

## Child/Young Person Protection Policy

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<b>Committee with delegated responsibility:</b>	Audit, Finance and Risk Committee
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<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Changes made</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Date updated</b>
<b>V7</b>	Addition of reference to Transportation of Young People and Social Media Policies. Inclusion of email address for reporting concerns to OT. Removal of refence to MYND. Updated pronouns. Addition of definitions for children's worker/core worker and non-children's worker	Ops Manager	November 2023
<b>V7.1</b>	Additional clarification of reporting requirement to exclude schools where programmes are community based. Update wording NSO to National Office	Ops manager	July 2024
<b>V8</b>	Additional clarification around Children's worker and non-children's worker. Addition of information regarding transportation of children and young people and use of media/images	General Manager National Operations/Ops Manager	May 2025

## **Summary**

Graeme Dingle Foundation is committed to ensuring the wellbeing and safety of children and young people, including prevention of child/young person harm, abuse or neglect. This policy provides guidance to Graeme Dingle Foundation officers (trustees and managers) and workers (including staff, contractors, and volunteers) on how to identify and respond to concerns about possible harm, abuse, or neglect of a child or young person.

## Policy Framework:

1. **Purpose, Scope and Principles**
2. **Definitions**
3. **Identifying Harm, Abuse or Neglect**
4. **Responding to Suspected Harm, Abuse or Neglect**
5. **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**
6. **Risk and Consent**
7. **Training**
8. **Review**

### **Appendix One – Flowcharts:**

- **Responding to Suspected Child/Young Person Harm, Abuse or Neglect;**
- **Reporting to Oranga Tamariki; and**
- **When the Alleged Abuser is a Staff Member**

### **Appendix Two – Detailed definitions**

### **Appendix Three – Role Description – Graeme Dingle Foundation Child/Young Person Protection Officer**

The interests of the child/young person will be the paramount consideration when any action is taken in response to suspected harm, abuse, or neglect. This organisation commits to support the statutory agencies Oranga Tamariki and the New Zealand Police (the Police) to investigate harm, abuse or neglect and will report suspected cases and concerns to these agencies as per the process in this policy.

Graeme Dingle Foundation's designated **Child/Young Person Protection Officer** (CYPPO) is the Operations Manager or will be delegated by the CEO in their absence. A Role Description for this role is attached as Appendix Three to this policy.

A copy of this Policy will be placed on Graeme Dingle Foundation's Website for public access and information.

## **1. Purpose, Scope and Principles**

### **a. Purpose**

This Child/Young Person Protection Policy supports our officers and workers to respond in a timely and appropriate way to potential child/young person protection concerns, including suspected harm, abuse, or neglect. This policy reflects Graeme Dingle Foundation's commitment to protect children and young people from harm, abuse or neglect and recognises the important roles all our officers and workers have in protecting children and young people. This policy sets out the Foundation's commitment to provide a safe and positive environment for children and young people.

### **b. Scope**

This policy will apply to all officers and workers and should be used wherever harm, abuse or neglect of a child or young person is suspected or identified, regardless of whether or not the child/young person is in one of Graeme Dingle Foundation's programmes.

The *Policies and Procedures Manual: General and Programme* for Community Partner Trusts who deliver the Foundation programmes under licence in regions across Aotearoa, should be read in conjunction with this policy.

### **c. Principles**

Graeme Dingle Foundation's Vision, Purpose and Values underpin this Child/Young Person Protection Policy.

In addition, we:

