

WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Purpose:

To ensure that all relevant legislation, standards and codes of practice are complied with in order to provide a safe and healthy environment for all staff, children, whanau and visitors.

Policy Statements:

1. The Board of Directors (BoD) has overall responsibility for the health and safety of all who attend, visit or work at the Centre, but delegates responsibility to the Centre Manager for the day to day management of health and safety at the Centre and to act as Health & Safety Officer.
2. The BoD understands that the possibility of health and safety incidents cannot be entirely eliminated, however the Centre Manager is required to show there are safeguards and robust, clear procedures in place to prevent and detect health and safety incidents, and ensure documentation is in place to meet the requirements of the Health & Safety at Work Act.
3. All staff have individual responsibility to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others in the Centre, to co-operate in the development and implementation of health & safety procedures, and to comply with these.

Definitions

Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU):

A PCBU is a legal entity. In the context of early childhood and compulsory education, the PCBU is a ECE Centre Board of Directors (BoD) as an entity, ECE Centre owner, kohanga reo, national education association, Ministry of Education or District Health Board (as landlords), sponsor, proprietor and/or self-employed educator.

Health and Safety Officer:

Officers are individual members of a BoD, and any other person occupying a position that allows them to exercise significant influence over the management of the business or undertaking (for example, a Chief Executive or a Principal). Their role is to exercise due diligence, which means they must take reasonable steps to ensure that the BoD/ECE (as the PCBU) meets its health and safety obligations. The purpose of due diligence is to inform governance decisions so they do not adversely or negatively affect health and safety. The officer will proactively undertake due diligence to ensure health and safety is prioritised by their BoD/ECE in order to improve health and safety and avoid the risk of any liability.

Worker:

A person who carries out work in any capacity for the BoD/ECE service, including employees, contractors and their employees, students and volunteers.

Health and Safety Representative (HSRs):

HSRs are workers who are elected to represent their colleagues on health and safety matters and receive appropriate training.

Health and Safety Committee (HSC):

A HSC brings together workers (including HSRs) and management to develop and review health and safety policies and procedures for the workplace.

PROCEDURES

1. Relievers & Visitors in the Workplace
2. Contractors & Sub-Contractors
3. Staff & Management
4. Accident
5. Staff Illness
6. Stress/Mental Awareness
7. Return to Work Plan

1. Relievers & Visitors in the Workplace

1. Relievers and visitors arriving to work in the Centre will report to the Centre Manager/Supervisor who will ensure they sight and sign the **Hazard Register**.

2. Contractors & Sub-Contractors

1. Before work commences the contractor will provide a copy of the firm's Occupational Health & Safety policy/statement.
2. All contractors are to hold current Contract Works and Public Liability Insurance or similar.
3. The contractor will comply with all relevant legislation ensuring the safety of staff & children is maintained at all times.
4. Contractors and/or sub-contractors working regularly during the Centre's hours of operation will be required to complete the **Police Vetting** process.
5. All contractor's personnel (including sub-contractors) must have adequate knowledge, experience and training for the tasks, equipment and substances with which they are involved, or be supervised by an appropriately trained person.
6. All contractor's personnel (including sub-contractors) are required to report to the Centre Manager/Supervisor on arrival and familiarise themselves with the requirements of this policy and the Centre's **Smoke Free Policy**.
7. All contractor's personnel (including sub-contractors) will report to the Centre Manager/Supervisor who will ensure they sight and sign the **Hazard Register**.
8. The contractor and/or sub-contractors will ensure their equipment has been properly maintained and will supply safety equipment (including isolating transformers) and first-aid facilities unless prior arrangements have been made.
9. All accidents or incidents relating to health and safety or the discharge of hazardous substances are to be reported to the Centre Manager/Supervisor immediately.
10. The contractor and/or sub-contractors are responsible for leaving the work-site as a safe place and must remove all their rubbish, off-cuts and debris.

