

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES

The following practices must be observed by members:

Education Outside the Classroom

- Ensure that preparation for events outside the classroom includes clear information to parents, caregivers and students regarding supervision, medical treatment, sleeping arrangements, washing/bathing.
- Ensure parents/helpers are informed of their responsibilities and how to handle situations so that their integrity is not compromised.
- Ensure that whatever the situation you are not alone with a student. (An exception would be in an emergency when someone has gone for help.

Medical Conditions

- Each school must have staff members specially trained in first aid and a comprehensive first aid kit.
- Ensure the school is aware of students with allergies or medical conditions and what is necessary to assist the student.
- For minor injuries or abrasions attend to the student immediately in the same way a responsible parent or caregiver would and in the presence of other students or another staff member.
- Ensure, monitors, another staff member, or witnesses are present when assisting or comforting a student who is seriously injured. Only qualified first aiders should examine the student. Immediately contact a parent, caregiver, doctor or the ambulance service.
- The administration of medicine should be the responsibility of the student's parent, caregiver or doctor.
- Only administer medicine in life-threatening situations when you and another staff member have been consulted by a parent or caregiver and you have accepted responsibility in accordance with school policy. Make sure you have the necessary knowledge to administer the medicine and do so in the presence of another person; keep a written record. Contact the student's parent, caregiver or doctor immediately in an emergency.
- Do not transport a sick or injured student on your own unless in an absolute emergency.

Note: Wear disposable gloves when giving first aid.

Restraint of Students

- Learn and use anger management and classroom skills to isolate and restrict students from injuring themselves.
- Learn appropriate ways to restrain students. Involve the Principal and contact support agencies (eg special school, Special Education Services staff)
- If the situation cannot be controlled in any other way, physically restrain the student as appropriately as possible and seek other staff/adult assistance.

Searching of Students

Do not body search students as this could lead to allegations of physical or indecent assault.

If it is necessary to undertake a search of property because you suspect theft, drugs or dangerous weapons, involve the Principal or a senior member of staff to supervise.

- Tell the student what you are looking for
- Ask the student to tell you where the item is
- Get the student to check all likely places for the item eg. empty out your bag, desk, locker.
- Ask the student to empty out her/his pockets and if the student is wearing a jacket, ask her/him to remove it.
- Ask the student to put onto the table anything they have tucked away in their clothing.
- If this is not successful involve the police and the parent/caregiver.

Attacks on Staff/Intimidation

- Try to protect yourself without causing injury to the student or adult involved.
- Move away or restrain the student if this is possible
- Get assistance immediately
- Report to the Principal

Toileting

- This is not a regular job expected of all teaching or support staff, but may happen from time to time eg. accidents, stomach upsets.
- Only trained support staff such as teacher aides should take on these tasks.
- Where students require assistance involve the parents/caregivers and outside agencies such as the Public Health Nurses, Special Education Services or a local school for Intellectually Handicapped who can assist.
- Ensure other staff know you are toileting a student

BEING ALONE WITH A STUDENT

Avoid situations where you are alone with a student, including pupil monitors/helpers.

If you are alone with a student use extremely careful judgement.

Counselling a Student

- When you are counselling a student ensure that the place is not closed off from other people seeing into the room.
- Parents and caregivers must be advised that a student is receiving 1:1 learning such as reading recovery.

Transporting a Student

- Staff should avoid transporting a student on their own at all times.

Discipline

- There is no place for corporal punishment in schools.
- Once a situation is diffused, it is often useful to allow some time to elapse before assessing what action should be taken
- Never discipline in anger as this can lead to unprofessional and unlawful actions. Any disciplining of a child should be done in the presence of a witness.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual Harassment of Students by Staff

- This is totally unprofessional, unacceptable and unlawful.
- Each school is obliged to put in its Charter and Policy effective procedures that are known to students to enable a means of support and complaint

Sexual Harassment of Staff by Students

- Remove yourself from the situation and immediately report the student's behaviour to the Principal or other appropriate person.
- Maintain professional conduct and a professional image
- If you are being sexually harassed by a student tell the student why the behaviour is unacceptable and must stop.
- Avoid situations where this is likely to occur.

