



Apii Te Uki Ou

Abuse Policy Title

CIAG # 5

Akakoro'anga (Purpose)

Te Uki Ou School emphasises that everyone must be treated with dignity and respect and have a right to have their needs met in a safe environment. The Cook Islands Crimes Act recognises that abuse (whether physical or sexual) is a crime against the state and must be reported.

Abuse includes any form of mistreatment by a person against themselves, another person, animal or possessions. It includes but is not limited to physical, psychological, sexual abuse and neglect and could be conducted through the use of words (spoken, written or conveyed electronically ie; social media), pictures, texting, signs or gestures, body language or inaction.

Tumu Manako (Rationale)

1. To take all reasonable steps to protect and uphold the well being of students, staff and visitors.
2. To ensure that safety of people in our environment is paramount.
3. To provide teachers with guidelines for dealing with cases of suspected abuse.
4. To identify additional support for staff, students and families in cases of suspected abuse.
5. To set high standards for staff to protect them from allegations of misconduct, and support them through this process as required.

Te au Kaveinga (Guidelines)

1. Adults will be receptive and sensitive to children so that children feel listened to and believed.
2. Staff will be provided with the Abuse Policy and appropriate guidance on the policy, especially the procedures.
3. Staff will follow the Procedures for Disclosure or Non Disclosure of Suspected Abuse where appropriate.
4. Keeping safe and self-esteem units will be taught as part of Apii Te Uki Ou's Health and Physical Education programme.
5. A special needs register will be kept in the principal's office to record instances of suspected abuse.
6. No outside agency will be involved without the prior knowledge of the principal / Board President.
7. Should the Principal be personally involved in the suspected abuse, the President of the Board of Governors should be the first point of contact.
8. All Teachers are to be familiar with the Cook Island Ministry of Education Code of Ethics of the Teaching Profession and the Counseling & Discipline of Teachers Ministry Policy, and this to be a topic for discussion at in at least one staff meeting per year.
9. If a Staff member is implicated as being responsible for the abuse, the procedures outlined in the above documents set out the legal steps to be followed.
10. Failure to comply with the requirements of the above policy and code will result in disciplinary action by the Secretary of Education.
11. The Principal is the person with the responsibility for coordinating action on suspected student abuse within the school, by other students, staff members or by volunteers working within the school.
12. Should matters of suspected abuse outside of school be brought to the school's attention, the Principal will be responsible for coordinating appropriate action, including referral and ensuring that the matter is followed up.
13. Confidentiality is maintained with information shared with only those who have a need to know.
14. Dated, accurate records of all relevant events are to be kept by those involved in cases where abuse is suspected.



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Date of Last Review:	November 2025	November 2025
Signed:		
	Gina Bamber Chairperson Board of Governors	Liz Cribb Acting Principal Apii Te Uki Ou



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Abuse Procedures

Procedures for Disclosure of Suspected Abuse

1. All information/discussions will be confidential to the staff involved.
2. Where a suspected case of abuse is disclosed, the Abuse checklist will be followed by the teacher and they will inform the Principal or Board President in writing.
3. The Principal or Board President will then discuss the suspected case with the appropriate authorities without revealing the identity of the child or family. Confirmation of this meeting and any action to be taken will be made in writing.
4. Should the agency agree this suspected case needs to be investigated, then the child and family will be identified and the case will be officially referred to the appropriate organization.
5. The person referring the case will ask in the referral conversation if the parents can be informed. Unless specifically told not to inform parents by the Help Agency in charge, Parents will be informed in writing immediately after the consultation".
6. The school will support the organization in their investigation.

Procedures for Non Disclosure of Suspected Abuse

1. All information will be confidential to the staff involved.
2. Where teachers are concerned about a child's change in behaviour, or information or stories they share in class, or unusual actions observed at school, they must first speak to the Principal/Board President, then refer the child to the Principal or Board President.
3. Should a child disclose a suspected case of abuse during discussion, staff will refer to the Procedures for Disclosure of Suspected Abuse.
4. The Principal/Board President will record discussions, and use his or her best judgement to decide on the next best step. Either; file the discussion records and do nothing; or contact parents outlining concerns and seek more information; or contact an appropriate organization to discuss the suspected case, without revealing the identity of the child or family.
5. Should the Principal/Board President conclude that it is likely a suspected case of abuse has occurred they will refer to the Procedures for Disclosure of Suspected Abuse.

Help Agencies on Rarotonga

- Punanga Tauturu – Support and counselling service for matters affecting families.
- Te Kainga o te Pa Taunga – Mental Health support and counselling.
- Police – Community Police.
- Social Welfare – Ministry of Internal Affairs.
- Ministry of Education approved Counsellor

Complaints against staff involving Abuse

1. If the written complaint is such that the material facts appear to be true, the principal and at least two members of the Apii Te Uki Ou Board of Governors will meet and will follow the steps set out in Apii Te Uki Ou's Complaints policy and procedures.
2. Both will inform the staff member who will be advised to seek legal advice.
3. The staff member may be suspended with full pay once an investigation has begun and after due consideration of further risk to our community and all reasonable attempts to minimize the possibility of further community concerns.
4. The principal should be kept informed of any actions being taken in the reporting of suspected child abuse.

Abuse Checklist

Use in cases of disclosure

- Have you thanked the child for telling you?
- Have you told the child that they've done the right thing?



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- Have you told the child that you believe them?
- Have you said to the child it's not their fault?
- Have you explained that abuse like this is really difficult for children to stop by themselves?
- Have you told the child that there are some things you can keep in confidence, but you cannot keep a secret about a child who is hurting?
- Have you told the child that it is not up to you to decide what will happen? No matter what happens it is not their fault?
- Have you done all you can to comfort the child?
(Bear in mind physical contact)
- Have you followed school procedure?

Remember the five statements

- I believe you.
- I'm glad you told me.
- I'm sorry it happened.
- It's not your fault.
- I'm going to do something about it.