CHILD PROTECTION

POLICY

1. PURPOSE

The Cause Collective (TCC) is committed to preventing the abuse, neglect, harm, mistreatment and deprivation of children and young people. In accordance with the **Children's Act 2014**, TCC ensures that all individuals working with children and young people undergo safety checks and that those convicted of certain offences are prohibited from holding key roles involving direct contact with children.

This policy affirms TCC's duty of care and responsibility to act promptly on any concern, suspicion or disclosure of harm to a child or young person. This policy provides a broad framework for protecting vulnerable children and outlines the expectations for staff conduct, particularly in response to actual or suspected abuse and neglect.

2. PARAMOUNTCY PRINCIPLES

Our guiding principles are:

Safety and Wellbeing First: The safety and wellbeing of children and young people are paramount in decision-making and actions about them.

Family / Whānau Engagement: We recognise the value of families and encourage their involvement in decision-making about their children and young people, unless it would increase risk to the child or young person.

Cultural Respect and Inclusivity: We respect diverse cultural perspectives, especially Māori and Pacific values in working with children and young people. We will incorporate Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles of partnership, participation, and protection into our engagements with children, young people and their whānau.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all:

- TCC employees, contractors and volunteers who may have contact with children or young people, including Board members, students, interns and secondees.
- children and young people, meaning individuals under the age of 18 years.

Policy Name:	CHILD PROTECTION	**Date Issued:**	2017
Policy Number:	HSPL04	**Date Updated:**	FEBRUARY 2026
Version:	2026/02	**Date Approved:**	MARCH 2026
Approved By:	The Cause Collective Board of Trustees	**Next Review Date:**	APRIL 2027

4. DEFINITIONS

- **Abuse**: including emotional, physical and sexual ill-treatment
- **Physical abuse:** intentional physical harm or actions that place a child at risk of injury.
- **Sexual abuse or exploitation:** any act that exposes a child to sexual activity, exploitation, or sexualised behaviour.
- **Family violence:** violence or abuse occurring within family/whānau relationships.
- **Online harm:** bullying, grooming, exploitation or exposure to harmful content via digital platforms.
- **Neglect**: the failure to provide for a child's basic physical, emotional, medical, or educational needs.
- **Child**: anyone under the age of 14 years. [1]
- **Young person:** anyone aged 14 to 17 years.[2]

5. POLICY

The Cause Collective (TCC) is committed to ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and protection of all children and young people in our care. We will comply with all relevant legislation and ethical practice to protect the safety and promote the wellbeing of children and young people (those aged under 18 years). Central to TCC's culture of child protection are ***The Children's Act*, 2014** and our indigenous cultural knowledge and approaches[3].

We recognise that the wellbeing of Pacific children is connected to the strength of their aiga, whanau and communities. Our holistic, ethnic-specific approach recognises the Va and affirms that children's safety and development are a shared responsibility, supported by the collective efforts of families and communities. This relational space fosters mutual respect, interconnectedness and cultural safety, ensuring that children grow up in environments where voices are heard, and their rights and cultural values are protected.

[1] The Children's Act, 2014
[2] Oranga Tamariki Act, 1989
[3] While legislation defines a young person as aged 14 to 17 years, TCC adopts a Pacific cultural lens and may refer to young people as those aged 14-24 years in the context of programme design and engagement. Statutory definitions apply for all child protection reporting obligations.

We are committed to:

5.1 Child and Youth Safety

- All children and young people have a right to feel safe, supported, respected, and protected from harm.
- A zero-tolerance approach to child and youth abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harm of any kind.
- Protection of children by providing appropriate support, intervention and referral pathways.
- We work in relational ways with children and young people, creating environments where they feel safe and supported to communicate if they have been harmed, or have concerns for their safety.

5.2 Compliance with Relevant Legislation

- Ensure compliance with **New Zealand legislation**, including:
    - Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 (Children's and Young People's Well-being Act)
    - Vulnerable Children Act 2014
    - Crimes Act 1961
    - Privacy Act 2020
- Implement policies and procedures that meet or exceed legal standards.

