



Gateway Church

Child Protection Policy

November 2024



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Statement of Commitment

Gateway Church is committed to the prevention of child abuse and to the protection of children.

Gateway Church is committed to supporting and empowering families to act to keep children safe and will themselves ensure that when making any decision affecting a child, the welfare and best interests of the child will be the prime consideration.



Section One: Introduction

Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this Child Protection Policy is to ensure that the Gateway Church operates in such a way as to protect children from harm.
- 1.2 This Child Protection Policy confirms the commitment of Gateway Church to the protection of children and is designed to assist staff by providing them with practical guidance for identifying and responding to child protection concerns.
- 1.3 This Child Protection Policy proceeds to:
 - outline the standards and principles by which all Gateway Church staff must abide
 - outline the action to be taken by members where any form of child abuse or neglect is known or suspected
 - establish what action is required when allegations are made against Gateway Church staff
 - outline safe working practices and the expected behaviour of all Gateway Church staff

Guiding Principles

- 1.4 The congregational environment should be a place of safety and all forms of child abuse violate the teachings and principles that underlie the belief system of Gateway Church.
- 1.5 Gateway Church asserts that all children have equal rights to protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation regardless of their gender, race, religion, political beliefs, age, physical or mental health, sexual orientation, family and social background, and culture, economic status, or criminal background.
- 1.6 The decisions and actions of Gateway Church in response to any child protection concern will be guided by the principle of *“the welfare and best interests of the child”*.
- 1.7 Gateway Church is committed to supporting and empowering families to act to keep children safe. Gateway Church is a multicultural church and staff recognise the importance of being culturally responsive and having an awareness of cultural identity, and underlying beliefs, customs, and cultural norms.
- 1.8 All services provided by Gateway Church for the safety and wellbeing of children adhere to the principles of partnership, protection, and participation; and the rights and responsibilities accorded by Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Scope

- 1.9 This policy applies to all Gateway Church staff. For the avoidance of doubt, the term “staff” is defined in the definitions section of this policy and includes volunteers.



Legislation

1.10 This policy has been written with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in mind and in accordance with the following legislation:

- Care of Children Act 2004
- Children's Act 2014
- Crimes Act 1961
- Education Act 1989
- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Family Violence Act 2018
- Health and Safety Act 1956
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- Health Information Privacy Code 1994
- Human Rights Act 1993
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- Privacy Act 2020

Review

1.11 This Policy will be reviewed a minimum of every three (3) years and updated regularly, to ensure it is kept up to date with changes that may have been made to legislation, related policies, and procedures, and in light of operational experience.

1.12 The overall responsibility for this policy rests with the Gateway Church Designated Person for Child Protection, in consultation with the General Manager and Senior Leaders.

Definitions

1.13 For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

"Child" means any person under 18 years of age.

"Child Abuse" can involve ongoing, repeated, or persistent abuse, or may arise from a single incident. Child Abuse may take many forms, but it can be categorised into four different types:

- i. Physical Abuse
- ii. Sexual Abuse
- iii. Emotional Abuse
- iv. Neglect

"Child Protection Register" is a record of children who are considered to be suffering, or who are considered to be at risk of suffering, or likely to suffer, abuse or neglect. The register includes information around those child protection concerns, including but not limited to:

- A record of facts, including observations, with time and date
- What was said and by whom, using the person's words
- What action has been taken, by whom and when



- All decisions, including if the concern does not require notifying Oranga Tamariki or the Police, with the reasons clearly identified and explained.

The Register must be kept up to date and its contents must be confidential other than to authorised enquirers. It must be held securely and separately from other Gateway Church records.

“Designated Person for Child Protection” is a person within Gateway Church who is responsible for the safeguarding of children. This person is required to undergo regular child protection training and is responsible for ensuring that child protection is a key focus within Gateway Church both at a strategic level and on a day-to-day basis.

As at the date of this Policy the Designated Person for Child Protection for Gateway Church is:

Annabelle Russell

“Emotional Abuse” is any act or omission that results in impaired psychological, social, intellectual and/or emotional functioning and development of a child.

“Family Violence” can take many forms and includes not only acts of physical violence, but also intimidating behaviour such as threatening to harm people, pets, or property. Children are always affected either emotionally or physically where there is family violence even if they are not personally injured or physically present.

“Grooming” is predatory conduct and can include, but is not limited to, befriending, or establishing an emotional relationship, or other emotional connection, with a child, (and can extend to members of the child’s family or whānau), for the purpose of lowering the child’s inhibitions and with the objective of sexual abuse.

“Neglect” is any act or omission that results in impaired physical functioning, injury and/or development of a child.

“Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children” formally known as Child Youth and Family Services (“CYFS”). Oranga Tamariki is a Government Ministry dedicated to supporting children in New Zealand whose wellbeing is at significant risk of harm now, or in the future.

“Physical Abuse” is a non-accidental act on a child that results in physical harm. This includes, but is not limited to, beating, hitting, shaking, burning, drowning, suffocating biting, poisoning, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse also involves the fabrication or inducing of illness.

“Sexual Abuse” is an act or acts that result in the sexual exploitation of a child, whether consensual or not. Sexual abuse can be committed by a relative, a trusted friend, an associate, or someone unknown to the child.

“Spiritual Abuse” is a form of abuse that occurs when a person misleads and maltreats a child or young person in the name of God, or in the name of the Church by taking advantage of the child or young person’s spirituality and putting them in a state of unquestioning obedience to an abusive authority.



“Staff” refers to any person working at, for, or on behalf of, Gateway Church and includes, but is not limited to, persons employed directly by Gateway Church irrespective of whether they are paid or voluntary, or whether they are working on a full time, part time, casual, or temporary basis.