3. Staff & Management

1. All new staff will undergo induction, training and supervision to ensure they have knowledge and understanding of health and safety procedures (See [Personnel Policy](#)).
2. Health & Safety Policies and Procedures (including Emergency Procedures) will be in the [Centre Operations Manual](#) and be accessible to all staff. There will be on-going evaluation, review and compliance updates of Health & Safety Policies and Procedures which staff will be consulted on.
3. A Hazard identification and management system is in place to minimise risk of injuries (See [Health & Safety in Centre Environment Procedures](#)).
4. Staff will not use at work, or arrive to work under the influence of, drugs, alcohol or any other substance that impacts on their behavior or performance. Staff suspected of such a breach may be requested to undergo an alcohol or drugs test, and support will be provided in the form of education, counselling and/or referral to support services. [Discipline & Dismissal procedures](#) contained in the [Personnel Policy](#) will be followed for a misconduct of this nature.
5. The Centre encourages positive outcomes in the areas of physical activity, healthy nutrition, smoking cessation and mental wellbeing to support the overall health and well-being of all staff.

4. Accident

1. In the event of an accident or injury of a staff member:
 - o Administer first aid immediately.
 - o If not needed to assist, other staff members will distract any children present.
 - o If deemed necessary call an ambulance, and contact the staff member's emergency contact person.
 - o Offer support and ensure the staff member is able to get home safely.
 - o Record details of the accident in the [Staff Accident Register](#).
 - o Investigate the cause of the accident to ensure prevention of reoccurrence.
 - o Complete relevant Health and Safety documentation and relevant ACC paperwork.
2. In the event of an accident, assisting staff will use gloves when contact with mucous membranes (eyes, mouth), broken skin or moist body substances (blood, vomit, faeces) is likely to occur, and plastic aprons when it is likely that moist body substances could soil clothing.
3. If the staff member needs to go to the hospital, Medical Centre or home, the Centre Manager/Supervisor will check that the staff:child ratio is met, and if not they will immediately call in a Relief Teacher.
4. In the event of a notifiable incident in the Centre:
 - a) The Health & Safety Officer will inform the BoD.
 - b) The Health & Safety Officer will inform Worksafe NZ (See link below).
 - c) The BoD will complete an Incident Investigation with the Health & Safety Officer and staff member closest to the incident and together they will review the [Serious Harm/Illness Form](#) (completed by the staff first aid responder) along with any statements from staff involved to:
 - o Identify key triggers to the incident.
 - o Minimise the hazard.
 - o Add to the [Hazard Identification Register](#) if required.
 - o Evaluate the effectiveness of procedure and make changes if required.
 - o Store all information in the [Incident File](#).
5. Accidents and injuries are reported, recorded and analysed, with records of these retained for 5 years.

5. Staff Illness

1. Staff suffering from diarrhea or vomiting will remain away from the Centre until 48 hours after their last symptom.
2. Staff will not have contact with children when suffering from any infectious disease (see 'Notifiable Diseases' link below) or any disease or condition capable of being passed on to children and likely to have a detrimental effect.
3. Staff suffering side-effects (including drowsiness) from medication that impacts on their behavior or performance should remain away from the Centre until side-effects subside.
4. If a staff member needs to go home due to illness, the Centre Manager/Supervisor will check that the staff:child ratio is met, and if not they will immediately call in a Relief Teacher.

