



Collection of Children and Missing Children Policy

Version 1 | Mahi Tuatahi

Effective Date | Whakamana tahito: September 2024 | Hepetema 2024

Next Review | ā houanga arotake: September 2026 | Hepetema 2026

Policy Owner | Rangatira Kaupapa Māhere: Chief Executive Officer

Key Accountabilities | Ngā Takonga Tuatahi: Chief Operations Officer

Introduction | Tīmatanga Kōrero

The purpose of this policy is:

To ensure there are systems in place so that children remain safely in the custody of Kaiako and TONI educators until the appropriate time for release to the appropriate person(s).

Background

Collection of children, supervision and safe environments are the focus of this policy and guidance on these practices are referenced in Licensing Criteria relating to premises and supervision such as during excursions, emergency drills, incident management and in line with Whānau Manaaki Child Protection Policy.

Applies To | Ko Wai Whakahāngaitia

This policy applies to all People, Teachers, Visiting Teachers, Drivers, Drivers Assistants and TONI Educators employed or contracted by He Whānau Manaaki o Tararua Free Kindergarten Association (Whānau Manaaki). all He Whānau Manaaki o Tararua Free Kindergarten Association.

General Principles | Mātāpono Whānui

- Whānau Manaaki Kindergartens, Etu Ao home-based services and the transport team cater to tamariki safety through active supervision, and mitigate hazards that could cause tamariki to go missing or be collected by an unauthorised person/s.

Collection of children

1. Each kindergarten and home-based service will have a Supervision plan in place and follow the guidelines attached to this policy, including any safety plans pertaining individual children to ensure children remain safely in their custody until the appropriate time for release to the appropriate person.

2. Kindergartens and Etu Ao home-based Services will record the names of any person(s) legally denied access to a child and copies of any legal custody or protection information will be sent and held in the Whānau Manaaki Office.
3. Kaiako and TONI educators will ensure that each child only leaves the kindergarten or home-based service with:
 - The person who has the role of providing day to day care for, or custody of the child as recorded on the child's enrolment form
 - Any person who is authorised in writing by the person who has the role of providing day to day care for, or custody of, the child to take that child (either as recorded on the Enrolment Form as an Emergency Contact or as advised in writing at another time); or
 - Any person who is authorised in writing by the person who has the role of providing day to day care for, or custody of, the child to transport that child on the Whānau Manaaki Transport service as per the signed agreement
 - Any person who is notified to kindergarten staff, communication hub, or TONI educators by the person who has the role of providing day to day care for, or custody of, the child.
4. If any person who is authorised to collect the child arrives and is suspected by kaiako or TONI educators to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, they should endeavour to prevent the person from leaving with the child, for example offer to contact another family member, or communication hub, to collect the child. Where a kaiako or TONI educator has concerns about a child's immediate and imminent safety, they will:
 - Notify the Police immediately
 - Notify their Senior Teacher, Communication Hub, Visiting Teacher or the Chief Executive (or in their absence a member of the Senior Leadership team) immediately.
 - Follow the directions given by the Police and/or Senior Teacher, Communication Hub, Visiting Teacher or the Chief Executive (or in their absence a member of the Senior Leadership team)

Supervision

5. Each Kindergarten and Etu Ao service will have a supervision plan in place (and displayed) indicating how they will actively supervise children in their care, and name places in the environment that would need to be closely monitored to prevent a child going missing.
6. On an excursion, a detailed risk analysis will highlight how children will be actively supervised and kaiako and TONI educators will take regularly roll calls/head counts to prevent a child going missing.

Missing child

7. Each kindergarten and Etu Ao home-based service will have their own procedure for responding to a missing child that will be part of their Emergency Management Plan.
8. As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing a search will be undertaken. Where the child is not located after the initial search the Police will be contacted. This will be followed by notification made to the Senior Teacher, communication hub or the Chief Executive Officer (or in their absence a member of the Senior Leadership team), and parents/whānau/caregivers.