Section Two: Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Gateway Church recognises that all staff have a full and active part to play in protecting children from harm. It is the primary responsibility of staff to be vigilant, maintain professional boundaries and safe working practices, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of neglect and abuse, whether actual or potential, and to report any concerns, suspicions, or allegations immediately.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Person for Child Protection

- 2.2 The Designated Person for Child Protection must:
- Be trained in child protection and undergo regular refresher training
 - Adopt, implement, comply with, and enforce the Gateway Church Child Protection Policy
 - Ensure that child protection is a key focus within Gateway Church and that appropriate protocols, procedures and training are in place
 - Ensure that the needs and rights of children come first - the safety and wellbeing of each child is the paramount consideration in all circumstances
 - Promote and model appropriate behaviour at all times
 - Ensure that all allegations are managed appropriately
 - Ensure, and safeguard, clear, confidential, detailed, and dated records on all child protection concerns
 - Ensure that all members of staff are aware of, have access to, and understand, this Child Protection Policy
 - Ensure that all Gateway Church staff are recruited and delegated responsibilities in accordance with the guidelines identified in this policy
 - Ensure that when child protection concerns arise, no internal investigation occurs without appropriate consultation and a decision whether a response from Oranga Tamariki and/or the New Zealand Police is required
 - Consult with the General Manager, Senior Leaders or an Oranga Tamariki social worker, regarding all child protection concerns.



Section Three: Child Protection Procedures

- 3.1 The procedures set out in section three of this policy provide Gateway Church staff with guidelines to assist with identifying and responding appropriately to concerns of abuse and neglect, whether these concerns are their own or are the concerns of a third party.
- 3.2 The procedures set out below will help staff with:
- the identification of abuse
 - handling disclosures, whether verbal or behavioural, from a child
 - reporting procedures
- 3.3 Gateway Church staff should be alert and aware of the fact that child abuse can occur in many different settings and forms and that child protection concerns may come to light in a variety of different ways. These can include, but are not limited to:
- Direct or indirect disclosure by the child;
 - Direct or indirect disclosure from someone known to the child;
 - Suspicions of abuse by those involved with the child;
 - Allegations and/or direct observations or signs displayed in the child's physical or emotional behaviour;
 - Direct witnessing of abuse.
- 3.4 The signs and indicators of abuse to a child may not be immediately obvious or identifiable. **Appendix One** of this policy sets out a non-exhaustive list of signs and indicators to help identify abuse.
- 3.5 If a member of staff is unsure about what might constitute child abuse, or if they are unsure about whether they ought to report an incident, they should ask for advice and guidance from the Designated Person for Child Protection. If the Designated Person for Child Protection is unavailable for advice and guidance, then staff should consult with the General Manager or a Senior Leader. At any time, staff may seek advice from Oranga Tamariki (0508 326 459) regarding any child protection concerns.

Responding to Child Abuse/Suspected Abuse

- 3.6 Staff will respond to allegations of abuse in a manner which ensures that the child's safety is the first and paramount consideration.
- 3.7 When abuse of a child is suspected, disclosed, or witnessed, everything must be done to ensure the ongoing safety of the child concerned, along with the ongoing safety of any other child who is in close connection to the alleged offender. In all cases, the child is the primary concern, and all other concerns (including the guilt or innocence of the alleged offender) must be secondary. This does not mean that the alleged offender is to be considered guilty without due investigation, but that the safety of the child comes first.
- 3.8 In a situation where any a member of staff believes that a child is in immediate danger, or in a situation where they believe that a third party is not prepared to secure the safety of the child by contacting a statutory service, the staff member, in consultation with the Designated Person for Child Protection, General Manager or a Senior Leader, will inform Oranga Tamariki and the Police of their concerns.



- 3.9 Gateway Church staff will not collude to protect an adult or an organisation. Gateway Church will respond with sensitivity, objectivity, confidentiality, fairness, and honesty.
- 3.10 Refer to the **“Child Protection Procedure Flowchart”** below in the Appendix section of this policy.

Responding to Disclosures

- 3.11 Disclosures of abuse may come directly from a child. It is important that staff of the Gateway Church take what the child says seriously. This applies irrespective of the setting, or the staff members own opinion on what is being said. If there is information disclosed regarding actual or suspected child abuse staff must:
- o stay calm
 - o listen and hear
 - o give time to the child to say what they want
 - o reassure them that they were right to tell
 - o tell the child that they are being taken seriously and that they are not to blame
 - o explain that they have to pass on what the child has told them as soon as they are aware that the child is making a disclosure
 - o give an age-appropriate explanation to the child of what the child can expect to happen next
 - o record in writing what was said as soon as possible, using the child's own words where possible.
 - o report the concern to the Designated Person for Child Protection, General Manager, or a Senior Leader.

Staff must not:

- o make the child repeat the story unnecessarily
 - o promise to keep secrets
 - o enquire into the details of the alleged abuse
 - o ask leading questions
- 3.12 Under no circumstances should a staff member of Gateway Church, including the Designated Person for Child Protection, General Manager, or Senior Leaders, attempt to conduct an investigation or deal with concerns of abuse themselves.

Reporting Procedures

- 3.13 Staff must report concerns or allegations of child abuse to the Designated Person for Child Protection at the first possible opportunity to best ensure the safety of the child. If the Designated Person for Child Protection is unavailable, or if the concern involves the Designated Person for Child Protection, then consultation should occur with the General Manager, a Senior Leader, or an Oranga Tamariki Duty Social Worker. A decision will then be made as to whether to formally notify Oranga Tamariki and the NZ Police. If an immediate response is required to ensure the child's safety, staff should contact the NZ Police and Oranga Tamariki directly.
- 3.14 All concerns or allegations of sexual abuse must be reported to the NZ Police and Oranga Tamariki.
- 3.15 When reporting an incident member of the Gateway Church should:



- o Inform the Designated Person for Child Protection, General Manager, or a Senior Leader, as soon as possible
- o Record in writing all conversations and actions taken and keep these records securely in a Child Protection Register.

3.16 Effective documentation, including referrals and notifications, must include the following:

- o A record of facts, including observations, with time and date
- o What was said and by whom, using the person's words
- o What action has been taken, by whom and when

3.17 All decisions, including if the concern does not require notifying Oranga Tamariki or the Police, must be recorded in writing and kept securely in a Child Protection Register with the reasons clearly identified and explained.

Keeping the Child's Family/Whānau Informed and Involved

3.18 Wherever possible, a child's family/whānau should participate in the decisions affecting that child and the relationship between the child and their family should be maintained and strengthened.

3.19 Although the parent or caregiver of the child will usually be informed of concerns, there may be times when those with parental responsibility may not be initially informed. This may happen in circumstances when:

- the parent or caregiver is the alleged offender
- it is possible that the child may be intimidated into silence
- there is a strong likelihood that evidence will be destroyed

3.20 When it comes to informing a child's family/whānau, advice can be sought from Oranga Tamariki.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

3.21 The safety of children is paramount, and Gateway Church has a responsibility to know when and how to share appropriate information with external agencies to protect the safety and wellbeing of children.

