

Child Protection Policy



Introduction

1. Taranaki School of Music is committed to providing a safe, nurturing environment where children can learn and thrive. This Child Protection Policy outlines our commitment to safeguarding all tamariki (children) in our care and our responsibilities under Aotearoa New Zealand law.
2. This policy applies to all staff, contractors, volunteers, and tutors working with children at Taranaki School of Music, both on-site and during any off-site events, including performances, camps, and workshops.

Key Principles

- The safety and wellbeing of children is our top priority.
- Tamariki have the right to be protected from harm, abuse, and neglect.
- We are committed to cultural safety and upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- We support open communication and encourage concerns to be raised without fear.

Legal Framework

This policy aligns with:

- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- Children's Act 2014
- Vulnerable Children Act 2014
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- Privacy Act 2020
- Education and Training Act 2020

Definitions

Child: Any person under the age of 18.

Abuse: Includes physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, as well as neglect.

Staff: Includes teachers, contractors, volunteers, and visiting tutors.

Code of Conduct with Children

All staff and tutors must:

- Maintain professional boundaries at all times.
- Avoid being alone with a child where possible.
- Never engage in physical punishment, ridicule, or inappropriate physical contact.
- Respect cultural values and child diversity, including gender identity and disability.
- Gain parental consent before taking photographs or videos of children.
- Report any concerns or disclosures of abuse immediately.

Recruitment and Safety Checking

All staff and teachers working with children will undergo a full safety check as required by the Children's Act 2014.

This includes police vetting, reference checks, identity verification, and risk assessment.

Safety checks are reviewed every three years.

Training and Awareness

All staff and volunteers will receive training in child protection, including how to identify signs of abuse and respond appropriately.

Regular refresher training will be provided.

Responding to Concerns

If a child discloses abuse or a staff member suspects abuse:

- Listen carefully and calmly.
- Reassure the child they are being taken seriously.
- Do not promise confidentiality—explain that you need to tell someone who can help.
- Report immediately to the Child Protection Officer (CPO).
- The CPO will assess the situation and, if necessary, report to Oranga Tamariki (0508 326 459) or NZ Police

- **Child Protection Officer (CPO)**

Our designated Child Protection Officer within TSM is:

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Information Sharing

We may share relevant information with external agencies (e.g. Oranga Tamariki, Police) if we believe a child is at risk of harm, in line with the Privacy Act 2020 and the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989.

Parent and Whānau Involvement

We actively involve parents and whānau in their child's learning and safety. This includes clear communication, consent procedures, and consultation when changes to safety procedures are made.

Policy Review

This policy is reviewed every two years or earlier if there are changes to legislation or best practices. Feedback from staff, whānau, and children will inform updates.