



Health-Safety-Welfare Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

Surf Life Saving New Zealand (SLSNZ) is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people in its care. SLSNZ recognises the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect children and young people from harm and exploitation while participating in SLS operations and activities.

1.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers engaged directly by SLSNZ, who work with children and young people. It is important that all staff, contractors and volunteers working with children and young people read and understand this policy.

2.0 PURPOSE

This policy recognises SLSNZ's responsibility to promote safe practices and well-being as well as to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation while participating in or associated with SLSNZ operations and activities. The purpose of this policy is to:

- 2.1 Protect all children and young people, whatever their culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socioeconomic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity, from all forms of harm.
- 2.2 Respect and promote the rights and feelings of children and young people.
- 2.3 Raise awareness of the importance of our role in maintaining the safety, welfare, and interests of any child and young person that staff or volunteers come into contact with, through their work.
- 2.4 Promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and young people and protect them from abuse.
- 2.5 Provide guidelines, training, support and supervision to staff and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and young people from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves.
- 2.6 Identify procedures for staff and volunteers to follow, should a suspected case arise or an accusation be made about inappropriate behaviour by any person, by providing training, support, and guidance to staff and volunteers.
- 2.7 Work in partnership with children and young people and parents/caregivers along with other organisations and agencies to promote the welfare, health and development of children and young people.
- 2.8 Regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of this policy and procedures.

3.0 INTRODUCTION

All staff and volunteers who come into contact with children and young people and families in their work, including those who do not have a specific role in relation to safeguarding children and young people, have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. All staff and volunteers must comply with this policy and the attached Appendices A, B, C and D.



4.0 DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to this policy:

Child – any child or young person aged under 17 years, and who is not married or in a civil union.

Child Abuse - the harming (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), ill treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person.

Forms of Child Abuse

Emotional abuse occurs when a child or young person's emotional, psychological, or social well-being and sense of worth is continually battered.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical or psychological needs, leading to adverse or impaired physical or emotional functioning or development.

Physical abuse can be caused from punching, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, burning, or throwing the child or young person. It can also result from excessive or inappropriate discipline or violence within the family.

Sexual abuse includes acts or behaviours where an adult, older, or more powerful person uses a child or young person for a sexual purpose.

Child protection – activities carried out to ensure that children and young people are safe in cases where there is suspected abuse or neglect or the risk of abuse or neglect.

National Child Protection Officer (NCPO) - a person/s appointed by the Chief Executive of SLSNZ, responsible for maintaining an oversight of concerns and disclosures of alleged child or young person abuse.

Oranga Tamariki - also known as the **Ministry for Children** is the government department responsible for the well-being of children and young people, specifically children and young people at risk of harm, youth offenders and children and young people of the State.

Safeguarding - the action that is taken to promote the welfare of young people and protect them from harm as well as help manage the risk of unsuitable persons entering the children and young people's workforce.

Safety check - means verifying identity and gathering information through application forms, face to face conversations, police vetting, and reference checks.

Whistleblowing – is the term used when a person passes on information concerning wrongdoing via an open, transparent and safe working environment where people feel able to speak up.

Vetting - means the formal process of obtaining checks from another agency, e.g. the Police vetting service, criminal record checks.

Volunteer - a person who freely gives their time, knowledge and skills to assist SLSNZ and/or staff with the delivery of SLSNZ operations and/or services. For the purposes of this policy, volunteer/s does not include club volunteers, volunteering directly to a club/s alone. Staff and volunteers working directly for clubs should refer to Club specific Safeguarding Children Policies and procedures.

Young people - refer to any person under the age of 18 engaged in a SLSNZ activity, whether a member of SLSNZ or not.



5.0 RELATED DOCUMENT, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

[Children's Act 2014](#)

[Crimes Act 1961](#) (Section 195A)

[Crimes Amendment Act](#) (No 3) 2011

[Films, Videos, and Publications Classifications Act 1993](#)

[Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#)

[Oranga Tamariki Act 1989](#)

[Privacy Act 1993](#)

[SLSNZ Code of Conduct](#) (SLSNZ Regulation 5)

[SLSNZ Club Health and Safety Manuals](#)

SLSNZ National Standard Operating Procedures (NSOPs) and Club/Service Operating Procedures (CSOPs)

6.0 POLICY

Recruitment and Training

- 6.1 All new SLSNZ employees, whether permanent or seasonal, who are likely to interact with children and young people are required to undergo safety checks prior to confirmation of their appointment and every two years thereafter.
- 6.2 All existing SLSNZ employees who are likely to interact with children and young people are required to undergo safety checks by 1 October 2020, and every two years thereafter.
- 6.3 All staff will receive child or young person protection training appropriate for their role and operational level.