3.22 All staff are required to adhere to the Privacy Act 2020 and the Information Sharing Provisions under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 and the Family Violence Act 1989.

3.23 Under the Privacy Act 2020, the giving of information to protect a child is not a breach of confidentiality. Principle 11 of the Privacy Act 2020, states that the sharing of personal information is allowed if "disclosure of the information is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious threat". Wherever possible the family or whānau should be kept informed of what information has been shared and to which agency, and for what purpose.

3.24 The Oranga Tamariki Act and the Family Violence Act place the wellbeing and best interests of a child as the first and paramount consideration when it comes to the sharing of information. This principle takes precedence over any duty of confidentiality that is owed to the child or their family or whānau, or any person with whom the child is in a domestic relationship with.



- 3.25 Under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, if a member of Gateway Church staff raises a legitimate concern in good faith about suspected child abuse, which proves to be unfounded on investigation, no civil, criminal, or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against that staff member, or against Gateway Church.
- 3.26 Advice may be sought from Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police before any information about an allegation that identifies an individual is shared.

Relationships with Statutory and Specialist Agencies

- 3.27 The Designated Person for Child Protection will maintain good working relationships with Oranga Tamariki and with the NZ Police as they have the statutory powers to intervene. The Designated Person for Child Protection will consult with Oranga Tamariki, Police, and with other appropriate agencies that have specialist knowledge to help protect children from abuse.

Think “What if I am right?”

not “What if I am wrong?”



Section Four: Safe Recruitment

Safe Recruitment

- 4.1 Gateway Church has a responsibility to ensure that those entrusted with children are safe to do so. Gateway Church is committed to ensuring robust recruitment and appointment processes are in place, and are followed, which emphasise the importance of child protection, and which ensure that every member of Gateway Church working with children, either directly or indirectly, is safe and suitable to do so.
- 4.2 Before making any appointment, Gateway Church will complete a robust safety checking process to ascertain the candidate’s suitability and safety to work for, or at, Gateway Church. Depending on the role, this process may include, but is not limited to:

SAFETY CHECKING PROCESS

- Identity verification check
- Employment verification check (*if applicable*)
- Reference check
- Professional membership check (*if applicable*)
- Criminal History Check
- New Zealand Police vetting check
- Oranga Tamariki check
- Risk assessment
- Interview(s) with the applicant which include questions of safeguarding
- Approval by the Designated Person for Child Protection, in consultation with the General Manager and Senior Leaders

- 4.3 All new Gateway Church staff will be made aware of, and provided with a copy of, the Child Protection Policy as part of the induction process.
- 4.4 All new Gateway Church staff will be made aware of, and provided with a copy of, the Gateway Church Code of Conduct as part of the induction process.
- 4.5 All new Gateway Church staff working directly with children will be made aware of, and provided with a copy of, the Gateway Church Code of Conduct for Children’s Workers as part of the induction process.

Police Vetting

- 4.6 Police vetting of all staff will be carried out a minimum of once every three (3) years. All new offers of employment and employment agreements, regardless of whether these are for paid or voluntary, permanent, part time or casual positions, will remain conditional on receiving satisfactory results from Police vetting.
- 4.7 Until such time as the Police vetting process has been completed and the results have been received, all newly appointed Gateway Church staff working with children will



be supervised in their role and will not be permitted to work alone or carry out any alternative duties.

- 4.8 The Police vetting requirement extends to all staff, including, but not limited to, volunteers.
- 4.9 If the candidate has lived in another country in the last five (5) years, they must supply a background check conducted in that country and/or provide evidence of good character as deemed appropriate by the Designated Person for Child Protection. In all circumstances the safety of children will be the paramount consideration.

Training

- 4.10 All staff of the Gateway Church will be required to be familiar with, and adhere to, the Gateway Church Child Protection Policy.
- 4.11 Gateway Church will ensure that all staff will be given appropriate training, covering basic awareness of child protection, in order to protect children and to recognise and respond when children are at risk. This training will include:
- o Roles and responsibility of staff regarding child protection
 - o Recognising and responding to the signs and indicators of actual or suspected abuse
 - o Ensuring staff receive a copy of this policy, can understand it, and can follow the procedures for reporting a concern
- 4.12 The Designated Person for Child Protection, and all other staff with defined child protection roles within Gateway Church, will receive in depth, regular, and updated child protection training a minimum of every three years, to ensure that those roles can be carried out effectively.

Support

- 4.13 It is recognised that dealing with child protection cases and concerns can have an impact on the wellbeing of staff. Gateway Church will offer appropriate support to any member of staff involved with dealing with a child abuse case or concern. This support may include, but is not limited to, counselling services and/or referring the staff member to other appropriate agencies.

Educating Parents and Caregivers

- 4.14 Gateway Church believes that as well as training for staff, education directed at parents and caregivers is also an important aspect in enhancing the wellbeing of children.
- 4.15 Parents and caregivers involved with Gateway Church will be made aware of the Gateway Church Child Protection Policy, ensuring that those associated with Gateway Church know, at a minimum, who to contact in the event of a child protection concern arising.



Section Five: Safe Working Practices

- 5.1 A relationship between an adult and a child can never be a relationship between equals. This is because there is a potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable children and therefore adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.
- 5.2 Staff must, at all times, work for the physical, social, educational, moral, and spiritual well-being of the children in their care.
- 5.3 Clear boundaries are important in maintaining professional behaviour and the Gateway Church Child Protection Policy reinforces the need for high standards of behaviour from Gateway Church staff in order to protect children from abuse and at-risk situations, and to protect Gateway Church, and its staff, from unwarranted suspicion.
- 5.4 Staff should always maintain appropriate boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. Staff who work with children must adhere to the relevant Gateway Church Code of Conduct and act in a way that is considered to be safe practice. This includes, but is not limited to:
- Avoiding situations where they are alone with a child
 - Ensuring that they are visible to others when with a child
 - Using an open-door policy where possible
 - Treating all children with respect at all times, regardless of their gender, race, religion, political beliefs, age, physical or mental health, sexual orientation, family and social background, and culture, economic status, or criminal background
 - Avoiding circumstances where their behaviour (both verbal and physical) may be misinterpreted as hostile, suggestive, inappropriate, offensive, or neglectful
 - Promoting an environment where children feel safe and comfortable in the care and contact of Gateway Church.
 - Not transporting a child, other than their own, alone at any time other than in an emergency situation
 - Not removing any child from Gateway Church without prior written consent from the child's parent or guardian – except in an emergency situation
 - Acting swiftly to ensure that any perceived risk to a child is immediately reported
 - Monitoring visitors to Gateway Church at all times
 - Not taking, or displaying, images of children unless they have consent to do so from the child's parents or caregivers, and the child themselves if appropriate
 - Ensuring that all interaction and communication with children, by whatever means, is transparent and open to scrutiny.