- Have a commitment to ensure information and training is identified so that all of our officers and workers can identify the signs and symptoms of potential harm, abuse or neglect and are able to take appropriate action in response and will do so;
- Will support our officers and workers to share information about suspected child/young person harm, abuse or neglect in a timely manner, even if feeling uncertain and to discuss any concerns with their manager or Graeme Dingle Foundation's Child/Young Person Protection Officer;
- Are committed to building and maintaining an organisational culture where our officers and workers feel confident that they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise concern without fear of reprisal;
- Will keep the child/young person at the centre of all decision-making and will recognise the rights of the child/young person to participate, in age-appropriate ways, in decision-making about themselves.
- Commit to ensuring our officers and workers have access to the training they need to uphold this Policy and its principles.
- Will report all concerns to the School, Oranga Tamariki or any other relevant agency as appropriate.
- Will support the role of the School, Oranga Tamariki or any other relevant agency in the pastoral care of their child/young person, in the reporting of suspected harm, abuse or neglect, and when and if there is an investigation.
- Support the role of the Police and Oranga Tamariki in the investigation of suspected harm, abuse or neglect and will report harm, abuse, or neglect to these agencies as appropriate or as concerns become apparent.
- Ensure appropriate escalation to School, Oranga Tamariki or any other relevant agency for any report of serious harm, abuse or neglect.

## **2. Definitions**

Definitions are detailed in Appendix Two to this policy.

## **3. Identifying child/young person harm, abuse or neglect**

Our approach to identifying harm, abuse or neglect is guided by the following principles:

- We understand that every situation is different, and it is important to consider all available information about the child/young person and their environment before reaching conclusions. For example, behavioural concerns may be the result of life events, such as divorce, accidental injury, the arrival of a new sibling etc.

- We understand when we are concerned a child/young person is showing signs of potential harm, abuse or neglect we should talk to someone, either a manager/supervisor or Graeme Dingle Foundation's Child/Young Person Protection Officer – we should not act alone.
- While there are different definitions of harm, abuse or neglect, the important thing is for us to consider overall wellbeing and the risk of harm to the child/young person. It is not so important to be able to categorise the type of harm, abuse, or neglect.
- It is normal for us to feel uncertain, however, the important thing is that we should be able to recognise when something is wrong, especially if we notice a pattern forming or several signs that make us concerned.
- Exposure to intimate partner violence (IPV) is a form of child/young person abuse. There is a high rate of co-occurrence between IPV and the physical abuse of children and young people. (See Additional Resource below: Safer organisations, Safer children guidelines, p. 7)

**d. Signs of potential abuse:**

<b>Concern</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<i>Physical signs</i>	Unexplained injuries, burns, fractures, unusual or excessive scratching of genitalia, genital injuries
<i>Behaviour concerns</i>	Age-inappropriate sexual interest or play, fear of a certain person or place, risk taking behaviour such as substance abuse, disengagement/neediness, aggression, deliberate self-harm
<i>Developmental delays</i>	Small for their age, cognitive delays, falling behind in school, poor communication and social skills
<i>Emotional signs</i>	Sleep problems, low self-esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness/loneliness
<i>Allegation or disclosure</i>	Child/young person talking about things that indicate abuse

**e. Signs of potential neglect:**

<b>Concern</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<i>Physical signs</i>	Looking unkempt and/or uncared for, dirty, without appropriate clothing, underweight
<i>Behavioural concerns</i>	Disengagement/neediness, risk taking behaviour such as substance abuse, aggression
<i>Developmental delays</i>	Small for their age, cognitive delays, falling behind in school, poor speech and social skills
<i>Emotional signs</i>	Sleep problems, low self-esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness/loneliness, and evidence of self-harm
<i>Neglectful supervision</i>	Out and about unsupervised, left alone, no safe home to return to
<i>Medical neglect</i>	Untreated skin and/or other medical issues

#### **4. Responding to suspected child/young person harm, abuse or neglect**

The process of responding to suspected child/young person harm, abuse or neglect is detailed in the Flowcharts in Appendix One to this policy.

***If a child/young person is in immediate danger, contact the Police immediately.***

Workers will report all suspicions or observed incidents or reports of incidents to their Manager, or to Graeme Dingle Foundation's Child/Young Person Protection Officer as soon as possible who will support them in reporting concerns to the School, Oranga Tamariki or any other relevant agency. If there is reasonable cause to believe child/young person harm, abuse or neglect has occurred, if they are enrolled in a school the school will be given the opportunity in the first instance to take the lead in taking the appropriate and reasonable steps to address the issue. This may include making a report of concern to Oranga Tamariki. Graeme Dingle Foundation Managers or Graeme Dingle Foundation's Child/Young Person Protection Officer may also insist that a report of concern is made to Oranga Tamariki (0508 326 459, [contact@ot.govt.nz](mailto:contact@ot.govt.nz)) and will ensure that the school is kept informed if they proceed with this (if the young person is enrolled in school).

