

Risk Assessment and Safety Checking Procedure

Introduction

All staff at the Ko Taku Reo Preschool, Auckland are safety checked, and a risk assessment completed to assess whether a person is suitable to fulfil a role as a “children’s worker” before working with children as outlined in the ECE Licensing Criteria GMA7A and rechecked every three years. A “children’s worker” is defined as a person who works in an early learning service, and their work:

- may or does involve regular or overnight contact with children, and
- takes place without a parent/guardian of each child being present.

A **core** children’s worker is a person whose work:

- requires, or allows them to be the only children’s worker present, or
- is the worker who has primary responsibility (person accountable, or duty of obligation or care) for, or authority over (person has power, control, provides guidance, or sets behavioural boundaries), a child or children.

A **non-core** children’s worker is everyone who isn’t a core children’s worker.

Nearly everyone working in ECE service is considered a core worker.

The Purpose

Consistent robust safety checking to reduce the risk of harm to children.

Documentation

Compliance and Safety Check Documentation (including Risk Assessment) as outlined under the Vulnerable Children’s Act 2014.

- A written procedure for safety checking all children’s workers before employment or engagement of the worker commences that meets the safety checking requirements of the Children’s Act 2014.
- A detailed record of each component of the safety check and the date and the results.

Procedure

New Employees

- Before confirming an appointment, referees need to be contacted; identity and qualifications verified; and police vetting as necessary, and safety checks (including risk assessments) need to be completed, and all results recorded as per Police Vetting and Safety Checking procedure below.
- Review all information gathered and use professional judgement to identify patterns of concerning attitudes or behaviours. Ask the question, “Does this person pose, or would this person pose and risk to the safety of children as a children’s worker?”
- Document the risk assessment on the “Safety Check Record” form and sign.

Current Employees

- New safety checks are completed for those staff who are due for review (review dates set on SMS Discover), or as indicated by other concerns as raised in the performance appraisal.
- Document the risk assessment on the form as above, and sign.

Police Vetting and Safety Checking Procedure

- A seven-step safety check is completed for all staff:
 1. Verification of identity (including previous identities)
 - a. Sight both an original and secondary identity document e.g. passport, and/or driver's license, and/or birth certificate
 2. An interview
 - a. Ask specific questions to allow them to talk about their own attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours.
 3. Information about work history (provided on CV or application form)
 - a. We review candidate's C.V. and collect data on the candidate's employment application form.
 4. Referee information – at least two
 - a. We ask the referee if they have any concerns regarding the candidate's suitability to work with children.
 - b. Referees must not be related to the candidate or part of the candidate's extended family. Confirm with the referee that the information in the candidate's C.V. is correct. Ask the referee at least one question pertaining to if they have any concerns regarding the candidate's suitability to work with tamariki.
 5. Information from any relevant professional organisation or registered body
 - a. We seek information from relevant professional organisations, licensing authority or registration authority, including confirmation that the potential children's worker is currently a member of the organisation, or currently licensed or registered by the authority.
 6. A New Zealand police vet (non-qualified Kaiako only)
 - a. We require a clear, valid police vetting check on all children's workers before they start work in the centre. We use teacher Registration Certificates for qualified teachers with current practising certificates as their Police vet will already have been done.
 7. A risk assessment
 - a. Review all information gathered and use professional judgement to identify patterns of concerning attitudes or behaviours. Ask the question, "Does this person pose, or would this person pose and risk to the safety of children as a children's worker."
- All results recorded on the "Safety Check Record" form.
- The potential employee must be met in person before employment commences.
- Verified copy of qualifications and Kaiako registration will be held on file.
- Potential workers who have lived in an overseas country for 12 or more months within the last ten years will be asked to provide a Police check for that country, if possible
- Qualified Kaiako must provide a copy of their registration certificate. The status of their registration will be checked via the Teaching Council register.

- All staff will be rechecked using steps 1, 5, 6 and 7 from above. Unqualified staff will be rechecked when their police vet expires. Qualified staff will be rechecked when their Kaiako registration is renewed.
- Safety check information will be stored on Discover and in hard copy folder which will give reminder to carry out new safety check when required.

Third Party Safety Checks (Student Teachers/ESW)

- Agree with the external provider (Tertiary Education Organisation/Relieving Agency/Support Worker Agency) who the children's worker will be and the length of their work placement, pending a risk assessment.
- A letter or email of introduction from the external provider
 - Ask that we agree to them acting on our behalf.
 - Include each individual children's worker's name.
 - Confirm the safety check has been carried out to the [Children's Act \(CA\) 2014](#) standard and
 - confirm the children's worker has given consent for the relevant checking information to be passed on to your early learning service.
 - If any concerns, we will do some or all components of the safety check ourselves.
- Complete identity check and risk assessment (even if done by third party)
 - Verify identification by two forms of identity documents.
 - an original primary identity document (e.g., passport)
 - a secondary identity document (e.g., driver's license)
- A risk assessment will be documented on the "Safety Check Record" form.

Contractors

- If possible, repairs and maintenance will be carried out outside of normal opening hours.
- Any contractors that need to be on the premises during opening hours will not have unsupervised access to children.

Reporting to Teaching Council

The Education and Training act 202 states that an employer must provide a mandatory report to the Teaching Council in certain circumstances. Failing to file a report is an offence, which carries a fine of up to \$5000, unless there is reasonable justification. Service providers can find out more about their responsibilities for mandatory reporting on the Teaching Council website.

Ko Taku Reo Preschool will need to make a mandatory report when:

- An employee who is a registered teacher is dismissed for any reason.
- An employee who is a teacher resigns from a teaching position if, with the 12 months preceding the resignation, the employer had advised the teacher that it was dissatisfied with, or intended to investigate, any aspect of the teachers conduct or competence.
- An employee who is a registered teacher ceases to be employed by the employer, and within the following 12 months the employer receives a complaint about the teacher's conduct or competence while he or she was an employee.

- The employee is satisfied that, despite completing competency procedures with the teacher, the registered teacher has not reached the required competence level.

Appendix:

- Appendix “Safety Check Record” form

Reviewed	June 2024
Review partners	Preschool Lead, Head of Early Years, Ko Taku Reo HR
Next review date	June 2026
Signed:	
Preschool Lead	Susan Swolfs