ONGOING PROGRAMMES

Physical Education

- Physical contact can occur in assisting movement and safety in gymnastics or teaching positioning skills in coaching sports or when dancing or teaching swimming.
- Use careful professional judgement regarding physical contact with students in all these circumstances.
- Encourage students to change and dress themselves
- Ensure the school has a policy about ongoing programmes that is known to parents and caregivers.

Special Education Needs

- Some students with special needs have a very affectionate nature and express themselves freely, eg. hold your hand, put their arms around you or other students.

- In consultation with parents, students should have the situation explained so that special needs students do not feel rejection when action is taken. Staff should gently remove themselves from the contact with the student without appearing to reject the student.
- When a female student requires physical assistance with sanitary hygiene (menstruation) only trained staff or parents/caregivers are to assist.

PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH STUDENTS AND ITS CULTURAL ACCEPTABILITY

- Some cultures frequently use affection and positive physical contact
- Regardless of a student's cultural customs, staff must avoid inappropriate physical contact

COMPLAINTS/DISCIPLINE

- Unprofessional behaviour towards students by staff may involve action being taken in accordance with the complaints and disciplinary procedures contained in the relevant collective employment contract.
- Serious misconduct may lead to suspension or instant dismissal and/or police investigation.
- Acts of indecent or physical assault will, if proven, result in a conviction and imprisonment, deregistration and loss of career.

CODE OF ETHICS

All members are bound by NZEI's Code of Ethics contained in Annex A to this code.

The Code commits members to good professional practice that will:

- Support effective learning and teaching in schools
- Assist the rights of students to physical, emotional and cultural safety in schools
- Guide members in carrying out their professional role in relation to the NZEI Code of Ethics
- Maintain the credibility of school staff with the public
- Promote high standards of work practices that protect members from complaints of inappropriate contact with students.

NZEI can exercise professional discipline through the code of ethics, ethics panel and disciplinary tribunal if a formal complaint has been laid.

INSTITUTE CODE OF ETHICS

Members of the New Zealand Educational Institute accept a commitment to the following ideal as embodying what is best in the profession of teaching and in education:

- Personal service to others through concern for, and responsible promotion of, the education and welfare of children, students, support staff and teachers.

Members accept that realisation of the goals implicit in this ideal depends upon

- The attainment of high qualifications, expert knowledge, and specialised skills
- Continuing inquiry into, and evaluation of the teaching task itself
- A proper understanding, not only of human development, but also the values which are fundamental to worthwhile social living.

In determining their conduct they should recognise

- Their obligation to advance the causes of education and hence the causes of their profession
- That individuals can make a significant contribution to the community in many varied ways
- That each child is an individual, and that children can differ in what is required for the promotion of their education.
- An obligation to assist all children to develop their talents suitably, and to the fullest extent feasible.
- That they should respect the professional integrity of their colleagues
- An obligation to help all members to maintain the best possible standards of professional competence
- That they should improve their effectiveness as educators
- That they should work with parents to promote the welfare of children, particularly by consulting and involving parents whenever this is desirable
- That they have a responsibility for their own actions and judgments and that they should be prepared to stand by their consequences.
- An obligation to enhance in every way possible the standing of their profession in the community.

In carrying out their responsibilities they agree

- To be responsible for the maintenance of their professional standards
- To use the Institute's established procedures for reporting unprofessional conduct.
- To advance and protect the professional welfare of their colleagues, both individually and collectively.
- To manifest personal responsibility, individual initiative and integrity in all aspects of their work
- To be ready to meet their professional obligations and, in particular, to be

available when necessary for consultation on measures which affect the profession.

- To accept that the profession should, whenever necessary, respect the confidentiality of certain information, and that they, as members of the profession, should render every assistance in determining which information is to be so treated.
- To abide by, and to act on, the majority decisions of the Institute.

Specific actions declared to be unprofessional are:

1. For any member to attempt to influence the Minister, the Ministry of Education or any other government agencies, or Boards of Trustees on matters affecting members in a manner contrary to the expressed decisions of the Institute.
2. For any member to apply for or accept a position which the National Executive directs is not at the time to be filled by members.
3. For any member to censure other members or to criticise their work in the hearing of pupils.
4. For any member to be found guilty of conduct seriously detrimental to the interests of the profession or the Institute.
5. For any teacher or support staff member by public statement to bring the profession into disrepute.