Graeme Dingle Foundation will always consider the recommendations of statutory agencies, including Oranga Tamariki and the Police. As well, we will endeavour to communicate with family/whānau as appropriate and in discussion and collaboration with the worker's manager and the host school/agency.

When responding to suspected child/young person harm, abuse, or any concerning behaviour, workers will CLEARLY document their observations, impressions, and communications. Workers and their manager will ensure that any such documentation will be kept secure and confidential, except when being provided to Police or Oranga Tamariki to support their investigations as appropriate and discussed with their manager.

The Regional Manager or the Child/Young Person Protection Officer will ensure that the person making the incident report/observation/allegation is aware of and has access to a copy of this policy.

The Flowcharts in Appendix One specifically address what to do if the alleged abuser is a worker of Graeme Dingle Foundation. Officers and workers involved in cases of suspected child/young person abuse are entitled to have support. We will maintain knowledge of such individuals, agencies and organisations in the community that provide support.

#### **5. Confidentiality and information sharing**

We will seek advice from Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police before identifying information about an allegation is shared with anyone, other than those directly involved, the school/the agency/the manager and/or the Graeme Dingle Foundation Child/Young Person Protection Officer.

Officers and workers should be aware that the Privacy Act 2020 and the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 allow information to be shared to keep children or young people safe when abuse or suspected abuse is reported or investigated. Note that under sections 15 and 16 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, any person who believes that a child or young person has been or is likely to be, harmed physically, emotionally or sexually or ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived may report the matter to Oranga Tamariki or the Police and, provided the report is made in good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against them.

## **6. Risk and consent**

For any activities requiring informed consent we will ensure the risks are explained to participants and/or parents/guardians.

## **7. Social media, internet or public use images of children**

Particular care must be taken if photos of a child/young person are intended for use on our website or social media sites. Consent from the individual or their caregiver, if under the age of 18, must be obtained before utilising any images in this manner.

## **8. Transporting children/young people**

Caregiver consent is required before transporting children or young people under the age of 18 in a vehicle.

Any impromptu or emergency arrangements are recorded and can be justified if required.

Children/young people will not be driven unaccompanied, unless absolutely required.

Anyone who transports children/young people must:

Comply with the NZ Road Code and all relevant legislation.

Be fit to drive and not under the influence of any substance/s which may impair judgement and/or their ability to drive. This includes, but is not limited to, illicit drugs, alcohol, and/or any prescribed medication which may fit the above criteria; and

Accept that the safety and welfare of the child/children or young persons in their care are their responsibility.

## **9. Training**

Graeme Dingle Foundation is committed to ensuring and increasing officer and worker awareness of how to prevent, recognise and respond to abuse/neglect through appropriate training. Graeme Dingle Foundation will seek to deliver appropriate training as required, using the annual conference and/or other training platforms to support this policy.

As part of their induction, new officers and workers whether they are children's workers or non-children's workers are made aware of the detail of the policy on child/young person protection and who the CYPPO is.

### **Other related Graeme Dingle Foundation Policies:**

Human Resources Policies and (recruitment/reference checking/vetting/settlement agreements)

General and Programme Procedures:

G15.6 Dealing with Alleged, Suspected or Confirmed Drug or Substance Abuse by Children/Youth

