

Child Protection

Children have a fundamental right to have their needs met and to be safe from abuse and neglect. The Children Act of 2014 ([Children's Act 2014 No 40 \(as at 01 August 2022\), Public Act – New Zealand Legislation](#)), which came into effect on the 1 July 2015, requires all children-related agencies to work together to improve the well-being of vulnerable children.

The policy is aimed at supporting children, their families, children agencies, core and non-core workers to provide for the wellbeing of students who attend Huntley School.

Huntley will provide a safe environment, free from physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse.

Huntley School recognises the important role and responsibility of all our staff in the protection of children by identifying and responding to suspected child abuse or neglect and appropriately responding to concerns about the wellbeing of a child.

Huntley will ensure that Part 2, Section 18(a), (b), (c) & (d) of the Children Act of 2014 is met, namely that the Huntley School Board of Trustees will:

- (a) adopt a child protection policy
- (b) ensure that the policy is available on the school website and is available upon request from the school office
- (c) ensure that all agencies, contracts or funding arrangements fulfill the requirements of this policy
- (d) review the policy every three years

1 Definitions and Supporting Procedures



Child abuse :

Includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse as well as neglect, which is the direct consequence of a deliberate act or omission by an adult and which has the potential or effect of serious harm to the child.

- **Physical abuse** – any acts that may result in the physical harm of a student or a 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 student 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, encouraging the student to perform such acts on the perpetrator or another
 - Non-contact abuse: exhibitionism, 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 student can also be emotional abuse.

- Exposure to family violence.

Child neglect:

Failure or omission to care for a child. 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 students 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).

Supporting Procedures:

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Staff Recruitment](#)

[Staff Induction - General](#)

[Pastoral Care, Chapel and Choir](#)

[Bullying](#)

[Emergencies - Traumatic Incident or Crisis Response](#)

[Police Vetting](#)

[Professional Development](#)

2 Responsibilities



- The Headmaster will ensure that teachers within the school work together with the other children's agencies (such as Police, Oranga Tamariki, Social Workers etc) to improve the well-being of vulnerable children by protecting them from abuse and neglect.
- The Headmaster will ensure that safe recruitment practices are in place, in line with the Children's Act of 2014.
- The Privacy Act 1993 and the Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989 allows for information to be shared to keep children safe when abuse or suspected abuse is reported or investigated.
- Core and non-core workers will be provided with training in order to recognise and respond to suspected abuse and neglect. The training will ensure roles and expectations of adult behaviour with children meet professional requirements as this will assist with the personal safety of core and non-core workers.
- The Headmaster will ensure that there are procedures in place to identify and respond to allegations regarding abuse.
- The Headmaster will ensure that there are procedures in place to deal with the possibility of an allegation involving a staff member.
- Any external organisation that has a contracting and/or funding arrangement with the school must provide a copy of their Child Protection procedure to the Headmaster as well as agree to the school's Child Protection procedure and accompanying procedures.

- No external contractor will have unsupervised access to children unless first being successfully police-vetted.

3 Elements of the Child Protection Procedure

There are four main elements to Huntley's Child Protection Procedure

- Alertness, awareness, attention, and **early detection** of signs of physical and emotional sickness, illness, abuse, discomfort, and anti-social behaviour
- **Prevention** through the creation of a positive school atmosphere and the teaching and pastoral support offered to students
- **Protection** by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child safety and protection concerns
- **Support** to students who may have been abused