6. Stress / Mental Awareness

1. In order to avoid the onset of stress related symptoms among employees, the employer and Centre Manager will make efforts to provide a healthy work environment that will include:
 - a) A friendly, respectful, communicative work environment, with a culture of flexibility, inclusion and diversity.
 - b) Encouraging supportive relationships and a strong sense of purpose centred on the outcomes encapsulated in the Centre [Philosophy Statement](#).
 - c) Creating a success oriented work environment that equips, empowers and encourages staff to achieve.
 - d) Encouraging staff in the Five Ways to Wellbeing: Having strong social relationships (CONNECT), being physically active (BE ACTIVE), being involved in learning (KEEP LEARNING), being givers (GIVE) and becoming more aware (TAKE NOTICE), which have shown to specifically increase positive wellbeing.
2. In order to mitigate the onset of stress related symptoms through early intervention, the employer and Centre Manager will:
 - a) Display contact details of Counsellors and support agencies in the Staff Office.
 - b) Endeavour to identify stressed employees, or employees who have a vulnerability to stress, which could involve looking at:
 - i) Employees' roles and the types of tasks they perform eg. High stress role?
 - ii) Employees' workload eg. Workload excessive? Working hours healthy?
 - iii) Whether an employee has had any changes in emotional reactions, thinking or behaviour.
 - iv) Whether an employee has said anything about being stressed, finding it hard to cope, suffering from depression or anxiety, suicide or self-harm, recent bereavements, traumatic experiences, etc.
 - c) Encourage employees to self report to the Centre Manager and/or the BoD if they are suffering from mental health problems or stress in the workplace. The Centre Manager will inform the BoD as soon as possible.
3. Once an employer has been notified or identifies stress in the workplace, the sorts of steps they should take, to reasonably address the employee's stress, include actions such as:
 - a) Liaising with the employee and the employee's doctor or specialist.
 - b) Providing financial assistance for an initial consultation with a counsellor.
 - c) Allowing the employee time off work to recuperate/recover.
 - d) After the employee has been on leave, allowing them to ease back into work (maybe part-time or reduced hours).
 - e) Providing support and additional resources eg. An employee assistance recovery plan.
 - f) Discussing and adjusting the mix of duties.
 - g) Suggesting alternative less stressful roles for the employee.
4. See the link below for the Working Well Guide which can be useful in proactively understanding, measuring and increasing mental wellbeing in the workplace.

7. Return to Work Plan

1. Staff will report injuries that affect their ability to work or lead to time off work (whether work or non-work related) and provide to the Centre Manager/Supervisor, as soon as possible after the event, a medical certificate and signed Consent Form to release medical information in order to support a return to work. Failure to report accidents or sickness may result in **Discipline & Dismissal procedures** contained in the **Personnel Policy** being commenced.
2. Staff will be supported to return to work after an injury or illness with a **Return to Work Plan** (see link below), in which the safety and welfare of the Centre's children and staff will be a paramount consideration. The plan will be developed in consultation with the BoD, the ill or injured worker, the Health & Safety Representative and other relevant parties such as the union representative, the treatment provider, ACC, and the medical insurer.
3. The **Return to Work Plan** will include clear objectives, actions to be taken to enable return to work, and the person responsible for each action. It may include:
 - suitable duties being offered including modified or alternative duties
 - hours of work and work breaks (frequency and duration)
 - support, aids or modifications to the workplace
 - special needs or conditions and what will be done to help (e.g. assistance with transport)
 - time frames
 - monitoring and reviewing progress so that problems can be identified and managed early

Links:

-) Further Guidance on Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (The PCBU and Health & Safety Officer should read this information to familiarise themselves with the requirements for ECE settings)
 - MoE Health & Safety: <http://www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/specific-initiatives/health-and-safety/>
 - WorkSafe Health & Safety regulator: <http://www.business.govt.nz/worksafe>
 - MBIE Administrator of Health & Safety legislation: <http://www.mbie.govt.nz/>
 - Duty Holders roles: <http://www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/specific-initiatives/health-and-safety/leadership/>
-) Notifiable Diseases: <http://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/notifiable-diseases>
-) Accident Notification forms: <http://www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/notifications-forms/accident-serious-harm>
-) Working Well Guide: <https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Working-Well-guide.pdf>
-) Return to Work forms and flowchart: <https://www.acc.co.nz/for-business/managing-employee-injuries/work-with-us-to-get-your-employee-back-to-work/>
-) Form templates for Health & Safety procedures: <http://www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/specific-initiatives/health-and-safety/implementing-the-health-and-safety-at-work-act-a-guide-for-early-learning-services/>

SIGNED: _____

NAME: _____

POSITION: _____