G15.8 Child/Young Person Disclosure and Confidentiality

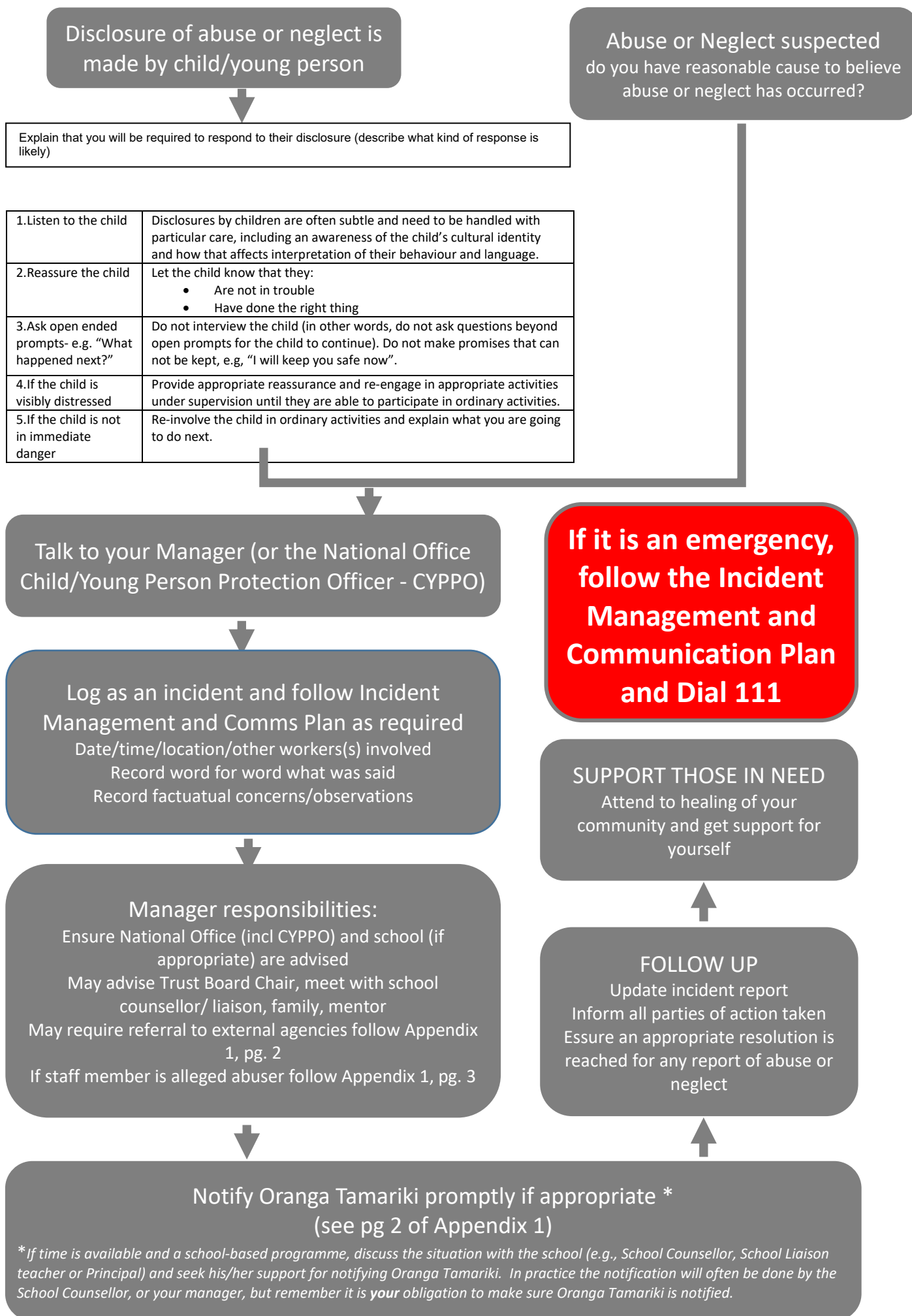
G15.9 Use of Force against a Child or Young Person

G16.1 Incident Management and Communication Plan

**Additional Resources:**

- Oranga Tamariki has developed the *Safer organisations Safer children* guidelines for child protection policies to build safer organisations  
<https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Working-with-children/Childrens-act-requirements/Safer-Organisations-safer-children.pdf>
- The Ministry of Health has also made guidance available in the health sector:  
<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/preventative-health-wellness/family-violence-and-sexual-violence>

## Appendix One: Responding to Suspected Child/Young Person Abuse or Neglect



## Reporting to Oranga Tamariki

(if under 18 years, if over 18 years report to Police)

**In most cases this will be done by the school (if school-based programme) or a manager within the Foundation**

### GATHER INFORMATION (Manager to do)

Ensure you have a full report from the person who identified the abuse. Offer them support. Ideally get them to sign the report. Tell them what actions you will take.