Relevant Legislation and Regulations | **Whaitake Ture me Waeture**

Education (Early Childhood Centres) Regulations 2008

Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008 (Ministry of Education)

Licensing Criteria for Home-Based ECE Services (Ministry of Education)

Related Procedures or Processes and Documents | **Pākanga Tukanga me Pukapuka**

Supervision Plan

Emergency Management Plan

Transporting Children Policy

Child Protection Policy

Excursions Policy

Policy Review Cycle | **Kaupapa Arotake Hurihanga**

This policy is to be reviewed every 2 years. Whānau Manaaki may amend or cancel this policy or introduce a new policy, as it considers it necessary within the current cycle of the policy. Any amendments will be considered by the policy Working Group and will need to be approved by the Senior Leadership Team and the Board. The policy will continue on the same review cycle.



Collection of Children and Missing Children Guidelines

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Collection of Children

1. Parents/Whānau/Caregivers will be made aware of their responsibility to notify kaiako, communication hub or TONI educators if there is any change to their child's regular departure routine.
2. **Kindergarten:** If no contact can be made with either the parents/whānau/caregivers or emergency contacts within one hour of the end of the session the child is attending, or by the time the staff need to leave the kindergarten and all reasonable attempts to contact the parents/whānau/caregivers and emergency contacts, kaiako should contact their Senior Teacher, or Whānau Manaaki Senior Leader. This action could include contacting the Police to advise them that the child has not been collected and to ask for further direction.
- 2(a) **Etu Ao Home-based service:** If no contact can be made with either the parents/whānau/caregivers or emergency contacts within one hour of the expected time of collection of the child attending and all reasonable attempts to contact the parents/whānau/caregivers and emergency contacts, TONI educators should contact the Communications Hub, Visiting Teacher or Whānau Manaaki Senior Leader. This action could include contacting the Police to advise them that the child has not been collected and to ask for further direction.
- 2(b) **Transport team:** If upon dropping the child/ren back to their residence there is no authorised adult parent to receive them the driver, driver assistant will notify the Communication Hub and an attempt will be made to locate the parent/caregiver or emergency contact person by phone. If at any time, there are concerns for the child's safety in the home environment the driver/driver assistant will inform the Communication Hub. The Communication Hub informs transport lead, senior teacher, engagement manager and community services lead and a decision is made where the child is transported to until a family member is contacted.
3. If a child remains at the kindergarten or a home-based service, kaiako or TONI educator must ensure that their physical and emotional needs are catered for.
4. There must be at least two adults (including one kaiako) available to stay with the child at kindergarten.
5. Kaiako or TONI educators/Visiting teachers should not transport children to their home without prior parental approval. In this case, an appropriate child car seat will be used.





6. Kindergartens and home-based services will have a written safety plan in place to respond in the event a parent arrives to collect a child when there is a parenting or protection order in place against them.
7. Kindergartens and home-based services will have a plan of action in place to respond to any parent or caregiver who turns up to pick up their child who they suspect to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.

Missing Children

1. Should a child be found to be missing, follow your missing child procedures as detailed in your Emergency Management Plan. This will include:
 - (a) A search for a missing child must be initiated immediately it is noticed that the child is missing from kindergarten. One kaiako may leave the kindergarten during the session to assist the search. If the child is not found immediately during the initial search the Head Teacher must contact the Police.
 - (b) In the event a child is missing from a home-based service the TONI educator must not leave the home but notify the Police immediately.
2. Whānau Manaaki Senior Leader or Senior Teacher or communications hub must be notified as soon as it is known that a child is missing.
3. It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher or Communication Hub to contact the parent/whānau/caregiver of the missing child as soon as possible.
4. Kaiako and TONI educators must take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the remaining children at the kindergarten or home-based service
5. A missing child incident must be logged on GOSH and the required investigation completed and supported by the Health and Safety Advisor.
6. Kaiako and TONI educators/Visiting Teachers must evaluate their procedures following the event and make any necessary changes to their supervision plans or other relevant procedures

