



Definitions:

A police vet is a search of the NZ Police database for information held about a person. It provides criminal history and other relevant information.

"Unsupervised access to students, in relation to a school, means access to any student on the school's premises that is not access by, or supervised by, or otherwise observed by, or able to be directed (if necessary) by, any 1 or more of the following:

- o a registered teacher or holder of a limited authority to teach:
- o an employee of the school on whom a satisfactory Police vet has been conducted within the last 3 years.

Rationale:

Police vetting is part of the safety checking process a school or kura Māori must do when employing or engaging staff. This is a requirement of both the Education Act 1989 and the Children Act 2014. It is a statutory requirement that board employees are vetted (Vulnerable Children's Act, 2014).

Purposes:

1. To take reasonable measures to protect students from harm so that students are not exposed to an unacceptable risk by persons with whom the school causes them to come contact. (NAG 5).
2. To ensure that all employees maintain proper standards of integrity and conduct (State Sector Act, section 77A).

Guidelines:

Police Vetting is required for:

- Non teaching staff
- Contractors and their employees who regularly work in the school during the day
- Volunteers who have unsupervised access to students e.g. Camp helpers, sports coaches
- If it is not possible to obtain a Police Vet in the required time frame, provision must be made to ensure the person does not have unsupervised access to students.

Police Vetting is not required for:

- Volunteers who do not have opportunity for unsupervised access to students
- Contractors who do not regularly work in the school or do not work during the school day

NB: The vetting of teaching staff is the responsibility of the Education Council.

The Principal is the Designated Person responsible for:

- Organising the signing of forms and viewing the required forms of identification including photo I.D.
- Receiving the completed vet
- Evaluation of the vet
- Keeping records of completed Police vets.
- Ensuring police vet forms are disposed of safely.

The Principal:

- Is responsible for vetting or viewing checks carried out by contractors working on site.
- Ensures that support staff are police vetted by the school before they can be appointed. They must then be police vetted every three years.
- Will not police vet parents/whanau who volunteer to support students on day trips.

- Will ensure that strict confidentiality is observed (s78). The only staff member who will read the police vet is the Principal (the “requestor”) and the Office Administrator.
- Will ensure that the subject of the police vet receives a copy of his/her police vetting and asks the subject to validate the information in the vet if there is anything incorrect or adverse. The subject must be given a reasonable opportunity to validate the information before the Principal can take adverse action.

Education Council – Core Workers

- Vets teachers every three years when they seek renewal of their teaching registration. The cost is contained in the registration fee.
- Ensures Limited Authority to Teacher (LAT) employees are treated the same as teachers. The cost is contained in the registration fee.

Support Staff – Core Workers

- All candidates will be informed about the requirements of Police Vetting.
- When the provisional decision has been made to employ a person they will be asked to complete their details on the Police Vetting form.
- The support staff member will be requested to provide 2 forms of non-expired identification, including one that is photo identification – 1 from Group A (e.g. Birth certificate / Passport / NZ Certificate of Identity / NZ citizenship) and one from Group B (e.g. driver’s licence / community services card / 18+ card / Inland Revenue Number) in order to confirm their identity and complete Police Vetting process.
- The school will complete all details and will then submit the form.
- ONLY the “requestor” – the Principal and the Office Administrator will have access to the returned information.
- If the vetting is satisfactory the Principal will complete the appointment procedure.
- If the vetting indicates an issue of concern, the Principal will give a copy of the police vet to the applicant who will be asked to validate the information (within a 2 week period).
- If the applicant cannot satisfactorily disprove the police vet, the Principal will inform the candidate that he/she cannot be appointed.

Contractors – Non Core Workers

- Contractors will be informed that they, and any employee who will be working at the school during school hours and have unsupervised access to children, will be required to be police vetted and that the cost shall be borne by the Contractor.
- The Contractor will be responsible for ensuring that all employees comply with this requirement.
- Contractors and or their employees who refuse to complete this vetting process will not be given access to the school site during school hours - or will not be used at all - at the Principal’s discretion.
- Individual contractors employed directly by the school on a regular basis will follow the support staff vetting procedures.
- The individual contractor will be requested to provide 2 forms of non-expired identification, including one that is photo identification – 1 from Group A (e.g. Birth certificate / Passport / NZ Certificate of Identity / NZ citizenship) and one from Group B (e.g. driver’s licence / community services card / 18+ card / Inland Revenue Number) in order to confirm their identity and complete Police Vetting process.
- ONLY the requestor (the Principal) and the Office Administrator will have access to the returned information.
- If the vetting is satisfactory the Principal will advise the Contractor accordingly.
- If the vetting indicates an issue of concern, the Principal will give a copy of the police vet directly to the applicant who will be asked to validate the information (within a 2 week period).