### DISCUSS WITH THE SCHOOL AND National Office (CYPPO)

Ensure the school is aware of the incident if school-based programme, in most cases they will take the lead and report the incident to Oranga Tamariki. GDF will report if not satisfied. Request confirmation of receipt



### REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE

Ring Oranga Tamariki on **0508 326 459** and tell them:

- Your name, organisation, role and contact details
- Name of child/young person (also known as/nicknames)
- Date of birth (if known)
- Ethnicity (if known)
- Name of caregivers, parents and other family members, and current living situation
- Current legal custodians
- Reasons why it is believed that the child/young person has been abused / neglected
- Any other significant background information
- Any concerns for your physical safety in making this notification

### ASK WHAT HAPPENS NEXT



### NEXT STEPS

- Work with Oranga Tamariki to decide how and when parents/caregivers are told
- Work with Oranga Tamariki to communicate next steps to the child/young person
- While the child/young person is in your care, ensure he/she is not at risk of being further abused



### Other referrals

Consider referral to other support agencies in the community (school counsellor, Whanau Ora, Social Workers in schools)



### Follow Up

Update incident report  
Inform all parties of actions taken  
Ensure an appropriate resolution is reached for any report of abuse or neglect

## When the Alleged Abuser is a staff member/volunteer/contractor

Disclosure of abuse or neglect is made by a child/young person

Abuse or Neglect suspected  
do you have reasonable cause to believe  
abuse/neglect has occurred?

Talk to your Manager (or the National Office  
Child/Young Person Protection Officer - CYPPO)

Log as an incident on Safe 365, ensuring  
anonymity is retained in all Safe 365 reporting  
(using initials only)

Date/time/location/other worker(s) involved  
Record word for word what was said  
Record factual concerns/observations

**If it is an  
emergency, follow  
the Incident  
Management and  
Communication  
Plan and Dial 111**

### Manager responsibilities:

Ensure you advise National Office (incl CYPPO who will notify CEO and Foundation Board), Trust, School  
(if appropriate)  
May need to meet with school counsellor/ liaison, family, mentor  
May require referral to external agencies follow Appendix 1, pg. 2

**If appropriate notify Oranga Tamariki 0508 326 459 or local Police promptly**  
(Where appropriate ensure Senior Management, your board and National Office are involved in the  
process of reporting to Oranga Tamariki)

Management to consult with Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police and:

- For **employees**, refer to the relevant employment agreement and employment law and make a decision as to whether to stand-down the employee while the allegation is investigated. Advise the employee of their right to support/advice.
- For **volunteers**, stand-down the volunteer while the allegation is investigated.
- For **contractors**, refer to the relevant service agreement and request the contracting company/organisation to withdraw the individual concerned from providing services to Graeme Dingle Foundation while the allegation is investigated.

### Follow Up

Consider whether individual requires any additional training; and/or should continue to be in contact  
with children and young people  
Update incident report and inform all parties of actions taken  
Ensure an appropriate resolution is reached for any report of abuse or neglect

## Appendix Two: Definitions

**Child** – any child aged under 14 years.

**Young Person** – any young person aged between 14 and 25 years \* note age of majority defined below

**Age of majority**–In New Zealand 18 is considered the age of majority, meaning young people gain full legal capacity and can make decisions without parental permission.

**Officer** – An officer is a person who occupies a specified position or who occupies a position that allows them to exercise significant influence over the management of the business or undertaking, i.e. Trustee or Senior Manager.

**Worker** – A worker is an individual who carries out work in any capacity for the business or undertaking, i.e. employee, contractor, volunteer.

**Children's Worker**– people who work with children, or who have regular contact as part of their role.

all children's workers must undergo police vetting.