Physical Contact

- 5.5 It is imperative that in all dealings with children, a balance is struck between the rights of the child and the need for intervention. When physical contact is made with a child this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity, and background. Staff should use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the child for the minimum amount of time necessary.



- 5.6 Any sexual activity between a member of staff and a child will be reported to the NZ Police.

Communication

- 5.7 Communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, webcams, websites, social networking, and blogs. Staff should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.
- 5.8 Staff should only share relevant, age appropriate, information. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from a child other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role within Gateway Church.

Supervision of Children

- 5.9 All efforts are made to ensure that a child safe environment is provided on Gateway Church premises.
- 5.10 Unless permission is otherwise given, children visiting Gateway Church premises must be accompanied, and supervised, by a parent or caregiver at all times. The parent or caregiver of any child visiting Gateway Church will be solely responsible for that child. Parents and caregivers will undertake all toileting and changing of their own children.

Childhood Ministries

- 5.11 Refer to the Code of Conduct that applies to those staff and volunteers supporting the various areas of Children's Ministry.

Primary School

- 5.12 The Gateway Church Primary school aged program is for children under the age of 5 years and are designed to be provided both with, and without, the presence of a child's parent or caregiver, depending on the needs of the child. Safe working practices will be followed at all times to protect children from the risk of inappropriate behaviour from Gateway Church staff, and any other adult or child present.
- 5.13 Where a parent or caregiver is not present, only staff whose role it is to provide care for a child may do so.
- 5.14 Any visitors must be approved by the member of staff in charge and supervised at all times.
- 5.15 Where possible, open door policies should be used for all spaces and staff should not be left alone with a child.
- 5.16 Except in emergency situations, no child is to be removed from the program by anyone other than the child's parents or caregivers without express written permission.
- 5.17 Except in emergency circumstances, and when a child's parent or caregiver remains present for the duration of the ministry, all children are to be signed both in and out by



a parent or caregiver. The parent or caregiver must provide Gateway Kids with up-to-date contact information.

- 5.18 Where a check in tag has been given to a person other than a child’s parent or caregiver, at the discretion of Gateway Church staff, this can be deemed to be express permission, authorising that person to sign the child out at the end of the program.

Primary

- 5.19 The Primary program is for children in School years 0-6 and designed to be provided without the presence of a child’s parent of caregiver. Safe working practices will be followed at all times to protect children from the risk of inappropriate behaviour from Gateway Church staff, and any other adult or child present.
- 5.20 Where a parent or caregiver is not present, only staff whose role it is to provide care for a child may do so.
- 5.21 Any visitors to the Primary School Program must be approved by the appropriate member of staff and supervised at all times.
- 5.22 Where possible, open door policies should be used for all spaces and no staff should be left alone with a child.
- 5.23 Except in emergency situations, all children will be signed in by the approved staff member and must be signed out by a parent or caregiver. No child is to be removed from the program by anyone other than the child’s parents or caregivers without express written permission. The parent or caregiver must provide the Gateway Kids with up-to-date contact information.
- 5.24 Where a check in tag has been given to a person other than a child’s parent or caregiver, at the discretion of Gateway Church staff, this can be deemed to be express permission, authorising that person to sign the child out at the end of the program.

Intermediate

- 5.25 The intermediate program is for children in School years 7-9 and is designed to be provided without the presence of a child’s parent of caregiver. Safe working practices will be followed at all times to protect children from the risk of inappropriate behaviour from Gateway Church staff, and any other adult or child present.
- 5.26 Where a parent or caregiver is not present, only staff whose role it is to provide care for a child may do so.
- 5.27 Any visitors to the program must be approved by the appropriate member of staff and supervised at all times.
- 5.28 Where possible, open door policies should be used for all spaces and no staff should be left alone with a child.
- 5.29 Except in emergency situations, no child is to be removed from the program by anyone



other than the child's parents or caregivers without express written permission. Children are checked in to the program by a team leader, or a parent or caregiver, using the Planning Center check in system. The parent or caregiver must provide Gateway Kids with up-to-date contact information.

- 5.30 Children are delivered to the main Gateway Church auditorium at the end of the session for collection by their parent or caregiver.



High School

- 5.31 Gateway Church has a program for High School aged children and is designed to be provided without the presence of a child's parent or caregiver. Safe working practices will be followed at all times to protect children from the risk of inappropriate behaviour from Gateway Church staff, and any other adult or child present.
- 5.32 Any visitors to the program must be approved by the appropriate member of staff and supervised at all times.
- 5.33 Where possible, open door policies should be used for all spaces and no member of staff should be left alone with a child.
- 5.34 Children are checked in to the program and their attendance recorded, at the start of the session by a approved volunteer using the Planning Center check in system.

Photographs and Recordings

- 5.35 Written consent must be obtained for all photographs to be taken, and/or displayed, of children, whether they are intended for internal or external use. This includes, but is not limited to, the posting of images on social media.
- 5.36 Where possible, all photographs and recordings should be carried out using Gateway Church equipment and not with personal devices. Where this is not possible, photographs and/or recordings taken on personal devices should be transferred to Gateway Church equipment and deleted from the personal device at the earliest opportunity.

Trips and Excursions

- 5.37 Taking children out of their usual environment can provide them with life-changing experiences which they will remember for the rest of their lives. It can also put them at risk and into unfamiliar situations. Careful planning and preparation is needed to minimise risks and make the activity a positive experience for each child.
- 5.38 Before any trip, parents and caregivers will be informed by written notice of the details of same, including but not limited to:
 - The venue
 - The method of transport
 - The date
 - The time
 - The contact details of the trip organiser
 - The adult/child ratios.