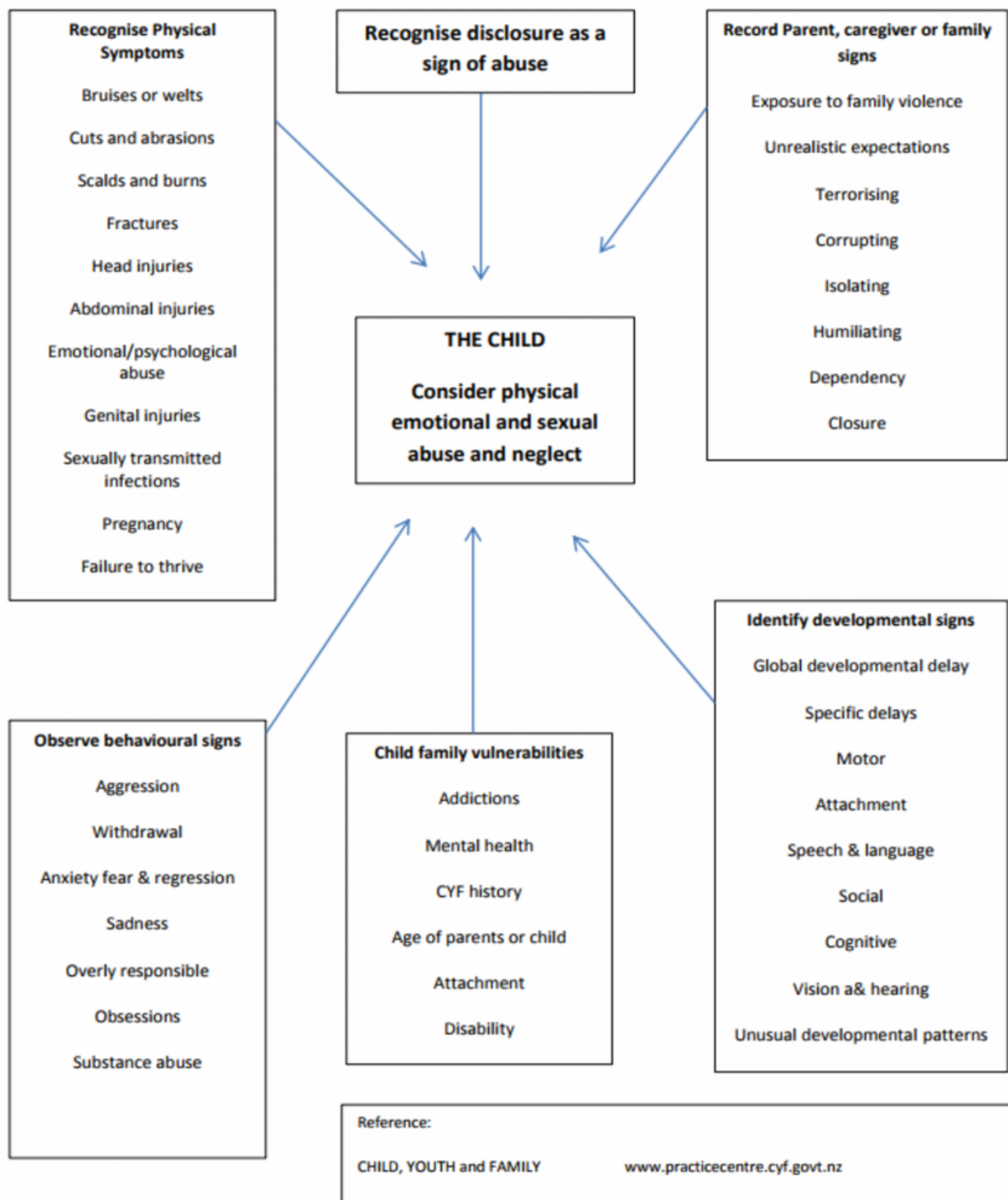
4 Identifying Child Abuse and Neglect

Every situation is different and it's important to consider all available information about the child 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.

It is normal for people to feel uncertain, however the important thing is that staff should be able to recognise when something is wrong, especially if a pattern is noticed or several signs together cause concern.