**Non-Children's Worker**– A person who works on behalf of children but not directly with children, examples for our organisation include desk-based staff members and trustees. Non-Children's workers must undergo a Ministry of Justice Check.

**Child protection** – activities carried out to ensure that children are safe in cases where there is suspected harm, abuse or neglect or are at risk of harm, abuse, or neglect.

**Child/Young Person Protection Officer** – the designated person responsible for providing advice and support to workers where they have a concern about an individual child/young person or who want advice about child/young person protection policy.

**Staff Member**– any employee of Graeme Dingle Foundation or one of its Licensed Community Partners.

**Volunteer** – a volunteer for Graeme Dingle Foundation or one of its Licensed Community Partners

**Contractor** – a contractor to Graeme Dingle Foundation or one of its Licensed Community Partners

**Disclosure** – information given to a worker by a child/young person, parent, or caregiver or a third party in relation to harm, abuse, or neglect.

**Oranga Tamariki** – the government department responsible for investigating and responding to suspected harm, abuse, and neglect and for providing care and protection to children and young people up to age 18 years found to be in need.

**New Zealand Police** – the agency responsible for responding to situations where a child/young person is in immediate danger and for working with Oranga Tamariki in child/young person protection work and investigating cases of harm, abuse, or neglect where an offence may have occurred.

**Physical abuse** – any acts that may result in physical harm of a child/young person or young person. It can be, but is not limited to: bruising, cutting, hitting, beating, biting, burning, causing abrasions, strangulation, suffocation, drowning, poisoning and fabricated or induced illness.

**Sexual abuse** – any acts that involve forcing or enticing a child/young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse can be, but is not limited to:

- **Contact abuse:** touching breasts, genital/anal fondling, masturbation, oral sex, penetrative or non-penetrative contact with the anus or genitals, encouraging the child/young person to perform such acts on the perpetrator or another, involvement of the child/young person in activities for the purposes of pornography or prostitution.
- **Non-contact abuse:** exhibitionism, voyeurism, exposure to pornographic or sexual imagery, inappropriate photography or depictions of sexual or suggestive behaviours or comments.

**Emotional abuse** – any act or omission that results in adverse or impaired psychological, social, intellectual and emotional functioning or development. This can include:

- Patterns of isolation, degradation, constant criticism, or negative comparison to others. Isolating, corrupting, exploiting, or terrorising a child/young person can also be emotional abuse.
- Exposure to family/whānau or intimate partner violence.

**Neglect** – neglect is the most common form of abuse and although the effects may not be as obvious as physical abuse, it is just as serious. Neglect can be:

- Physical (not providing the necessities of life like a warm place, food, and clothing).
- Emotional (not providing comfort, attention, and love).
- Neglectful supervision (leaving children or young people without someone safe looking after them).
- Medical neglect (not taking care of health needs).
- Educational neglect (allowing chronic truancy, failure to enrol in education or inattention to education needs).

## **Appendix Three: Role Description – Graeme Dingle Foundation Child/Young Person Protection Officer**

Graeme Dingle Foundation's Child/Young Person Protection Officer (CYPPO) is responsible for the operation of Graeme Dingle Foundation's Child and Young Person Protection Policy (CYPP), including:

- supporting Graeme Dingle Foundation workers to **identify** suspected child/young person harm, abuse and/or neglect;
- supporting Graeme Dingle Foundation workers to **respond** to suspected child/young person harm, abuse and/or neglect;
- organising a debrief for each instance of identified child/young person harm, abuse or neglect to consider if the CYPP provided sufficient guidance and direction, and if any aspect of the policy or the response could be improved;
- training new Regional Managers in the CYPP, so they can train and support their workers to follow the policy; and
- contribute to the Graeme Dingle Foundation Board's annual review of the CYPP, seeking to improve this policy.

The CYPPO will be familiar with the terms of the CYPP and with the Children's Act 2014. They will also be familiar with all of Graeme Dingle Foundation's Policies and Procedures.

### **Key Performance Indicators:**

- Positively reviewed by each Graeme Dingle Foundation worker, and/or their manager, that the CYPPO supports with a child protection issue.