback from relevant agencies (the Police or Oranga Tamariki).
* The feedback of staff on whether the preparation, training, identification and responses made in accordance with the CPP have been appropriate.

The Vulnerable Children Act 2014 requires a rigorous process for screening staff who work with children. BMCETNZ complies with this Act, in order safeguard its services to children from inappropriate persons.

**1. Definitions**

Child abuse refers to the harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill treatment, abuse, neglect, or serious deprivation of any child/tamariki, young person/rangatahi (Section 14B Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989).

Physical abuse - any acts that may result in physical harm of a child or young person.

Sexual abuse - any acts that involve forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening.

Emotional abuse - any act or omission that results in adverse or impaired psychological, social, intellectual and emotional functioning or development.

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.

Family violence may be witnessed/experienced by children and involve physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

**2. Training**

The BMCETNZ is committed to maintaining and increasing staff awareness of how to prevent, recognise and respond to abuse through appropriate training. Staff are expected to act at all times within their level of experience and training, and to consult with management about any concerns.

As part of the induction of new staff explanations of the following are provided:

- the CCP and commitment to child protection

- procedures for supervising children and minimising the risk of an allegation of inappropriate behaviour

- what to do if abusive behaviour is observed or suspected

- the process for reporting any concerns

- how to respond to a disclosure of abuse

**3. Identifying child abuse and neglect**

All staff will be made aware of the signs of potential abuse of neglect (see below) and will always consider all available information before taking any action e.g. behavioural concerns may be the result of life events, such as divorce, accidental injury, the arrival of a new sibling etc.

Staff members are not expected to reach any conclusions about whether abuse or neglect is occurring, or what form it may be taking. They are expected to recognise and consult when something is wrong, if a pattern is noticed or several signs together cause concern.

Some signs of potential abuse / neglect:

- Physical signs of abuse: unexplained injuries, burns, fractures, unusual or excessive itching, genital injuries, sexually transmitted diseases. Neglect: looking rough and uncared for, inappropriate clothing, underweight

- Medical neglect (e.g. persistent skin disorders or other untreated medical issues).

- Developmental delays (e.g. small for their age, cognitive delays, falling behind in school, poor speech and social skills).

- Emotional abuse/neglect (e.g. low self-esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness/loneliness and evidence of self-harm).

- Behavioural concerns (e.g. age- inappropriate sexual interest or play, fear of a certain person or place, eating disorders/substance abuse, disengagement/neediness, aggression).

- The child talking about things that indicate abuse (sometimes called an allegation or disclosure).

- Neglectful supervision (e.g. out and about unsupervised, left alone, no safe home to return to).

**4. Responding to child abuse**

Under sections 15 and 16 of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989, any person who believes that a child has been or is likely to be, harmed physically, emotionally or sexually or 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.

This organisation will act on recommendations made by statutory agencies concerning the reporting of suspected abuse. Staff will only consult with or inform families about any suspected or actual abuse, after consulting with the appropriate statutory agencies.

When notifying the agency, a receipt or acknowledgement of the notification (written or electronic) will be requested. All information or notes concerning the notification will include date, time and name of the person receiving the notification.

Staff will respond to suspected child abuse or any concerning behaviour by writing down observations, impressions and communications in a confidential register. This will be kept separate from other records and enrolment information etc.

Information volunteered by a child should be fully and accurately recorded. Staff will not interview children about the suspected abuse.

No staff member will act alone about suspected child abuse but will consult with the BMCETNZ’s management. Where staff and management suspect child abuse has occurred and a child is unsafe, immediate contact will be made with the Police or Oranga Tamariki.

Staff who are responding to cases of suspected child abuse are entitled to have support. The BMCETNZ will maintain knowledge of such individuals or organisations that provide support and will assist staff to access these services as needed.

If a staff member has concerns for the safety of other people they come into contact with in the provision of services e.g. parents, siblings of children etc. they can raise these concerns with management and confer over an appropriate response, which may include contact with Oranga Tamariki. A confidential written record of the circumstances and response will be kept.

**5. Responding to a disclosures/concerns about abuse.**

a. If a child discloses abuse or abuse is suspected:

i. Listen to the child and reassure the child he or she has been heard.

ii. If the child is upset, offer re-assurance and help them to re-engage in an appropriate activity, under supervision

iii. If there is no immediate danger to the child then re-engage the child in activities and explain what you will do next.

iv. If there is immediate danger to the child or safety is an issue, act with urgency – contact the Police

v. Do not interview the child: do not ask questions and only use open prompts for the child to continue e.g. “keep going, I’m listening.”

vi. Do not make promises that can’t be kept, e.g., “I will keep you safe now”.

vii. As soon as possible, formally record:

- A record of the concern.

- Word for word, what the child said.

- Date, time, location and the names of any staff that may be relevant.

- Factual concerns or observations that have led to the suspicion of abuse or neglect (e.g. any physical, behavioural or developmental concerns).

- A record of any related discussions, (including copies of correspondence, where appropriate).

- A record of any advice received.

- Any earlier concerns, if the notification is based on an accumulation of concerns (rather than a specific incident).

- Any other information that may be relevent

- Action taken by your organization, including any rationale

viii. Inform a manager and make a decision regarding any further action

ix. Notify Oranga Tamariki promptly if there is a belief that a child has been, or is likely to be, abused or neglected. Family (0508 326 459) contact@mvcot.govt.nz A receipt of the notification will be requested.

**b. When an allegation of abuse is made against a staff member**

i. Where it is suspected that child abuse has been carried out by a staff member (paid/ unpaid in any service role), the matter will be reported promptly to management.

ii. Any children involved will be protected from possible risk or trauma.

iii. Management may remove the staff member from the service role subject to the requirements of an applicable contract.

iv. All actions will be undertaken with appropriate care to maintain confidentially.

v. If immediate danger or safety is an issue act with urgency. Notify management.

vi. Management will consult with Oranga Tamariki or Police.

vii. Oranga Tamariki or management will advise staff memeber and seek a response (depending on discussions with Oranga Tamariki and/or Police)

viii. The staff member will be advised of their right to seek support or advice from an appropriate representative

ix. Management will consider removal of the staff member from the service environment subject to any relevant contract

x. Management will maintain close liaison with Oranga Tamariki or Police.

**d. Peer abuse**

i. While the situation is being evaluated, the children/young people concerned will be kept separate.

ii. Parents will be asked to keep all information confidential to allow proper investigation and resolution.

iii. All parents/caregivers will be kept informed about how the Management is responding to concerns, including meeting with staff to discuss these concerns.

iv. Discourage interaction between the different parents involved and between parents and other children while a concern is being investigated.

**6. Child and staff safety – supervision and conduct guidelines**

These specific guidelines are concerned with minimising the risk of allegations of inappropriate conduct.

All staff should be aware of situations where they could be alone with children. These situations will be avoided as much as possible.

Children under 16 are to be accompanied at concerts by care takers at all times.

In the event that children under 18 take part in concerts or concert tours, it is required that they be chaparoned by a family member for the duration of the concert/tour including rehearsals.

An open door policy for all spaces should be used as much as possible.

Staff will provide physical comfort or reassurance when needed by children, but exercise caution and restraint when initiating physical contact or displaying signs of affection.