



## Music Education New Zealand Aotearoa (MENZA) Child Protection Policy

### 1. OVERVIEW

Music Education New Zealand Aotearoa (MENZA) is fully committed to the prevention of abuse and to promoting the well-being and safety of children.

This policy guided by the following principles:

- MENZA asserts that all children have equal rights to the protection from abuse and exploitation, regardless of their gender, race, religion, political beliefs, age, physical or mental health, sexual orientation, family, culture or economic status
- The decisions and actions of MENZA in response to the protection of children will be guided by the principle of “the welfare and best interests of the child”

### 2. PURPOSE STATEMENT

- To ensure the safety and well-being of children participating in MENZA events
- To promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children, protecting them from abuse
- To ensure all concerns are dealt with effectively and in full, including accurate and prompt sharing of information

### 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all MENZA staff, including employees, contractors and volunteers.

### 4. DEFINITIONS

- **Child:** Any person under the age of 18
- **Staff:** People employed by MENZA that work for and engage with students, including contracted staff and volunteers. For the purposes of this policy, “staff” also refers to any trustee of MENZA
- **Child abuse:** The Oranga Tamariki Act, 1989, defines child abuse as “. . . the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually) ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person”
- **Physical abuse:** A non-accidental act on a child that results in physical harm. This includes but is not limited to, beating, hitting, shaking, burning, drowning, suffocating,

biting, poisoning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse also involves the fabrication of inducing illness.

- **Emotional abuse:** Any act or omission that results in impaired psychological, social, intellectual and/or emotional functioning and development of a child.
- **Sexual Abuse:** An act or acts that result in the sexual exploitation of a child, whether consensual or not. Sexual abuse can be committed by a relative, a trusted friend, an associate, or someone unknown to the child.
- **Neglect:** Any act or omission that results in impaired physical functioning, injury and/or development of a child. It may also include neglect of a child's basic or emotional needs. Neglect is a lack: of action, emotion or basic needs.
- **Child Protection:** Activities carried out to ensure that children are safe in cases where there is suspected abuse or neglect or the risk of abuse or neglect.
- **Disclosure:** Information about abuse or neglect given from a child, parent/caregiver, or any other person. There are two types of disclosures, direct and in-direct. Direct disclosures clearly indicate abuse, for example, "Mum punched me in the head and made my nose bleed". In-direct disclosures may or may not indicate abusive experiences, for example "I'm scared to go home tonight".

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

The MENZA chairperson/designated person will:

- Manage all aspects of child protection within MENZA
- Respond appropriately to disclosures or concerns which relate to the well-being of a child
- Being available for, and acting as a source of supporting, advice and guidance to all staff in any situation where there is a concern or disclosure of potential or actual abuse
- Ensuring that this policy and supporting information are readily available to staff
- Maintaining confidential records of reported cases and action taken
- Liaising with statutory and local child protection agencies

The MENZA Board will:

- Promote a culture of child protection
- Ensure procedures are appropriate to the management of and the response to, suspicions and disclosures of abuse and neglect
- Ensure that the child protection policy is reviewed annually

All staff are responsible for:

- Adhering to the child protection policy
- Recognising indicators of neglect and abuse
- Responding to direct and in-direct disclosures in an appropriate way
- Reporting any concerns, suspicions or allegations immediately

## 6. REVIEW

This policy and related documents will be reviewed annually and updated regularly, to ensure it is kept up to date with changes that may have been made to legislation, related policies and procedures, and considering operational experience.

## **7 PROCEDURES**

### **7.1 SCREENING**

As part of the organisation's duty of care, MENZA will ensure that suitable and appropriate employees, contractors and volunteers (including parents) are engaged to work with children. When recruiting people to work with children, the recruitment process will include:

- Evidence of current teacher registration
- Or
- Two reference checks for each applicant
- Interviewing (to be carried out by two appointed board members)
- Screening (e.g. police vetting)

### **7.2 RESPONDING TO ABUSE/SUSPECTED ABUSE**

All staff will respond to abuse/suspected abuse in an appropriate way, ensuring the safety and well-being of the child is maintained at all times. If any staff member believes that a child is being abused or suspects potential abuse, they must immediately complete a concerning behaviour form and consult with the chairperson of MENZA.

