

## Safety Checking – Procedure PO155-3

### 1. PURPOSE

To keep children safe from harm (Te Whāriki, 2017).

To take all reasonable and legal precautions to ensure that all children's workers by Ōtātara Children's Centre (including: volunteers and student teachers on field-based placement or practicum) are safety checked and assessed for their suitability to work with children **before** commencing work or placement at the centre and every subsequent 3 years following commencement of employment.

Under the Children's Act 2014, the New Zealand Ministry of Education defines a **children's worker** as any person working in a **regulated service** (such as schools, early childhood centres, or alternative education) whose role involves regular or overnight contact with children, taking place without a parent or guardian present. The Ministry of Education further categorizes children's workers into two distinct groups:

#### 1. Core Workers

A core worker is an individual whose role requires or allows them to be present with children either as the **only children's worker** present, or as the worker who has **primary responsibility** or authority over the children.

- **Examples:** Teachers (including relief teachers), centre managers, head teachers, home-based educators, and therapists.

#### 2. Non-Core Workers

A non-core worker is a children's worker who has regular contact with children but is **never left alone** or does not have primary responsibility/authority over the children.

- **Examples:** Administrative staff, bus drivers, caretakers, or visiting volunteers who have access to children but always remain supervised by a teacher.

## 2. PROCEDURE

Safety checks will be carried out by the Centre Manager, or nominated representative, in accordance with the requirements of the Children's Act 2014. A record of safety checks will be kept at the centre.

***New children's workers will be subject to a 7 step safety check which includes:***

|          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> | Identity confirmation, either by:<br><br>1. Use of an <b>electronic identity credential</b> (e.g., the RealMe identity verification service), and a search of personnel records to check that the identity has not been claimed by someone else. OR<br><br>2. Following the regulatory process to provide confidence that:<br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The identity exists (i.e. that it is not fictitious) by <b>checking an original primary identity document</b>.</li><li>- The identity is a 'living' identity and the potential children's worker uses that identity in the community by <b>checking an original secondary identity document</b>.</li><li>- The potential children's worker links to the identity either by checking an identity document that contains a <b>photo</b>, or by using an <b>identity referee</b>.</li><li>- Searching <b>personnel records</b> to check that the identity has not been claimed by someone else.</li></ul> |
| <b>2</b> | An <b>interview</b> of the potential children's worker.<br>The interview may be conducted via telephone or other communications technology.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>3</b> | Obtaining and considering a <b>work history</b> , covering the preceding five years, provided by the potential children's worker.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>4</b> | Obtaining and considering information from at least one <b>referee</b> , not related to the potential children's worker or part of their extended family.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Seeking information</b> from any relevant professional organisation, licensing authority, or registration authority, including (but not limited to) confirmation that the potential children's worker is currently a member of the organisation, or currently licensed or registered by the authority.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>6</b> | Obtaining and considering information from a <b>New Zealand Police vet</b> , unless at least three-yearly New Zealand Police vetting is already a condition of the potential children's worker holding professional registration or a practicing certificate (and the specified organisation has confirmed that that registration or certificate is current).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>7</b> | Evaluation of the above information to <b>assess the risk</b> the potential children's worker would pose to the safety of children if employed or engaged, taking into account whether the role is a core children's worker or non-core children's worker role.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

**Existing children's workers will be subject to a 4 step periodic safety check which includes:**

|          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> | Confirmation that the children's worker has not changed their name from the name on the documents produced during the initial identity confirmation (i.e., the presented primary or secondary document).                                                                                                                                            |
|          | If there has been a change to the person's name since he or she was last safety checked, the person must reconfirm his or her identity by producing a supporting name change document relating to his or her name change.                                                                                                                           |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Seeking information</b> from any relevant professional organisation, licensing authority, or registration authority, including (but not limited to) confirmation that the person is currently a member of the organisation, or currently licensed or registered by the authority.                                                                |
| <b>3</b> | Obtaining and considering information from a <b>New Zealand Police vet</b> , unless at least three-yearly New Zealand Police vetting is already a condition of the children's worker holding professional registration or a practicing certificate (and the specified organisation has confirmed that that registration or certificate is current). |
| <b>4</b> | Evaluation of the above information to <b>assess the risk</b> the children's worker would pose to the safety of children if employed or engaged, taking into account whether the role is a core children's workforce or non-core children's workforce role.                                                                                         |

Should the Centre Manager, or nominated representative, require advice or clarification regarding safety checking of children's workers, advice must be sought from the MoE. Records of advice received must be retained by the centre and attached to the corresponding personal file.

| Document information – Office use only |                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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| <b>Owner</b>                           | Executive Director, Student and Academic Services                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Developer</b>                       | Supervisor Children Centre                                                                                                                                                      |
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| <b>Related Items</b>                   | Children's Act 2014 – <a href="#">click here</a><br>OCC Child Protection Policy – <a href="#">click here</a><br>OCC Students in the Centre Procedure <a href="#">click here</a> |
| <b>Version history</b>                 | New format July 2020<br>Migrated format March 2023<br>Reviewed in June 2026                                                                                                     |

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