Roles and Responsibilities of Staff and Volunteers

- 6.4 The Chief Executive of SLSNZ shall appoint a National Child Protection Officer, whose role and responsibilities shall include:
 - a. ensuring that children or young person protection procedures are available to all staff and volunteers
 - b. raising awareness within SLSNZ
 - c. establishing and maintaining a complaints procedure
 - d. regularly reporting to the Chief Executive on child or young person protection issues and complaints
 - e. acting as the main contact for child or young person protection matters
 - f. keeping up-to-date with developments in child or young person protection legislation
 - g. maintaining confidential records of reported cases and any action taken
 - h. regularly monitoring and reviewing existing policies and procedures



- 6.5 It is the responsibility of staff and volunteers to be vigilant, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of neglect, potential or actual abuse, and to report any concerns, suspicions or allegations of suspected abuse immediately and ensure that the concern is taken seriously and reported.

Allegations and Complaints

- 6.6 Any allegation or concern that a child or young person may have been harmed or abused must be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and promptly.
- 6.7 Any allegation or concern that a staff member or volunteer may have behaved in a manner that has harmed or abused a child or young person must be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and promptly.
- 6.8 In situations where a staff member or volunteer is alleged to have caused harm or abuse to a child or young person, and where an investigation is initiated, or likely to be initiated by the NZ Police and/or Oranga Tamariki, the staff member or volunteer will be temporarily suspended until an outcome has been achieved. Suspension is not punitive but a safety measure for both the staff member or volunteer and the child or young person.
- 6.9 In the case of an allegation where the NZ Police and/or Oranga Tamariki are not involved, the staff member or volunteer may be required to undertake alternative duties to avoid direct contact with children and young people until an outcome has been achieved.
- 6.10 Where desired and permitted, SLSNZ shall seek to support the child or young person and their family through any investigation processes if undertaken.
- 6.11 Where desired and permitted, SLSNZ shall seek to provide peer support to the staff member or volunteer through any investigation process if undertaken.

7.0 PROCEDURES

Recruitment and Training

- 7.1 The process of filling staff and/or volunteer positions requiring contact or interaction with children and young people should include:
- having written role descriptions
 - following up on referees
 - interviewing preferred candidate/s
 - undertaking safety checks of the preferred candidate/s
- 7.2 In addition to the pre-selection safety checks, the child or young person protection process must include subsequent monitoring and training of staff and volunteers in order to:
- ensure that staff and volunteers are working safely and effectively with children and young people
 - identify and respond to any unacceptable behaviour or practices
 - enable staff and volunteers to analyse their own behaviour and practices against SLSNZ's Safeguarding Code of Conduct – *Refer to Appendix A*, so as to minimise the risk of allegations or complaints against that person



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- d. respond in a positive way to concerns raised about any staff or volunteer behaviour, e.g. via training to improve practices.

Allegations and Complaints – Refer to Appendix B

- 7.3 In all cases, a RESPOND➡ RECORD➡ CONSULT➡ REPORT/MONITOR approach should be implemented at all times.

Respond

- 7.4 If there is an immediate risk of harm to the child or young person, emergency medical treatment is needed, or a crime against a child or young person has been committed, staff or volunteers should call 111 and inform SLSNZ's National Child Protection Officer. If an allegation is against SLSNZ's National Child Protection Officer, inform SLSNZ's Chief Executive Officer.
- 7.5 If a child or young person makes a disclosure, react calmly and show that you are listening and concerned.
- 7.6 Take what the child or young person has said seriously and allow the child or young person to continue at their own pace, without interrupting.
- 7.7 Do not give assurances of confidentiality but explain that the information will need to be passed on to those that need to know. Tell the child or young person what will happen next and offer reassurance that the issue will be taken seriously.
- 7.8 Keep questions to an absolute minimum, only to establish and clarify what the child or young person is saying and not to investigate; this is the role of the NZ Police and/or Oranga Tamariki.
- 7.9 SLSNZ fully supports 'whistleblowing' for the protection of a child or young person. SLSNZ will support staff or volunteers who report any behaviour or practice that may contravene this policy and/or pose a possible risk to children or young people.