5.39 Parents and caregivers must give written consent for their child to attend any planned trip.

5.40 All adults taking part in the trip or excursion must be appropriately safety checked prior to the trip or excursion taking place.

Transportation

5.41 All precautions must be taken to ensure that when transporting children their safety and wellbeing is paramount.

5.42 Only approved, fully licensed adults will be responsible for transporting children. All adults must be free from alcohol and non-prescription drugs.

5.43 All vehicles transporting children must be roadworthy, with a current Warrant of Fitness and registration, and the maximum passenger number must not be exceeded. Safety belts must be used.

5.44 Drivers must not deviate from the agreed route and must carry a mobile phone with them at all times in case of emergencies.

5.45 Children should not be transported alone, except in an emergency. This can be achieved by:

- having a central drop off and pick up point for trips so there isn't one child left at the end of a trip
- using vans and transporting big groups at once
- encouraging parents or caregivers to accompany their own child/ren to events.

5.46 In circumstances where transporting a child is unavoidable due to an emergency, staff must:

- a. Let the child's parent and/or caregiver know what is happening, where you are going, and when you will be back;
- b. Let the Ministry Team Lead or alternatively the Designated Person for Child Protection know the situation
- c. Ensure that the child sits in the back seat of the vehicle.

Under no circumstances should staff attempt to conduct an investigation or deal with concerns of abuse themselves



Section Six: Allegations Against Gateway Church Staff

Allegations Against Staff

- 6.1 Concerns may be raised regarding Gateway Church staff. These may be as a result of behaviour within Gateway Church, or of behaviour within their home environment.
- 6.2 All staff have a responsibility to understand what constitutes appropriate behaviour towards a child, and to maintain this behaviour at all times.
- 6.3 Allegations, suspicions, or complaints of abuse against staff will be taken seriously and reported to the Designated Person for Child Protection who, in consultation with the General Manager and Senior Leaders, and will deal with the allegation, suspicion or complaint immediately, sensitively, and expediently within the procedures outlined in this policy.
- 6.4 If the allegation is against the Designated Person for Child Protection then this must be reported directly to the Senior Leaders.
- 6.5 Any concern of abuse of a child will follow the child protection procedures outlined in this policy. In the event of an allegation of abuse by a member of staff, a report of concern will be made to the Police and Oranga Tamariki.
- 6.6 When there are suspicions of abuse by a staff member, both the staff member's and the child's rights are to be attended to. This means that the safety of the child is of first concern, and that the staff member must be encouraged to obtain appropriate professional advice.
- 6.7 In all child protection cases, Gateway Church will co-operate fully with both Oranga Tamariki and the Police in their investigations and assessments.
- 6.8 It is important that no internal investigation is undertaken, and no evidence gathered that might prejudice an official Police or Oranga Tamariki investigation.
- 6.9 If there is insufficient evidence to pursue a criminal prosecution, then an internal disciplinary investigation may still be undertaken subject to internal disciplinary procedures. In these circumstances the Designated Person for Child Protection will inform the complainant of the process to be followed, what information will be taken into consideration, and when the internal investigation is likely to be complete.
- 6.10 Gateway Church does not support the use of settlement agreements. Some settlement agreements allow staff to agree to resign provided that no disciplinary action is taken, and a future reference is agreed. Where the conduct at issue concerns the safety or wellbeing of a child, the use of such agreements is contrary to a culture of child protection.
- 6.11 A person tendering his or her resignation, or ceasing to be involved with Gateway Church, will not prevent an allegation of abuse against a child being followed up in accordance with these procedures.



Continued Involvement with Gateway Church

- 6.12 Gateway Church has a duty of care to the children they are in contact, and entrusted, with. All those working for, at, and associated with, Gateway Church have a responsibility to understand what constitutes appropriate behaviour in relation to children, and a responsibility to maintain appropriate standards of behaviour – which includes reporting lapses in these standards by others.
- 6.13 The fact that an alleged offender has not been prosecuted or been found guilty does not necessarily mean that they are appropriate to continue to work with children. A risk assessment must be carried out before allowing the person to return to their duties, or any alternative duties, in any capacity. When making any decisions, Gateway Church will, at all times, place the safety and wellbeing of children as the paramount consideration.
- 6.14 If Gateway Church becomes aware that an alleged, suspected, or convicted offender is involved, or looking to become involved, with another Church, it may inform the Designated Person for Child Protection of that Church of the existence of that risk, or potential risk. At any time, advice can be sought from Oranga Tamariki and/or the NZ Police with regards to the disclosure of information.

Historical Allegations

- 6.15 Gateway Church regards its child protection responsibilities with the utmost importance and is committed to acknowledging, and apologising for, any abuse to anyone entrusted in its care. Gateway Church is committed to providing redress and taking all steps to prevent any possible recurrence of abuse.
- 6.16 Any person, collective group of persons, or advocate or support person may submit an allegation of historical abuse against Gateway Church, either verbally or in writing, directly to the Designated Person for Child Protection, General Manager, or Senior Leaders. The Designated Person for Child Protection, General Manager, or Senior Leaders will deal with the allegation, suspicion, or complaint immediately, sensitively, and expediently, seeking advice from Oranga Tamariki, Police, or other appropriate agencies that have specialist knowledge in protecting children from abuse and how to deal with historical allegations.



Appendices



Appendix 1: Indicators of Abuse

The [indicators](#) for child abuse and neglect fall into three general categories:

- Physical indicators:** Injuries to a child that occur in a pattern or occur frequently. These injuries range from bruises to broken bones to burns or unusual lacerations and are often unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given
- Behavioural indicators:** The child's actions, attitudes, and emotions can indicate the possibility of abuse or neglect. Behavioural indicators alone are much less reliable than physical indicators, as a child's behaviour may be the result of a variety of other problems or conditions. When observing changes in behaviour, look for the frequency and pattern of the new behaviour, as well as a child's age and stage of development. For example, it is normal for younger children to be wary of adults, as they may have been taught not to talk to strangers. Look for a combination of physical and behavioural indicators.
- Caregiver indicators:** Caregivers who abuse, neglect, or exploit children are either unable or unwilling to provide care and protection in an appropriate way. Those who are unable to provide care and protection may be physically unable due to their own medical or health condition. They may be overly stressed, tired, or working under the influence of drugs or alcohol which limits their abilities. Caregivers who are unwilling to provide children with the appropriate level of care and protection are more aware that what they are doing is wrong but continue to act in that way. These caregivers may not view the child as someone who has feelings and emotions and often have the need to control others or have displaced aggression towards weaker persons.