- If that person cannot satisfactorily explain the outcome of the police vetting the Principal will then inform that person, and the Contractor, that he/she cannot work at the school. No details will be given to the Contractor.

Volunteers – Non Core Workers

- Volunteers (e.g. parents and members of the school community) are not required to be vetted, although the school board or management may choose to do so. Volunteers will be vetted if they are in a situation that requires them to be left alone with children for more than thirty minutes – a period of “vulnerability” or a “window of opportunity”.
- Parents/Whanau who are staying overnight on school trips or camps will also be police vetted by the school.
- From time to time, parents/whanau will be informed of Police Vetting requirements so that they understand both the rationale and procedures to be followed.
- The parent/whanau will be requested to provide 2 forms of non-expired identification, including one that is photo identification – 1 from Group A (e.g. Birth certificate / Passport / NZ Certificate of Identity / NZ citizenship) and one from Group B (e.g. driver’s licence / community services card / 18+ card / Inland Revenue Number) in order to confirm their identity and complete Police Vetting process.
- ONLY the requestor – the Principal and the Office Administrator will have access to the returned information. If the vetting is satisfactory the Principal will inform the teacher organising the trip/camp and the parent/whanau member.
- If the vetting is not satisfactory the Principal will inform the parent/whanau member and discuss that person’s options: either to provide proof that the information is wrong or to withdraw from the trip or camp. At this stage the teacher in charge of the trip or camp will not be informed. If the parent opts to prove the information is wrong, then 2 weeks will be allowed for this.
- If the parent/whanau member satisfies the Principal that the information is incorrect, and the original vetting report is amended, the parent/whanau member will be informed that they can continue with the trip/camp. The teacher in charge of the camp will then be informed of the outcome.
If the parent/whanau member cannot disprove the original vetting report, then the teacher in charge of trip or camp will be informed. No details will be given to the teacher in charge of the event.

Evaluation of a Negative Police Vet

If the police vet reveals criminal offences or concerns that need to be given consideration, the following factors are to be considered:

- How serious was the offence?
- How long ago was the offending?
- Has a sentence been served, or is there Periodic Detention / Community Service still being served?
- Was it a one-off offence, or is there a pattern of offending?
- What is the employee’s / contractor’s role in the school, and how does the type of offence relate to it?
- The concerns raised by a ‘Red Stamp’ (A Red Stamp indicates police have concerns about the person working with children).

Relevant Offences:

Individuals will be disqualified from holding positions that require direct contact with children if their criminal records include any of the following:

- Past history of sexual abuse of children
- Conviction for any crime in which children were involved
- History of any violence or sexually exploitative behaviour

Other Factors that need to be considered by the Principal / Board when evaluating criminal history records are:

- The circumstances surrounding the conduct in question.
- The age of an individual at the time of the offence.
- Societal conditions that may have contributed to the nature of the conduct.
- The probability that an individual will continue the type of behaviour in question.
- The individual's commitment to rehabilitation and to changing the behaviour in question.

RIGHTS/PRIVACY

Applicants have the right to be treated fairly and to have their privacy respected. The information contained in a police vet is confidential, and privacy must be safeguarded at all times.

Police Vetting Register

The school will operate a Register of all requests made for a police vetting. The headings will include:

- Subjects name / D.O.B.
- Category (support staff, contractor, contractor's employee, volunteer).
- Date submitted to Police
- Date the result is received
- Outcome ("pass" or "fail")
- Date the vetting expires
- Comment (for result of appeal etc).

Related Policy and Procedures:

Health & Safety; Personnel; Appointments

Board Statement:

The board recognises the need to ensure the safety of students and mitigates students being placed at risk by the actions of employees, through robust recruitment processes which include Police Vetting of all potential staff.

Ratified by the Board: 25 June 2015
Reviewed & Updated: February 2019

Signed For BOT