Record

- 7.10 When allegations or disclosures occur, make a comprehensive record of what was said and done. The record should include the following:
 - a. a verbatim record of the child or young person's account of what occurred, in their own words, which should not include the assumptions or opinions of others. This record could be used later in a criminal trial and needs to be as accurate as possible.
 - b. a description of any visible injury.
 - c. the date, time, and place of the alleged incident, of the conversation, and any other potentially useful information.
- 7.11 Transfer all notes to an *Incident Report Form* keeping all original notes attached to the form, as they may be needed as evidence. At the earliest opportunity, pass this form to SLSNZ's National Child Protection Officer who will store it in a secure location. Forms should be retained for a period of 50 years.



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Consult

- 7.12 Following an allegation or disclosure, SLSNZ's National Child Protection Officer must be informed as soon as practicable, detailing what has happened and what (if any) actions have been taken in response to the incident.
- 7.13 Never work alone, nor investigate, nor question an alleged offender or contact the child or young person's family without prior approval from Oranga Tamariki and/or the NZ Police, and only in consultation with SLSNZ's National Child Protection Officer.

Report/Monitor

- 7.14 Once an Incident Report Form has been submitted to the National Child Protection Officer, they will assess whether a Report of Concern should be made to Oranga Tamariki and/or the NZ Police. The National Child Protection Officer will seek guidance from Oranga Tamariki and/or the NZ Police as to what further actions SLSNZ and/or the club are permitted to take, if any. Where permitted, the National Child Protection Officer will advise all parties of the process and progress, which may include one or more of the following:
- a. informing parents, staff, volunteers and any organisation responsible for the child or young person.
 - b. talking to the child or young person.
 - c. contacting the alleged offender.
- 7.15 SLSNZ will not enter into any settlement agreement where a child or young person's safety and/or protection is a concern, i.e. where a settlement agreement contradicts a culture of safeguarding and child protection.
- 7.16 In the instance a child, young person and/or the alleged party leaves SLSNZ, while a complaint is in progress or where a complaint arises after their departure, the National Child Protection Officer in consultation with the Chief Executive and relevant authorities shall determine what actions will be taken to uphold the intent of this policy.

8.0 DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

Policy owner	Chief Executive	Revised date	July 2022
Content Manager	National Health and Safety Advisor	Next Revision date	July 2024
Approved By	Chief Executive		



APPENDIX A – SLSNZ’s SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT

SLSNZ and its employees recognise that the welfare of children and young people is paramount, and will ensure that staff and volunteers;

1. Are familiar with, and understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
2. Promote best safeguarding practices for staff, volunteers, children and young people.
3. Are supported to meet SLSNZ’s safeguarding expectations.
4. Adopt and demonstrate safeguarding as a shared responsibility.
5. Are responsible for their own actions and behaviours, to ensure safe practices at all times.
6. Practices and behaviours are in accordance with SLSNZ’s safeguarding policies and procedures, making certain any breaches are openly recorded and reported.
7. Are supported by having a code for children and young people. *Refer Appendix C.* This is their version of their responsibilities and behaviour towards staff, volunteers and other children or young people.
8. Are supported by having a code for parents/caregivers. *Refer Appendix D.* This is their version of their responsibilities and behaviour towards staff and volunteers, as well as children or young people in their care.
9. Recognise that this Code of Conduct relates to every child and young person, and applies to every staff member or volunteer no matter their position or seniority.

Staff and Volunteers must:

1. Only commence SLSNZ duties upon completion of all safer recruitment elements including police vetting, and the required Safeguard training.
2. Immediately notify a SLSNZ line manager(s) as soon as practicable, of any changes relating to known or possible criminal charges/convictions during their employment.
3. Recognise that safeguarding is both an individual and shared responsibility amongst all staff and volunteers to uphold practices and behaviours befitting of their role/s as trusted providers of SLSNZ services, including but not limited to;
 - a. Always operate in the best interests of children and young people.
 - b. Carry out a risk assessment to identify any potential risk to children, young people and staff, and identify appropriate control measures to mitigate the risks.
 - c. Where provided, ensure SLSNZ ID/attire is worn when representing/undertaking SLSNZ duties.
 - d. Promote an inclusive culture across all areas of diversity.
 - e. Complete the required Safeguarding training for their role.
 - f. Only use approved SLSNZ ICT resources to communicate with children, young people and their families.
 - g. Ensure that all communication, behaviour and actions with or around children and young people is positive, and appropriate to their age level of development.