Some signs of potential abuse / neglect:

- physical signs of abuse - unexplained injuries, burns, fractures, unusual or excessive itching, genital injuries, sexually transmitted diseases
- neglect - looking rough and uncared for, dirty, without appropriate clothing, underweight
- medical neglect e.g. untreated medical issues
- developmental delays e.g. small for their age, cognitive delays, falling behind in school, poor speech and social skills
- emotional abuse/neglect e.g. sleep problems, low self-esteem, obsessive behaviour, inability to cope in social situations, sadness/loneliness and evidence of self-harm
- behavioural concerns e.g. age-inappropriate sexual interest or play, fear of a certain person or place, eating disorders/substance abuse, disengagement / neediness, aggression
- the child talking about things that include abuse (sometimes called an allegation or disclosure)
- neglectful supervision e.g. out and about unsupervised, left alone, no safe home to return to

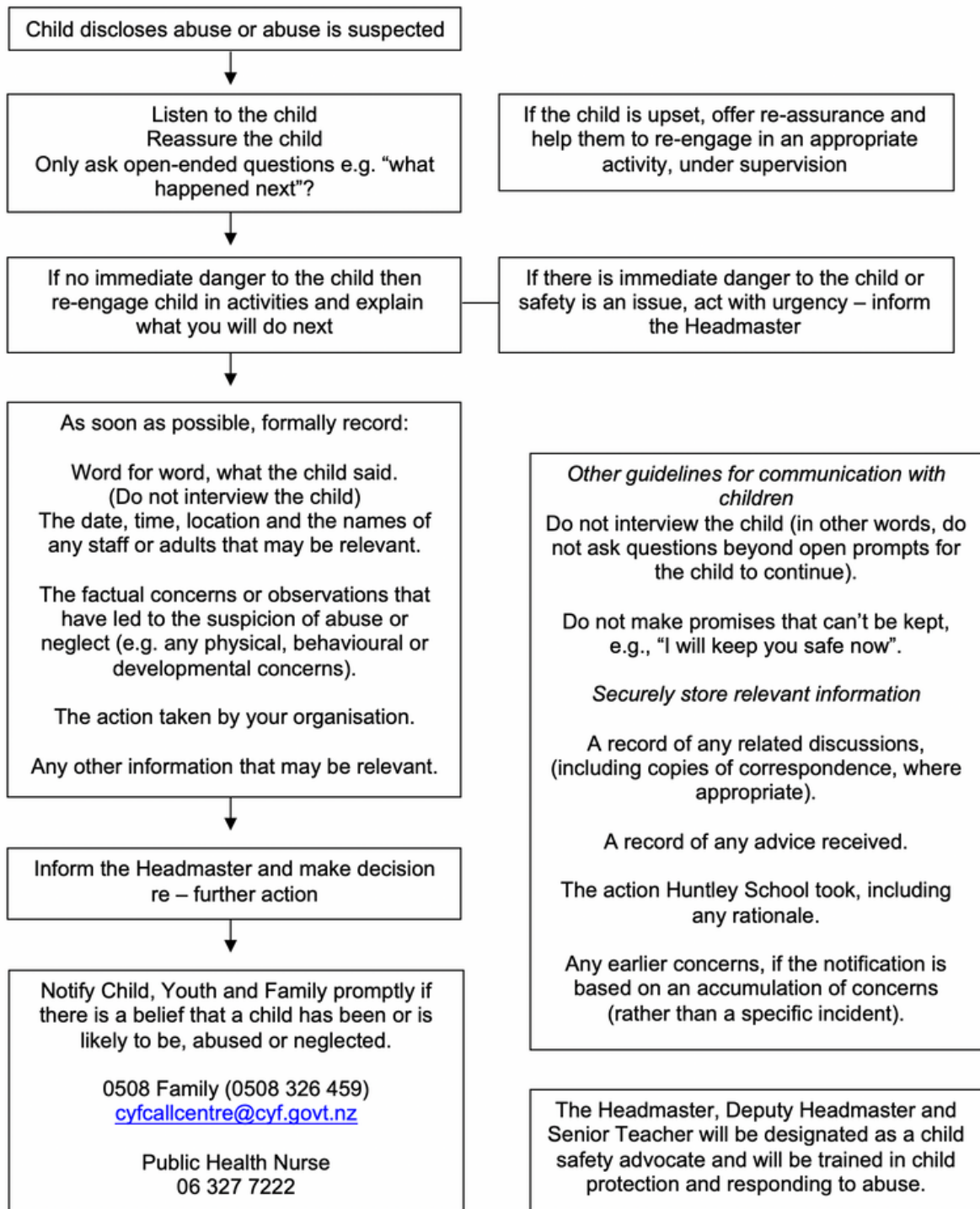


Note it is not important to identify what specific kind of abuse might be occurring. Staff simply need to be aware of and able to recognise the whole range of concerning signs.

5 Responding to a Concern About Abuse



RESPONDING TO A CONCERN ABOUT ABUSE



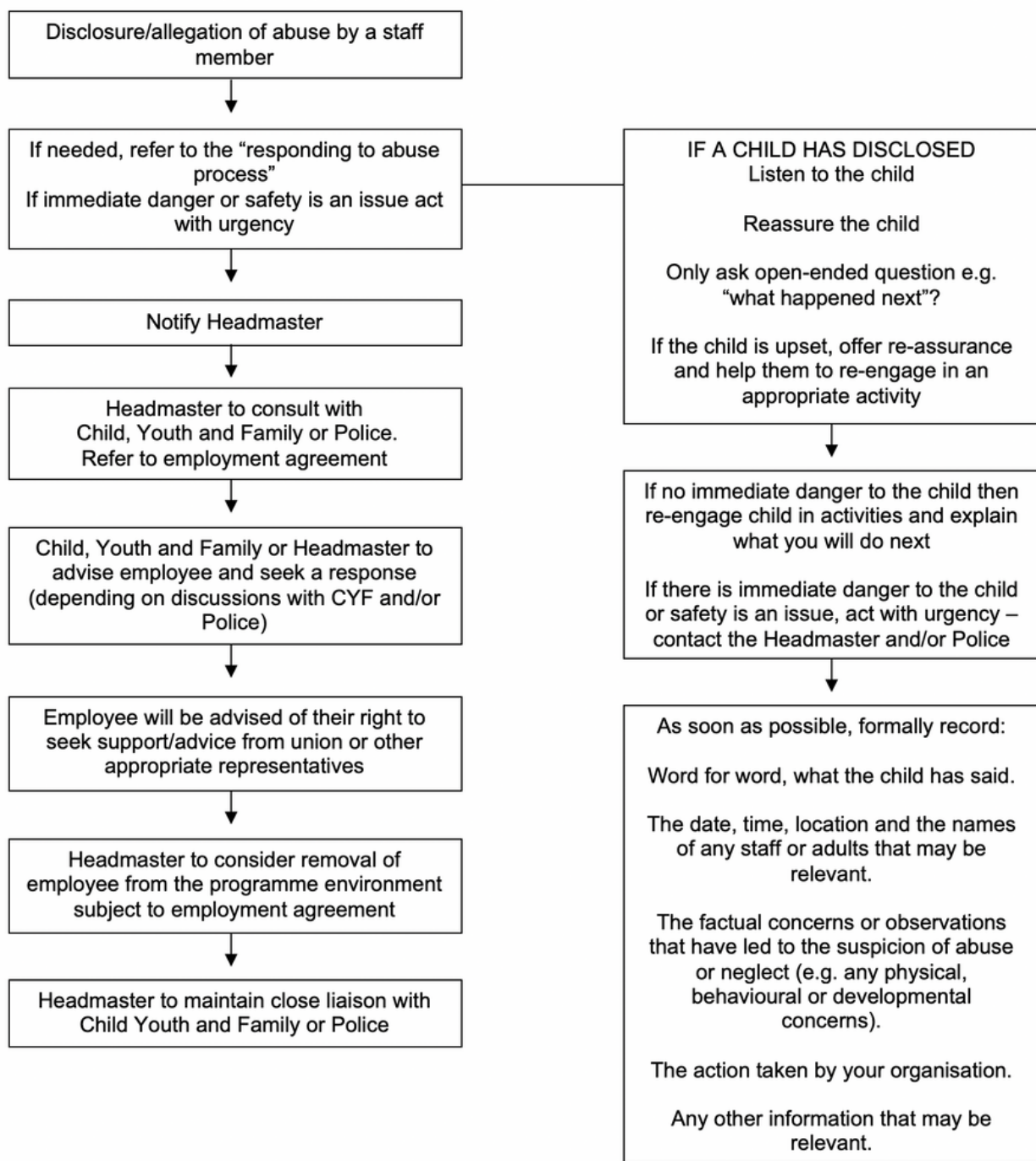
6 Allegations of Abuse Against a Staff Member



