

POLICY: SEXUAL ABUSE**RATIONALE**

All young people are vulnerable to sexual abuse – regardless of family situation, race, sex, age or socio-economic level. This policy seeks to ensure that staff is aware of the indicators of sexual abuse among the student group and what they should do about it, and that students are made aware of sexual abuse and what they may do to get help.

Purpose

1. Every two years the staff will be informed about how to recognise indications of sexual abuse, past or current of young people.
2. Provide programmes that aim at helping young people learn about themselves, grow in confidence and develop as individuals.
3. To present programmes that provides information to and educate the school community of the nature of sexual abuse through health education programmes.
4. To provide suitable and appropriate resources for staff to deal with sexual abuse.

Guidelines

1. If any staff member suspects a student is being sexually abused they are to discuss the matter immediately with the Guidance Counsellor or Principal as they have a responsibility to do what they can to secure the safety of any student who is in danger or unsafe.
2. Teachers will be given advice every two years to understand the dynamics of sexual abuse as well as the indicators.
3. Confidentiality is to be maintained at all stages and staff should not assume that the family or anyone else has been told.
4. When a young person is suspected of having been abused, teachers or Guidance Counsellor should keep dated confidential records of behaviours observed and accurate statement of disclosure.
5. At all stages the student's best interests must be the main focus.
6. If a staff member is implicated in an allegation of sexual abuse concerning a student at Rotorua Lakes High School, the above procedures should be followed but in addition the Principal and the Board of Trustees chair must be informed at earliest opportunity.

Attached: Guidelines for staff who may have to deal with Sexual Abuse and/or if Guidance Counsellor is not available.

GUIDELINES FOR STAFF IF GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR IS NOT AVAILABLE;

DISCLOSURE BY A STUDENT OF SEXUAL ABUSE AT HOME

- Act immediately to secure the safety of any student who is in danger or unsafe;
- Listen to and reassure the student but do not make promises or commitments you cannot keep;
- Write down any information or disclosures that the student gives and check that any surrounding events have been recorded;
- Ensure that the student has a responsible adult supporting them through this process;
- Do not formally interview the student. Obtain only necessary relevant facts if and where clarification is needed;
- Inform the Guidance Counsellor and Principal and discuss the situation;
- Agree on a suitable course of action and check that the Ministry of Social Development and/or the police have been notified.
- Whatever the role the Counsellor chooses to take it is important that the complaint should be treated seriously, and that the student should be informed of the options available and supported in following up whatever option seems most appropriate.
- This policy is to be read and used in conjunction with The Vulnerable Children's Policy.

Ministry of Social Development
Ph: 0800 559 009

Rotorua Police
Ph: 348 0099

REVIEW: This policy will be reviewed according to the Board of Trustees' triennial Programme of self-review (SEP 2023)

DATE CONFIRMED: SEPTEMBER 2020