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- h. Only use SLSNZ behaviour management procedures and practices when addressing or challenging inappropriate behaviour.
4. Operate in the line of sight and sound of others at all times.
5. Comply with all statutory regulations and SLSNZ policies, procedures and practices in regards to reporting any concerns or noncompliance issues, in a timely manner.
6. Obtain written parental or caregiver consent prior to:
 - a. Working 1 on 1 and or where physical contact is required.
 - b. Using ICT to communicate directly with a child or young person.
 - c. Confirming excursions, overnight stays, sleeping arrangements and travel.
 - d. Taking, sharing or storing of imagery

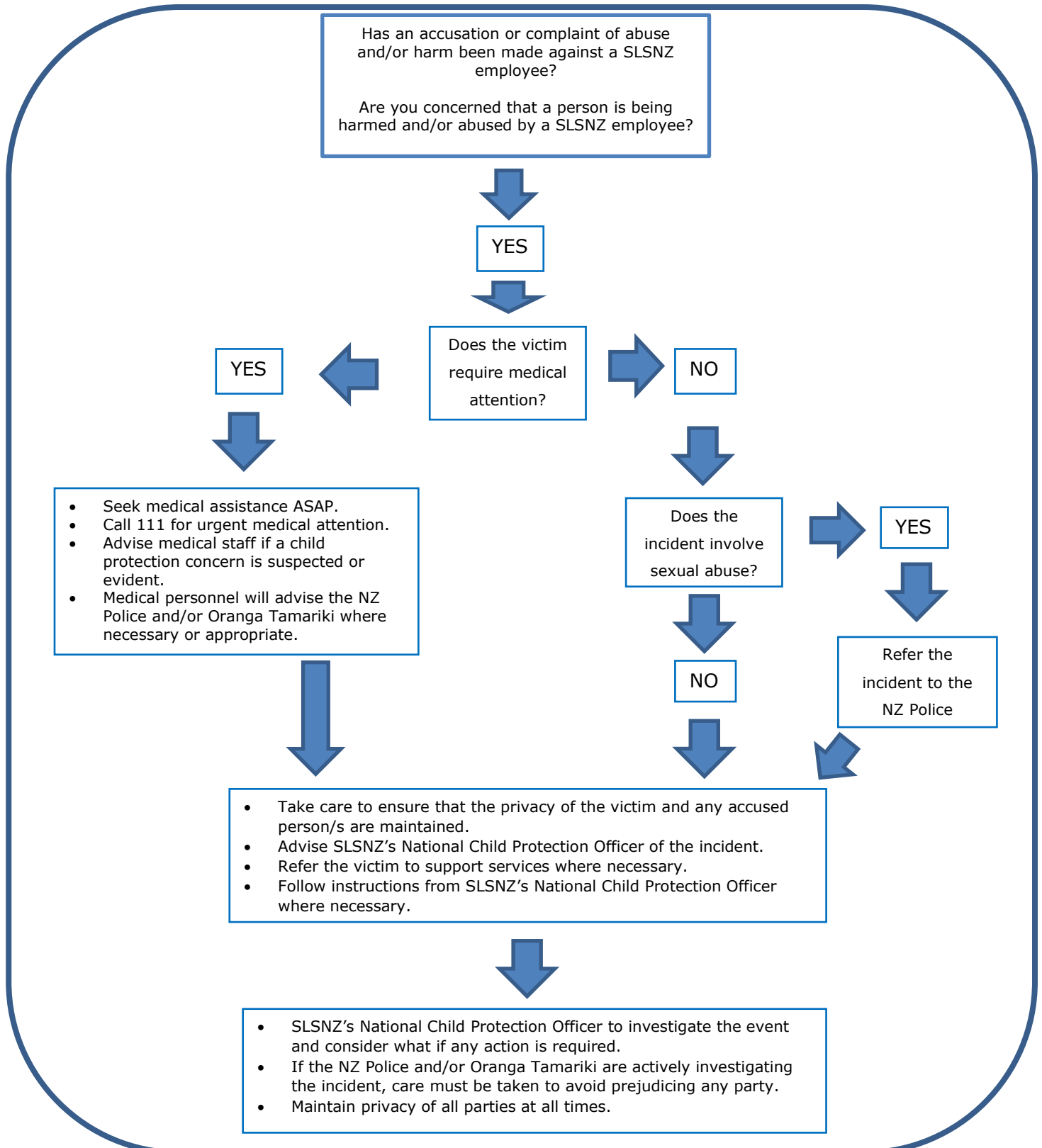
Staff and Volunteers must not:

1. Leave children and young people unattended or alone with unauthorised adults.
2. Use their position of trust for any purpose that would be of detriment to a child or young person or their family.
3. Undertake any form of sexual engagement or behaviour in the presence of, between or with any person, particularly those under 18, while accessing or providing SLSNZ services, including contact and/or non-contact behaviours.
4. Perform any conduct that may question motivation and/or intentions or be open to perceptions of grooming. This includes but is not exclusive to:
 - a. Giving of personal gifts.
 - b. Encouraging out-of-service/social contact and/or taking a child or young person to out-of-service facilities, e.g. personal home, etc.
 - c. Being secretive or encouraging secrecy amongst others.
 - d. Demonstrating favouritism or exclusion towards children and young people.
5. Initiate or participate in any unnecessary, unwanted or inappropriate physical contact, e.g. boisterous games, personal care (when the person is capable of self-care), unnecessary affection, etc.
6. Use behaviour management outside of organisational requirements, including but not exclusive to:
 - a. Any form of physical punishment/discipline or degrading treatment.
 - b. Any form of emotional abuse including threats, references to diversity differences, withdrawal of care and/or necessities, etc.
7. Attend work in the possession of/under the influence of drugs or alcohol.



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Appendix B - Flowchart for Managing Allegations of Abuse or Harm





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APPENDIX C – SLSNZ’s CHILDREN & YOUNG PERSONS SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT

SLSNZ and its employees recognise that the welfare of children and young people is paramount, and will ensure that staff and volunteers encourage children and young people to:

1. Value each other, parents, caregivers, staff and volunteers, and advise them that they may be asked for their views and feedback.
2. Include all children and young people and encourage them to value and embrace differences throughout the SLS activities they are involved in.
3. Abide by the rules to keep them safe, such as keeping out of prohibited areas, not leaving the site or programme without staff permission, adhering to restricted access to certain areas, e.g. bathrooms, changing rooms, etc.
4. Behave appropriately towards each other, staff, volunteers, parents and caregivers.
5. Expect that behaviour falling outside of expectations will be addressed and what this may look like, e.g. time out, phoning parents or caregivers.
6. Take care of themselves and others. Be safe.
7. Tell someone if they or someone else is being treated unfairly or differently and/or if they are worried about someone.



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APPENDIX D – SLSNZ’S PARENT & CAREGIVERS SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT

SLSNZ and its employees recognise that the welfare of children and young people is paramount, and will ensure that staff and/or volunteers inform parent and caregivers that they:

1. And their child’s voice is valued, and they may be asked for their views and/or feedback.
2. Must be contactable or nominate an emergency contact who will be available at all times while their child or young person is involved in SLSNZ operations or activities.
3. Should tell someone if they or someone else is being treated differently to this or other SLSNZ Codes of Conduct, and/or if they are worried about someone.
4. Are expected to behave in accordance with SLSNZ’s Code of Conduct (*Refer SLSNZ regulation # 5*), at all times.
5. Are expected to behave appropriately and compassionately towards others, including should they be dissatisfied, e.g.
 - a. Remembering staff and volunteers are people too, and some may be young staff or volunteers.
 - b. Not raising voices/using inappropriate language towards staff or volunteers, particularly in the vicinity of children and young people.
 - c. Knowing that any conduct that is or perceived as being, abusive, racist, sexist, bullying, harassing, threatening, etc. is not permitted and may result in service exclusion.
6. Along with SLSNZ, are expected to promote inclusivity and will undertake all reasonable steps to accommodate any special needs where practicable and where resources permit.
7. Are encouraged to support the actions taken by staff or volunteers to address inappropriate behaviours that may breach SLSNZ’s Code of Conduct and also how they may be managed, e.g.
 - a. For children and young people: immediate strategies such as time out, etc. as well as Behavioural Management Plans that incorporate parent or caregivers’ involvement and agreement.
 - b. For children and young people and adults: serious concerns (e.g. illegal behaviour, danger, harm towards self or others, persistent failings to comply, etc.) may result in temporary and/or permanent exclusion.
8. Are required to abide by SLSNZ’s operational and/or activity requirements, e.g. dropping off/collecting children and young people at the times and location specified.
9. Are required to abide by all SLSNZ’s policies, procedures and practices at all times, including refraining taking, sharing or storing images of children and young people, other than their own, noting:
 - a. Taking of imagery is not permitted unless authorised by staff.
 - b. SLSNZ will create opportunities for imagery to be taken safely.
 - c. How breaching imagery requirements may place others at risk, e.g. from family violence, etc.
10. Remember that safeguarding is a shared responsibility.