Where it is suspected that child abuse has been carried out by a staff member (paid, unpaid or in any programme role) the matter must be reported promptly to the Headmaster, and the Board Chairperson notified.

Under no circumstances should the child making the allegation be exposed to unnecessary risk. This may require the Headmaster to consider removal of the staff member from the programme environment subject

to the requirement of the applicable employment contract. All actions will be undertaken with appropriate care to maintain confidentiality.



7 Settlement Agreements



Huntley School acknowledges that the use of 'settlement agreements', are generally contrary to the principles of child protection. Some settlement agreements allow a member of 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, use of such agreements will be avoided.

8 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Huntley School will seek advice from Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police before identifying information about an allegation is shared with anyone, other than Senior Management.

In general, when collecting personal information about individuals, privacy and confidentiality will be maintained.

Staff may disclose information under the Privacy Act/Health Information Privacy Code where there is good reason to do so – such as where there is a serious risk to individual health and safety (see privacy principle 11/Code rule 11). Disclosure about ill-treatment or neglect of a child/young person may also be made to Oranga Tamariki under sections 15 and 16 of the Children’s and Young People’s Well-being Act 1989.

9 Peer Abuse

Huntley School will ensure that the safety of children and young people is paramount and no form of physical, sexual or verbal harassment or violence from peers will be tolerated.

While the situation is being evaluated, the children/young person’s concerns will be investigated. It is essential to reduce further emotional trauma for the victims who may be fearful and distressed if they are in contact with possible abusers.

In some cases where the abuse has occurred, immediate suspension may be appropriate, as outlined in the [Student Disciplinary Action](#) procedure.

Huntley School will make every effort to keep personal information as private as possible. Parents will also be asked to keep all information confidential to allow proper investigation and resolution.

10 Supervision Guidelines

All staff will examine the opportunities or possible situations where staff could be alone with children. This should be avoided wherever possible. Some circumstances dictate one to one teaching such as Individual Music tuition and Learning Support lessons.

Wherever possible an open door policy for all spaces should be used (i.e. not possible for toilets). Staff should be aware of where all children are at all times and check to ensure what they are doing is appropriate.

Be aware of situations where children are out of sight together (gym, playhuts etc.) and supervise accordingly.

Visitors to Huntley should be monitored at all times by staff and sign in at the office.

All volunteers who will have unsupervised access to children will be monitored and police vetted, e.g. Granny Readers.

In some situations a child or young person may require more regular physical and or personal care assistance. If possible, involve the parents/caregivers and outside agencies (such as Ministry of Education’s Special Education Group) to assist. If this assistance is not available, ensure that staff are aware of the appropriate procedures when giving assistance.

Staff should avoid being alone when transporting a child or young person, unless an emergency or exceptional circumstance requires it. Except in an emergency, children and young people are not taken from Huntley without written parental consent.