

Section E (NAG 5) Safe, Physical and Emotional Environment

Policy: **Interviewing of Students**

Date of Review: **November 2022**

Reviewers: **Olivia Fugmann (Associate Principal), Staff Health & Safety Committee**

GOAL

This policy clarifies the protocol to be used when interviewing students.

OBJECTIVES

1. To clarify and protect the rights of interested parties at each stage of the enquiry. ie
 - The students being interviewed whether victims, perpetrators or witnesses
 - The caregivers of the students involved
 - The staff involved
2. To detail procedural considerations which ensure 'due process'

GUIDELINES

1. When interviewing students, staff will be impartial.
2. A member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) must be involved in the case of serious misconduct, even though a member of the Pastoral Care Team (PCT) may carry out the interviews.
3. As each situation is unique, school protocol must allow Senior Leadership staff to use their discretion with the order and timing of various actions as facts become available.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. A parent may be involved at any stage of the inquiry.
2. Every effort should be made to contact parents/caregivers with details of the inquiry and for them to be present if the potential consequences are serious. Routine enquiries may not necessitate their presence, but they should be informed of outcomes.
3. Students will be given their opportunity to explain their perspective. Students will be treated with respect. Their thoughts, feelings and side of what happened will be listened to.
4. Decisions made for searches and/or seizures of student property are undertaken when it is necessary to maintain a safe environment. The staff member will follow guidelines as set out in the Education and Training Act 2020.

5. Unless impracticable, a search will be carried out by a staff member who is of the same sex as the student; and in the presence of the student and another teacher of the same sex as the student.
6. When suspension or school initiated prosecution is likely, parents should be contacted without delay. In the case of interviews with Police, Oranga Tamariki or any other agency with statutory powers and responsibilities, the student must be given the opportunity for an advocate of their choice to be present unless this option is declined. If the student is vulnerable a staff member may choose to act in the student's best interests and attend the interview as an advocate. All information given in any interview may, at the request of the student, or the discretion of the interviewer, be deemed to be 'confidential'. This does not apply where safety issues override confidentiality.

Chairperson

Principal

Date