The indicators alone do not prove child abuse or neglect. Likewise, the absence of indicators does not exclude the possibility that abuse is occurring. If you have any concerns about the wellbeing of a child, seek advice from your Designated Person for Child Protection, General Manager, Senior Leaders, or an Oranga Tamariki Duty Social Worker.



Emotional Abuse Indicators

- Physical Indicators:
 - Bed wetting or bed soiling with no medical cause
 - Frequent psychosomatic complaints (e.g., headaches, nausea, abdominal pains)
 - Non-organic failure to thrive
 - Pale, emaciated
 - Prolonged vomiting and/or diarrhoea
 - Malnutrition
 - Dressed differently to other children in the family

- Behavioural Indicators:
 - Severe developmental lags with obvious physical cause
 - Depression, anxiety, withdrawal, or aggression
 - Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol, and drug abuse
 - Overly compliant
 - Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
 - Running away from home, avoiding attending at school
 - Nightmares, poor sleeping patterns
 - Anti-social behaviours
 - Lack of self esteem
 - Obsessive behaviours
 - Eating disorders

- Caregiver Indicators:
 - Labels the child as inferior or publicly humiliates the child (e.g., name calling)
 - Treats the child differently from siblings or peers in ways that suggest dislike for the child
 - Actively refuses to help the child
 - Constantly threatens the child with physical harm or death
 - Locks the child in a closet or room for extended periods of time
 - Teaches or reinforces criminal behaviour
 - Withholds physical and verbal affection
 - Keeps the child at home in role of servant or surrogate parent
 - Has unrealistic expectations of child
 - Involves child in adult issues such as separation or disputes over child's care
 - Exposes child to situations of arguing and violence in the home



Neglect Indicators

- **Physical Indicators:**
 - Dressed inappropriately for the season or the weather
 - Often extremely dirty and unwashed
 - Regularly attends school without lunch
 - Severe nappy rash or other persistent skin disorders
 - Inadequately supervised or left unattended frequently or for long periods
 - May be left in the care of an inappropriate adult
 - Does not receive adequate medical or dental care
 - Malnourished - this can be both underweight and overweight
 - Lacks adequate shelter
 - Non-organic failure to thrive
- **Behavioural Indicators:**
 - Severe developmental lags without an obvious physical cause
 - Lack of attachment to parents/caregivers
 - Indiscriminate attachment to other adults
 - Poor school attendance and performance
 - Demanding of affection and attention
 - Engages in risk taking behaviour such as drug and alcohol abuse
 - May steal food
 - Poor social skills
 - No understanding of basic hygiene
- **Caregiver Indicators:**
 - Puts own need ahead of child's
 - Fails to provide child's basic needs
 - Demonstrates little or no interest in child's life - does not attend school activities, social events
 - Leaves the child alone or inappropriately supervised
 - Drug and alcohol use
 - Depression



Physical Abuse Indicators

- Physical Indicators:
 - Bruises, welts, cuts, and abrasions
 - Burns - small circular burns, immersion burns, rope burns etc
 - Fractures and dislocations - skull, facial bones, spinal fractures etc
 - Multiple fractures at different stages of healing
 - Fractures in very young children
- Behavioural Indicators:
 - Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
 - Wary of adults or a particular person
 - Vacant stare or frozen watchfulness
 - Cringing or flinching if touches unexpectedly
 - May be extremely compliant and eager to please
 - Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
 - Runs away from home or is afraid to go home
 - May regress (e.g., bedwetting)
 - May indicate general sadness
 - Could have vision or hearing delay
 - Is violent to other children or animals
- Caregiver Indicators:
 - Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
 - May appear unconcerned about child's wellbeing
 - May state the child is prone to injuries or lies about how they occur
 - Delays in seeking medical attention
 - May take the child to multiple medical appointments and seek medical treatment without an obvious need



Sexual Abuse Indicators

- Physical Indicators:
 - Unusual or excessive itching or pain in the genital or anal area
 - Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
 - Bruises, lacerations, redness, swelling or bleeding in genital, vaginal or anal area
 - Blood in urine or stools
 - Sexually transmitted infections
 - Pregnancy
 - Discomfort in sitting or fidgeting as unable to sit comfortably

- Behavioural Indicators:
 - Age-inappropriate sexual play or language
 - Bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual knowledge
 - Refuses to go home, or to a specific person's home, for no apparent reason
 - Fear of a certain person
 - Depression, anxiety, withdrawal, or aggression
 - Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol, and drug abuse
 - Overly compliant
 - Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
 - Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
 - Eating disorders
 - Compulsive behaviours

- Caregiver Indicators:
 - May be unusually over-protective of the child
 - Accuses the child of being sexually provocative
 - Misuses alcohol or drugs
 - Invades the child's privacy (e.g., during dressing, in the bathroom)
 - May favour the victim over other children



Family Violence Indicators

- Indicators in the Child:
 - Physical injuries consistent with the indicators of Physical Abuse
 - Absenteeism from school
 - Bullying or aggressive behaviour
 - Complaints of headaches or stomach aches with no apparent medical reason
 - Talking or describing violent behaviours

