



New Plymouth Girls' High School  
Te Kura Taitamawāhine o Puke Ariki

### **3.5 SCOTLANDS HOSTEL: RIGHTS, RELATIONSHIPS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (ILL TREATMENT) POLICY**

#### **Outcome statement**

All boarders at Scotlands Hostel should be able to achieve their maximum potential in a safe and positive environment. Students in the hostel should feel a sense of belonging to their home-away-from-home, while studying. This policy sets out the ways that the hostel will act to ensure we are protecting and respecting the rights of all students entrusted into its care.

The New Plymouth Girls' High School Board will take all practicable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of boarders by complying with the Human Rights Act 1993, the Education (Hostels) Regulations 2005, the Childrens Act 2014, relevant health and safety regulations, standards, and codes of practice.

#### **Scoping**

All hostel staff, Senior School Leaders and staff working in and around the hostel complex (including contractors and volunteers) are expected to be familiar with this policy, its associated procedures and protocols and abide by them.

#### **Delegations**

Although ultimate accountability sits with the Board, the Board delegates responsibility to the Hostel Manager through the Principal to ensure that all hostel boarders are treated with respect and dignity and in accordance with all statutory responsibilities and the school's values of Respect/Whakamana, Responsibility/Haepapa and building positive Relationships/Whanaungatanga.

#### **Expectations**

1. The Hostel staff shall undertake all reasonable steps to support the health, safety and wellbeing of its boarders.
2. The hostel is a positive, safe environment and "home away from home" for boarders.
3. Boarders have clear, reasonable boundaries that promote their safety and wellbeing.
4. Boarders feel safe, supported and valued and experience a positive learning environment.
5. Praise and encouragement and providing opportunities for personal growth and development underpin the Hostel's daily practice.
6. Boarders are given positive guidance and direction that promotes appropriate behaviour having regard to the boarder's stage and development.
7. Boarders take personal responsibility for their health and safety.

8. Boarders respect the health and safety and rights of all other individuals within the hostel environment.
9. Boarders are not subjected to any form of discrimination, physical ill treatment, solitary confinement or deprivation of food, drink, warmth, shelter, privacy or protection.
10. Boarders have ready access to people they can trust and confide in.
11. Boarders have ready access to, and a degree of choice about health and personal services they may require.
12. Hostel staff are appropriately responsive in situations where there is ill treatment, discrimination or any other form of behaviour that causes upset and disharmony.
13. Boarders and their whānau / family are supported to raise problems and issues that are of concern to them.
14. Physical Restraint will only be used in exceptional circumstances where the student is a danger to themselves or others, and in accordance with the school's policy.
15. All hostel staff are required to report any concerns about a boarder's physical, mental, or emotional safety to the Hostel Manager or School Principal immediately. Retaliation against those who report concerns will not be tolerated.
16. Training for hostel staff will be provided on:
  - a. Identifying and responding to ill treatment and abuse.
  - b. Safe and appropriate ways to manage student behaviour.
  - c. Cultural competency, particularly in engaging with Māori and Pasifika students and their whānau.
17. Boarders will be educated about their rights and the process for reporting concerns.
18. A student friendly version of the policy will be provided in induction packs.

### **Care, support and action**

If abuse or harassment is suspected or reported, the Hostel Manager or Principal will take immediate steps to ensure, as far as is practicable, that the boarder does not come into contact with the person who is alleged to have abused or harassed the boarder. This may include but is not limited to, moving a student to another unit, using disciplinary measures to remove a student from site, providing leave with pay for a staff member, or trespassing an individual from the hostel grounds. Counselling services and a designated staff contact for affected boarders will be provided.

The School Board, as owners of the hostel, will provide written as outlined in the Education (Hostels) Regulations 2005, if they believe on reasonable grounds that abuse, harassment or serious neglect has occurred. The school will also provide support for the boarder and their family.

### **Process**

If the alleged abuse was by another boarder, the school's disciplinary investigation and process would commence and may include police involvement.

If the alleged abuse was by a person not enrolled at or employed by the school, the matter would be referred to the Police.

The steps outlined below should be referred to in the event of suspicion or disclosure of abuse of a boarder by an employee. The child or young person must be adequately protected.

Please note there are two procedures to be followed:

1. The reporting procedure in respect of the child/young person.

## 2. The procedure for dealing with the employee.

In all cases it is suggested that no one person has responsibility for dealing with both the reporting issues and the employment issues.

The steps below are recommended when dealing with an employee, noting that discussions with the Personnel Committee or external experts may require a different approach for a particular circumstance:

1. The Principal should inform the Presiding Member of the School Board and the Personnel Committee as soon as possible, ordinarily within 24 hours.
2. The Principal is advised to ensure records are kept of any comments by the student, complaints and/or allegations, and follow up action taken.
3. The decision to follow up on an allegation of suspected abuse or neglect against an employee of the school should be made in consultation with:
  - Oranga Tamariki
  - New Zealand Police
  - Presiding Member of the School Board
4. The Principal has a dual responsibility to both the boarder and the employee. Immediate consultation should take place with agencies involved to enable the Principal to:
  - Determine the extent of the assistance they can give to the investigation.
  - Consider the time frame to be followed with regard to the possible conflict between any steps the Board may take as an employer and possible police involvement.
  - Consider the Board's role as an employer, procedures outlined in relevant employee contracts, and other relevant policies .
  - The Principal should also consider appointing an independent investigator for cases involving serious allegations against staff.
5. If the Board Personnel Committee determines that abuse, harassment, or serious neglect has occurred, it must take the following actions within 24 hours:  
Provide written notice of the matter to at least one of the parents of the boarder, Oranga Tamariki, and the Police.  
Advise the Ministry of Education, as the licensing authority, of the alleged harm and who has been given written notice and when that took place and provide them with a copy of that written notice.
6. If it is determined the Board should pursue the matter as an employer, the Board should advise the person accused of the allegation and seek a response.
7. The employee should be advised of their right to seek support/advice from a union representative or legal representation.
8. The boarder raising the concern or making the allegation should not be exposed to unnecessary risk. This may require the Board to contemplate removal of the employee from the hostel environment subject to the requirements of the applicable employee contract.

### Related documentation and information

- Children's Act 2014  
<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2014/0040/latest/DLM5501618.html?src=qs>
- Education (Hostels) Regulations 2005, Part 4, S54-58.  
<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2005/0332/19.0/DLM362025.html>
- The Ministry of Education: Education (Physical Restraint) Rules 2023  
<https://assets.education.govt.nz/public/MOE-Physical-Restraint-Rules-FINAL.pdf>

- Policy 3.2 - Privacy & Protected Disclosure Policy
- Policy 3.3 – Complaints and Concerns Policy
- Policy 5.4 – Search and Surrender Policy
- Policy 5.1 – Health and Safety Policy
- Policy 5.5 – Child Protection Policy

The School Board acknowledges its obligation to maintain a safe environment for all boarders. Failure to comply with this policy may result in regulatory action, including licence revocation under Regulation 58(5).

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| Reviewed: March 2025 | Next review: 2028 |
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