### **7.2 RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES**

Staff members will respond to disclosures in the following way to ensure the protection and welfare of the child is maintained by:

- Being calm;
- Listening, allowing the child to tell as much or little as they want without interrupting;
- Believing what the child discloses;
- Responding reassuringly (for example, "thank you for telling me", "it's not your fault" or "I'm so sorry that this happened to you");
- Asking an open, clarifying and non-leading question in the event of an in-direct disclosure (for example, if a child in-directly discloses that they are scared to go home, ask "how come you don't want to go home?");
- Acting immediately to ensure their safety if the child is in danger or unsafe;
- Engaging them in the programme for the duration of the session if the child is not in immediate danger;
- Completing a concerning behaviour form, outlining factual details such as: the nature of the allegation; who noticed/disclosed the abuse and their relationship to the child; details of any witnesses; signs and symptoms noted (including behavioural change); times, dates, places; word for word what the child disclosed;
- Contacting the chairperson of MENZA;
- Seeking support for yourself.

Staff must not:

- Make the child repeat the disclosure unnecessarily.

- Respond confrontationally (for example “You should have told me sooner” or “Why did you let him/her do that?”).
- Promise to keep secrets.
- Correct, confront, change, challenge or influence what the child says.
- Ask leading questions.
- Question or counsel the alleged offender.

The chairperson will respond to the concerning behaviour form as follows:

- Review the concerning behaviour form.
- Consult other parties who may have additional information, such as staff.
- If further information is needed, the chairperson will continue to observe and document future incidents.
- If information indicates abuse or neglect, a report of concern will be made to the Ministry for Children - Oranga Tamariki and where necessary the New Zealand Police.

## **8. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING**

MENZA recognises that all staff must act within the legal requirements of the Privacy Act, Oranga Tamariki Act, Health Information Act and all other relevant legislation. There are provisions within these Acts for sharing information needed to protect children and enable other people to carry out their legitimate functions.

## **9. INFORMING THE CHILD’S FAMILY**

Although the parent or caregiver of the child will usually be informed of concerns, there may be times when those with parental responsibility may not be initially informed. This may happen in circumstances when:

- The parent or caregiver is the alleged perpetrator.
- It is possible that the child may be intimidated into silence.
- There is a strong likelihood that evidence will be destroyed.
- The child does not want their parent or caregiver involved and they are of an age when they are competent to make that decision.

## **10. RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES**

MENZA will maintain a good working relationship with Oranga Tamariki and with the New Zealand Police, and be familiar with the laws that serve to protect children from abuse. The chairperson will consult with Oranga Tamariki, the New Zealand Police, and with other appropriate agencies that have specialist knowledge to help protect children from abuse.

## **11. MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF**

Allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against staff must be taken seriously and reported to the chairperson who will deal with them immediately and sensitively. If there is a conflict of interest, these allegations, suspicions or complaints may be reported to the deputy chairperson. The chairperson will liaise with Oranga Tamariki/New Zealand Police and follow their guidance, including the support to be provided to the person alleging the abuse and/or

family involved. In consultation with Oranga Tamariki/New Zealand Police, the staff member will be notified about the complaint and consequences. The staff member will be directed to appropriate legal/ professional advice as appropriate. Ordinary disciplinary policies will be followed, guided by the employment contract/collective employment contract and relevant statutory obligations.

## **12. SAFE WORKING PRACTICES**

- Do not engage in any intimate, over-familiar or sexual relationships with people under the age of 18 years. This includes employees, contractors and volunteers at MENZA.
- Ensure that any filming or photography of children is appropriate. Ensure consent is obtained prior to filming or photographing, with clear explanation of purpose.
- Staff should never be left alone with children.
- Children will not be transported in a vehicle unaccompanied.
- Where possible, separate bathrooms will be provided for children and adults.
- Any documented information must be kept confidential.

## **13. CONTACTS**

- **MENZA Chairperson**  
Benjamin Lau  
Email: [blau@newlands.school.nz](mailto:blau@newlands.school.nz)  
Mobile: 021 423 652
- **New Zealand Police**  
Emergency line: 111  
Non-emergency line: 105  
Online reporting: [105.police.govt.nz](https://105.police.govt.nz)
- **Oranga Tamariki**  
Phone: 0508 326 459  
Email: [contact@ot.govt.nz](mailto:contact@ot.govt.nz)

## **14. RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

- Children's Act 2014
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989
- Privacy Act 2020

## **Review**

This policy will be reviewed every year at the first face to face board meeting after the AGM.