



5.3 POLICE VETTING

Outcome statement

To take all reasonable steps to protect students from harm and to meet the requirements of the Children's Act 2014 and the Education and Training Act 2020, and the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015. Police vetting is part of the school's safety checking processes and supports the school's responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and staff. Where required by law, the school will ensure that all elements of the safety checking process are completed. All employees and other adults covered by this policy are expected to maintain appropriate standards of integrity and conduct.

Scoping

The Board will

- Take all reasonable steps to ensure students and staff are safe from harm, exploitation or abuse.
- Set clear guidelines for managing the vetting process so that relevant offences are identified and that the rights and privacy of the person being vetted are protected.

Delegations

The Board delegates the process of police vetting of teaching staff, non-teaching staff, volunteers, contractors, contractors' employees, and homestay providers to the Principal.

Expectations and limitations

Who we police vet

- Teaching staff, where police vetting occurs through the Teaching Council practising certificate process or the Limited Authority to Teach process.
- All non-teaching staff.
- All casual or temporary employees.
- Contractors, subcontractors and employees of contractors, must be police vetted if they may have unsupervised access to students at the school during normal school hours.
- Community members who are employed to provide homestay facilities for fee paying students.
- Volunteers who have unsupervised access to students, e.g. camp helpers, sports coaches, parent helpers. If it is not possible to obtain a police vet in the required timeframe, provision must be made to ensure the person does not have unsupervised access to students. The Principal's PA holds a database of vetted volunteers.

Teaching staff

Registered teachers are generally police vetted through the Teaching Council as part of their practising certificate. Teachers engaged under a Limited Authority to Teach are vetted through that process. Before a teaching staff member begins work, the school will obtain and record evidence of current registration, practising certification, or authority to teach, and will complete any further safety checking required by law or school process.

Non-teaching staff

A police vet and risk assessment must be completed before a non-teaching staff member begins work at the school where vetting is required by law or school process. This includes non-teaching staff who meet the definition of a children's worker under the Children's Act 2014 and non-teaching staff employed, or applying to be employed, at the school during normal school hours who are not registered teachers or holders of a Limited Authority to Teach. Police vets are repeated at least every three years while the person remains engaged in the relevant role.

Contractors

The school will police vet contractors, subcontractors, and their employees where they are may have unsupervised access to students during normal school hours. The school will verify identity before allowing unsupervised access, to ensure the person is the person who was vetted and approved. Where contractors are engaged as children's workers, the school will ensure that all statutory safety-checking requirements are met.

Volunteers and homestay providers

The school may require police vetting for volunteers who may have unsupervised access to students, including camp helpers, sports coaches, parent helpers, and parent volunteers, as a matter of school practice. Community members engaged to provide homestay accommodation for fee-paying students must be vetted where this is required by law or school process.

How we police vet

The Principal controls the process

- tell the person they will be vetted and explain the process, including how long information will be kept and why;
- obtain the required consent;
- verify the person's identity before a police vet is submitted;
- give the person a reasonable opportunity to view and respond to adverse or potentially adverse information before any adverse decision is made;
- complete a risk assessment that considers the safety and best interests of students, the nature and seriousness of the information, how long ago the conduct occurred, the age of the person at the time, the context in which the conduct occurred, whether there is a pattern of similar information, any aggravating or mitigating factors, the relevance of the conduct to the role, and any evidence of rehabilitation or behavioural change; and
- not employ or engage a person in a prohibited role if they are barred by the Children's Act 2014, unless a lawful exemption applies.

External and overseas vetting

- The school may accept confirmation that police vetting has been carried out through professional registration processes, such as teaching or social work registration, by another organisation on behalf of the school, where the school is satisfied that the process complies with the safety checking requirements of the Children's Act 2014 and any school requirements.
- The school will not ordinarily accept police vet reports supplied directly by individuals.
- Where a New Zealand police vet is not sufficient because a prospective children's worker or other relevant person has lived overseas, the school may require police certificates from the person's countries of citizenship and from any country in which they have lived for more than 12 months within the last 10 years.
- If those certificates cannot be obtained, the school may require satisfactory evidence of attempts to obtain them together with any declaration required by the school.

Record keeping

- Police vetting information and risk assessments are confidential and must be used only for the purpose for which they were obtained.
- Information must be kept securely and managed in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020, the Criminal Records (Clean Slate) Act 2004, the Public Records Act 2005, and the school's privacy and records management requirements.
- The school will keep an appropriate record of the person's name, the dates of initial and most recent police vetting, the date the next vet is due, and relevant risk assessment information.
- Records will be retained securely for audit purposes in accordance with the school's records retention requirements and may be destroyed only in accordance with those requirements and any Board direction.

Assurance and compliance

The Principal will ensure that any required police vetting and risk assessment are completed before the person has, or is likely to have, unsupervised access to students at the school or hostel, and in the case of homestay providers, at the provider's home or any other environment.

Police vetting will be renewed at least every three years while the person remains in a role at the school.

If concerns arise about a person during the period between police vets, the school may undertake a further risk assessment and take any further steps considered necessary to protect students.

If a new offence under the Children's Act 2014 comes to the attention of NZ Police after the vet results have been issued for an individual, they're able to contact the school to alert them to this new information.

All police vetting procedures must comply with the Children's Act 2014, New Zealand Police vetting service requirements, the Criminal Records (Clean Slate) Act 2004 and the Privacy Act 2020.

Legislative Compliance

- Children's Act 2014;
- Education and Training Act 2020;
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015;
- Criminal Records (Clean Slate) Act 2004;
- Privacy Act 2020;
- Public Records Act 2005

Resources

- [New Zealand Police | Nga Pirihimana o Aotearoa: NZ Police Vetting Service](#)
- [Ministry of Education | Te Tahuu o te Matauranga: Police vets for schools and kura](#)
- [Ministry of Education | Te Tahuu o te Matauranga: Risk assessments after a Police vet](#)
- [Ministry of Education | Te Tahuu o te Matauranga: Who needs to be safety checked at school](#)
- Ministry of Education website www.education.govt.nz
- [Children's Act 2014](#)

- Oranga Tamariki website
<https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/working-with-children/childrens-act-requirements/safety-checking/>
- Specified offences -
<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2014/0040/latest/DLM5501909.html>
- Privacy Act -
<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1993/0028/latest/DLM296639.html>
- <https://www.police.govt.nz/advice-services/businesses-and-organisations/vetting/forms-and-guides>

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