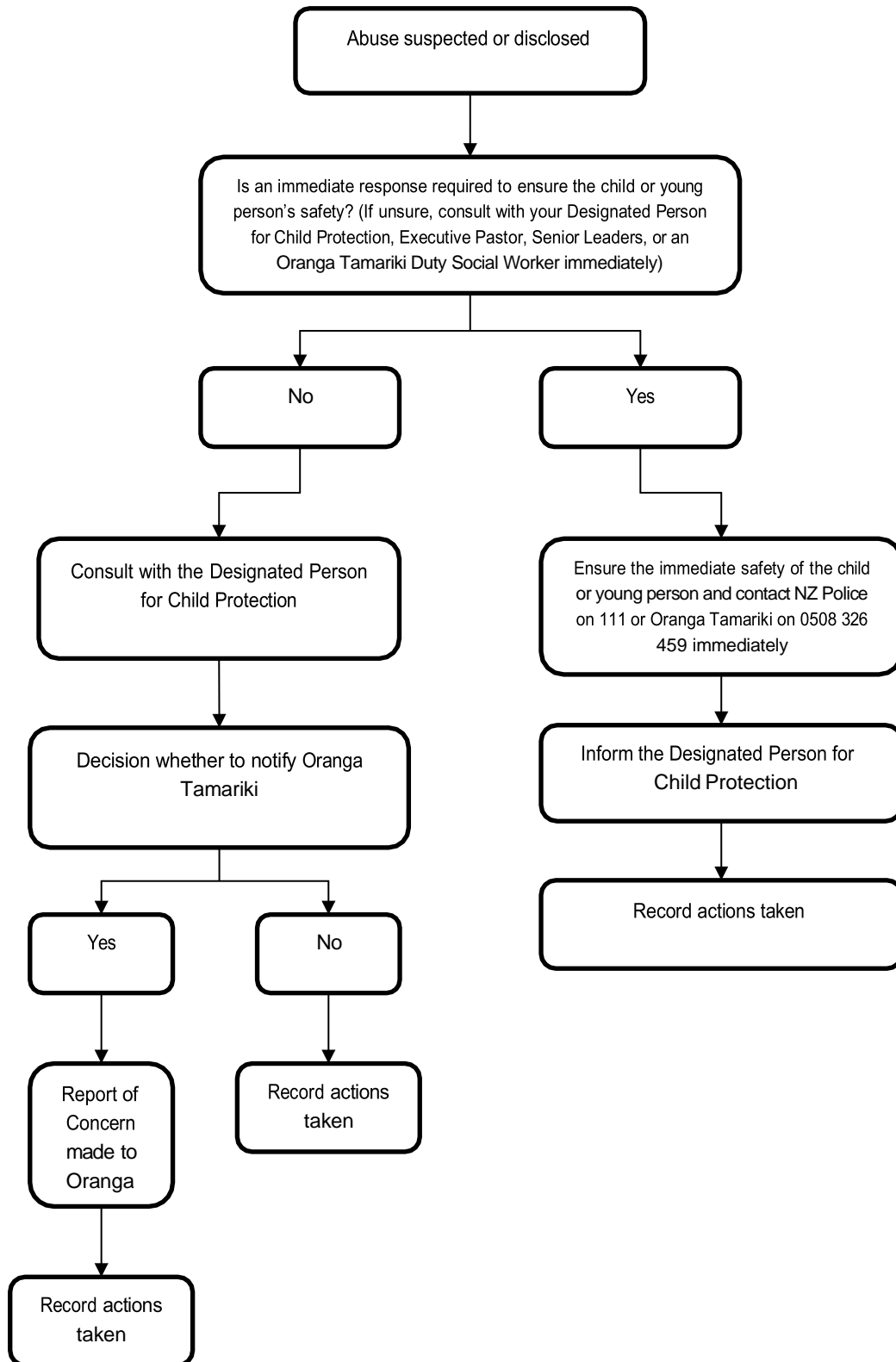
- Indicators in the Victim:
 - Physical Injuries including bruising to chest and abdomen, injuries during pregnancy
 - Depression and/or anxiety
 - Inconsistent explanations for injuries
 - Fearful
 - Submissive

- Indicators in the Offender:
 - Isolates and controls partner and children
 - Threatens, criticises, intimidates, uses aggressive and physical abuse towards partner and children
 - Minimises and denies own behaviour, or blames victim for the perpetrators own behaviour



Appendix 2: Action Flowcharts

Child Protection Procedures Flowchart:





Appendix 3: Information Sharing Overview:

SAFETY COMES FIRST:

In all instances personal information can be shared with child welfare and protection agencies or independent child protection persons if there are concerns about a child’s safety and wellbeing.

The wellbeing and best interests of a child are to be the first and paramount consideration.

PROTECTION WHEN SHARING:

If information is shared in good faith, meaning that you are making every effort to do the right thing, and if that sharing complies with the information sharing provisions, you are protected from civil, criminal, or disciplinary proceedings. (NOTE: Keeping good records about information you have shared and why is important to help demonstrate you shared in good faith.)

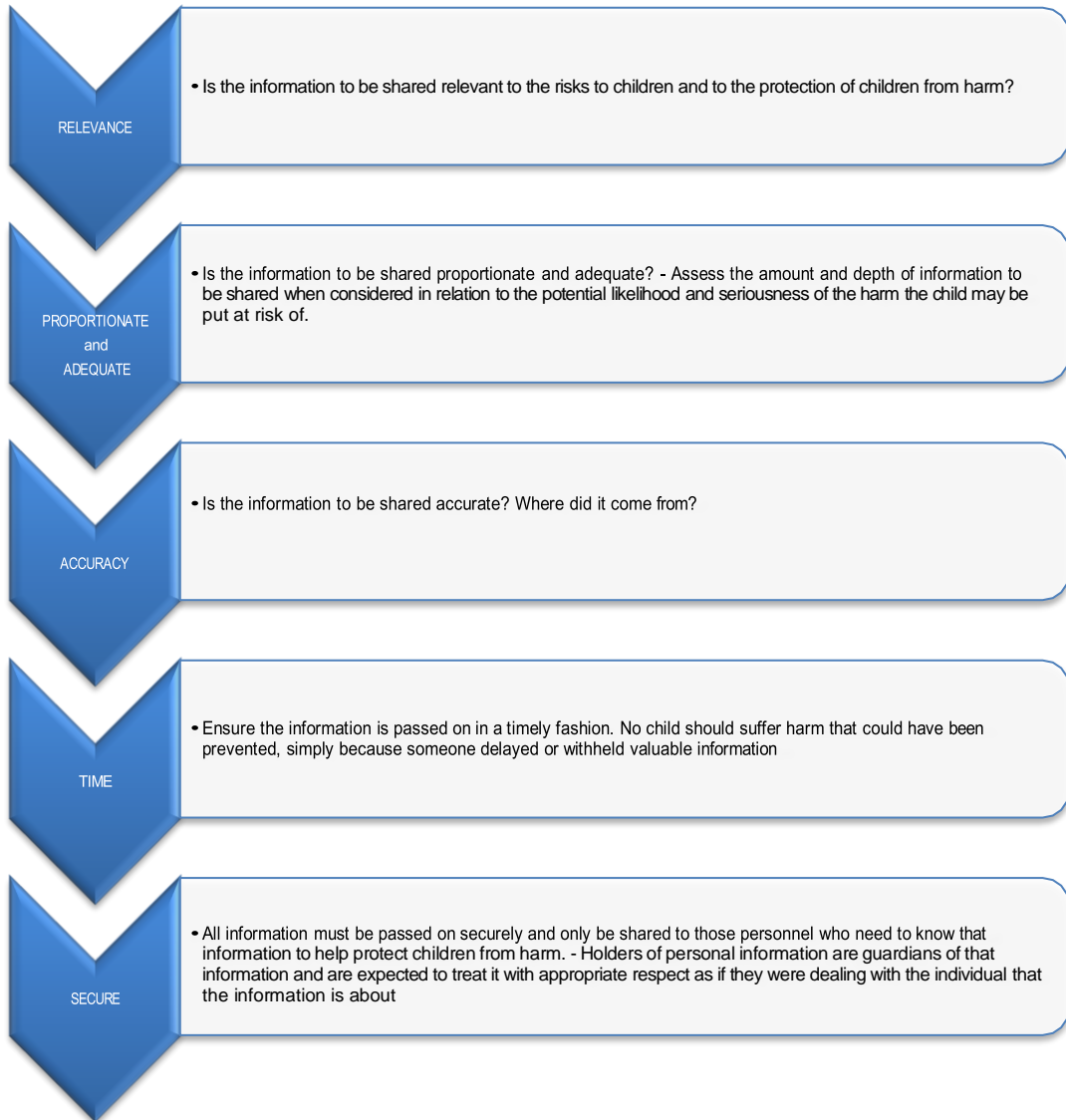
PRIVACY:

The principles of the Privacy Act 2020 must be followed by Gateway Church when collecting, storing, using, or disclosing personal information. When there is conflict between the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 and the Privacy Act 2020, the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 **prevails.**

WHEN IT COMES TO INFORMATION SHARING THE WELLBEING AND BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD ARE TO BE THE FIRST AND PARAMOUNT CONSIDERATIONS



CONSIDER:





Appendix 4: Safe Working Practices Agreement

SAFE WORKING PRACTICES AGREEMENT

As a Gateway Church staff member, I **WILL**:

- Ensure that I have read and understood the Gateway Church Child Protection Policy.
- Treat all children with respect at all times, regardless of their gender, race, religion, political beliefs, age, physical or mental health, sexual orientation, family and social background, and culture, economic status, or criminal background.
- Promote an environment where children feel safe and comfortable in my care and contact.
- Act professionally and maintain appropriate boundaries at all times.
- Avoid circumstances where my behaviour (both verbal and physical) may be misinterpreted as hostile, suggestive, inappropriate, offensive, suggestive, or neglectful.
- Act swiftly to ensure that any perceived risk to a child is immediately reported to the Designated Person for Child Protection.
- Inform the Designated Person for Child Protection of breaches in safe working practices, regardless of whether this has resulted in the harm of a child.
- Not engage in any unwarranted or inappropriate touching of a child.
- Ensure that all communications with children, by whatever methods, are transparent and open to scrutiny.

I certify that I have read, understood, and will comply with the Gateway Church Child Protection Policy:

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Appendix 5: Key points to remember when reporting

KEY POINTS

RESPOND:	Respond to the person (adult or child) – Believe what they tell you and/or what you see.
SAFETY:	Ensure the safety of the child. Always take action in the short term to ensure the immediate safety of the child. This will mean contacting the NZ Police (111) and Oranga Tamariki (0508 326 459) if you think there is an immediate risk to the child.
RECORD:	Record immediately all initial statements, observations, and concerns to avoid misinterpretations or confusion at a later date.
CONSULT:	Do not make decisions alone. Consult with your Child Protection Policy, and your Designated Person for Child Protection. Oranga Tamariki is always available to give advice.
REPORT:	Decide to act on your concerns. If you have told the person you believe is responsible for taking action and they do not act, take further action yourself.
SUPPORT:	Seek support for yourself. Responding to a child protection issue can be stressful.



Appendix 6: Contact List

CONTACT LIST

Your Designated Person For Child Protection Is:

Annabelle Russell
[Contact Details] 0223801160.

Your General Manager Is:

Mike Frew
[Contact Details] 0299581840

Your Senior Leaders Are:

Chris Jones
[Contact Details] 021776642

Hope Jones
[Contact Details] 021665502

Ministry for Children - Oranga Tamariki
0508 326 0459

New Zealand Police
111

Child Matters
07 838 3370



Appendix 7: Template Record of Issue or Concern

RECORD OF ISSUE OR CONCERN

Any person associated with Gateway Church who suspects the abuse or neglect of a child, or whom a concern has been disclosed to, must complete this form. It is a tool to assist with recording factual observations in accordance with the Gateway Church Child Protection Policy

Childs Name:	DOB:
Date:	Time:
Name of Parent/s/Guardian/s: Contact Details:	
Issue or Concern	
<p><u>Issue or Concern:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>What is the concern for this child?</i> - <i>What has prompted you to complete the Record of Issue or Concern?</i> <p>NOTE: <i>This is a record of the facts. Remember to record:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>observations</i> • <i>times and dates</i> • <i>what was said, and by whom – Use the persons own words if possible</i> <p style="text-align: center;">_____</p>	



Additional Information:

- *Is there any additional information that needs to be disclosed or may be helpful for Gateway Church or statutory authorities to know?*

NOTE: *At times incidents viewed in isolation may not be cause for concern however, when viewed in relation to other incidents these can form a larger picture of concern*

Action:

- *What action has been taken?*
- *Have statutory authorities been consulted? If so, record those details.*
- *Why was this action taken/Not taken? (Clearly identify and explain the reasons)*
- *By whom was this action taken, and when?*
- *Who has been informed?*



Follow Up:

- *Next steps*
- *Is a follow up required? If yes, by whom and when?*

Signed:		Date:
Full Name:		
Position:		
Contact Details:		



Please give this form to the Designated Person for Child Protection

(Designated Person for Child Protection to complete)

I, (Full name and position)..... confirm that the above record of issue or concern has been brought to my attention and consultation with the person making the record of issue or concern, and named above, has taken place. The record of issue or concern will be held securely and confidentially.

The following action has been taken:

Signed

Dated

Contact Details (Phone/Email)

Follow Up Date