

Theme Nine: Developing Positive External Relationships

Recommendation No.18: Develop a trusting and cooperative relationship with police.

“We recommend that the Dilworth Trust Board, as a priority, develops a trusting and cooperative relationship with New Zealand Police and continue to refer immediately any instances of sexual misconduct to police for investigation and co-operate promptly in providing information police seek.”

Progress to date

In keeping with the School’s safeguarding, whistleblowing, pastoral, and legal duties, it is established policy to refer immediately any instances of sexual misconduct to NZ Police for investigation, and to cooperate in promptly providing information sought by police.

The Dilworth Trust Board cooperated fully with NZ Police during Operation Beverly, the operation to investigate former Dilworth staff members accused of historical abuse, albeit in doing so it had to have regard to its obligations to protect the privacy of other students, and to fulfil its obligations under the Privacy Act 2020.

Operation Beverly was initially established following information provided to the police by the Board after it became aware of the extent and seriousness of historical abuse allegations.

Next steps

The Dilworth Trust Board will consult with NZ Police on how its engagement can be enhanced, including working to agree good and effective protocols for reporting abuse and managing documentation requests. It will ensure any protocols or recommendations from NZ Police are visible and clearly articulated to staff, students, and the wider Dilworth community.

Recommendation No.19: Develop an effective working relationship with the Anglican Church.

“We recommend that the Dilworth Trust Board develop an effective working relationship with the Anglican Church to ensure chaplains employed by Dilworth have their performance properly reviewed and any concerns are immediately passed onto the other party and actioned effectively and swiftly.”

Progress to date

While Dilworth School is independent of the Anglican Church, it is a school based on the ethos and teachings of the Church. The School Chaplain is ordained by the Church and is appointed in consultation with the Bishop of Auckland.

In October 2022, the Dilworth Trust Board signed a Memorandum of Understanding with The Anglican Diocese of Auckland on the nature of the relationship between the School and the Anglican Church, and the respective responsibilities of the parties. It addressed, in particular, the role of the Bishop in visiting and inspecting the School from time to time (typically annually) and reporting thereon to the Trust Board, and for the Bishop to be consulted in relation to the appointment of the School Chaplain. There is also a requirement for the parties to inform each other without delay if any matter of discipline related to the School Chaplain comes to their attention.

As an employee of the School, Chaplains are also subject to the same rigorous safeguarding processes and good practice requirements of all School staff and those responsible for pastoral care.

Next steps

The Dilworth Trust Board and School continue to work closely with the Bishop of Auckland to promote an enduring relationship that is in the best interests of Dilworth students today and those of the future.