5.3 Cultural Safety and Inclusivity

- To respect and uphold **Te Tiriti o Waitangi** principles of Partnership, Participation, and Protection.
- Culturally safe practices that are inclusive of a child / young person's cultural background, including those from Māori, Pacific, and other diverse cultural backgrounds.

5.4 Preventative Measures

- Robust **screening, vetting, and recruitment processes** for all staff, volunteers, and contractors who work with children and young people.
- All personnel working with children and young people are **trained and educated** on child protection issues, including recognising signs of abuse and neglect, bullying, self-harm or suicide ideation.
- Maintaining **healthy and safe environments** for children and young people, that are free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.

5.5 Reporting and Responding to Concerns

- We promote an environment where **staff feel confident** to report concerns and challenge unsafe practices.
- We have clear procedures for **reporting concerns, disclosures, or allegations** of abuse or neglect.
- We ensure any disclosure or **suspicion of suicide risk or imminent harm** causing concern for a child or young person's safety is reported immediately.
- We implement clear reporting channels for children, young people, staff and volunteers to **report bullying, including cyberbullying**.
- **Timely and appropriate responses** to all reported concerns, including notifying relevant authorities (e.g., Oranga Tamariki, NZ Police) when required.
- We will ensure children and young people are heard, respected, and supported during any **reporting and investigation process**.

5.6 Confidentiality and Information Handling

- Safeguard personal and sensitive information in line with the **Privacy Act 2020**.
- Ensure information is only shared with appropriate individuals or agencies when necessary to protect a child or young person, in line with the **Oranga Tamariki Act 1989**.

5.7 Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- Regularly **review and update** the policy to reflect changes in legislation, best practices, and feedback from stakeholders.
- Systems **monitor the effectiveness** of the policy and ensure compliance across the organisation. These are reported to Management and Board.

5.8 Child and Youth Participation

- Children and young people are encouraged to **express their views and concerns** about their safety and wellbeing.
- Their feedback is incorporated into policy development, review, and improvement processes as appropriate.

6 RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board's Responsibilities are to:

a. Ensure policy compliance with relevant NZ legislation (***Oranga Tamariki Act 1989***, ***Children's Act 2014***, etc.) and ethical standards.
b. Promote a culture of safety, respect, and inclusivity honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles.

c. Monitor compliance and respond to breaches appropriately.

Management's Responsibilities are to:

d. Delegate a Designated Person for Child Protection (DPCP) with oversight responsibilities of child protection
e. Annually audit child protection compliance, with findings reported to the Board.
f. Implement, communicate, and regularly update the policy.
g. Provide training, resources, and guidance for staff and volunteers.
h. Ensure robust vetting, screening, and risk assessment processes.
i. Respond to concerns promptly, ensuring confidentiality and compliance.

Staff and Volunteers' Responsibilities are to:

j. Adhere to the Staff Code of Conduct and maintain safe interactions.
k. Complete training and stay updated on policies and procedures.
l. Report concerns or disclosures immediately and accurately.
m. Respect confidentiality and handle sensitive information appropriately.
n. Apply child protection principles consistently in all interactions.
o. Monitor environments for safety and report hazards promptly.
p. Communicate concerns through established reporting channels.
q. Maintain accurate records of incidents or disclosures.

Reference: **Delegated Authority Policy**

7 APPROVAL AND AMENDMENTS

This **Child Protection Policy** was approved by the Board of Trustees on 18 March, 2026 and is subject to periodic review and amendments as required.

8 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- Delegated Authority Policy
- Managing Our People Policy
- Transportation of Children and Young People Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy
- Concerns and Complaints Management Policy
- Toolkit for Child Protection Safety
    - Child Protection & Family Violence Reporting Procedure
    - Safety Checking Assessment Procedures
    - Staff Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Procedures
    - Youth Stream Guidelines
    - Positive Guidance.