

Policy No. 55 Theft and Fraud Prevention

But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.

1 Timothy 6:9

Rationale

1. The Board accepts that it has a responsibility to protect the physical and financial resources of the School. The Board has agreed that through its chief executive, the Principal, the School has a responsibility to prevent and detect theft and fraudulent actions by persons who are employed or contracted by the School or who are service recipients of the School. The Board accepts that any investigation into any theft or fraudulent actions will be conducted in a manner that conforms to the principles of natural justice and is procedurally just and fair.
2. The Board, therefore, requires the Principal to establish systems and procedures to guard against the actions of theft and fraud. The Principal is to report such actions to the Board Chairperson as prescribed in the procedures set out below.

Safety procedures that are already in place at our school

- Passwords in place for all banking procedures
- ASB Banking procedures have a secure coded unit attached to each transaction.
- Principal must have permission from the Board for any singular items over \$500 that are out of the current year's budget.
- When the administration staff are requested to transfer money by the Principal or the Financial committee, from investment account to cheque account an email is directed to the ASB Manager who then processes this action.

Procedures

1. As preventative measures against theft and fraud the Board requires the Principal to ensure that:
 - a. The School's physical resources are kept secure and accounted for.
 - b. The School's financial systems are designed to prevent and detect the occurrence of fraud. All such systems must meet the requirements and standards as set out in the Crown Entities Act 2004.
 - c. Staff members who are formally delegated responsibility for the custody of physical and financial resources by the Principal should be competent to carry out such responsibilities and that such persons are held accountable for the proper execution of their responsibilities.
 - d. All staff members are aware of their responsibility to immediately inform the Principal should they suspect or become aware of any improper or fraudulent actions by staff, suppliers, contractors, students or other persons associated with the School.

2. In the event of an allegation of theft or fraud the Principal shall act in accordance with the following procedures:
 - a. So far as it is possible and within 24 hours:
 - i. Record the details of the allegation, the person or persons allegedly involved, and the quantity and/or value of the theft or fraud.
 - ii. Request a written statement from the person who has informed the Principal, with details as to the nature of the theft or fraud, the time and circumstances in which this occurred, and the quantity and/or value of the theft.
 - iii. Decide on the initial actions to be taken including consulting with the person who provided the information and, if appropriate, confidentially consulting with other senior members of staff about the person who is the subject of the allegation.
 - iv. Inform the Board Chairman of the information received and consult with him or her as appropriate.
 - b. On the basis of advice received and after consultation with the Board Chairperson, the Principal shall decide whether or not a case of theft or fraud exists, and if not, to document this decision and record that no further action is to be taken.
 - c. The Principal shall then carry out the following procedures and should work through the following action if it is deemed to be necessary:
 - i. Investigate the matter further, if a prima facie case is thought to exist to continue with their investigation, invoke any disciplinary procedures contained in the contract of employment should the person be a staff member;
 - ii. Lay a complaint with the New Zealand Police if appropriate;
 - iii. If necessary, commission an independent expert investigation
 - iv. In the case of fraud, require a search for written evidence of the possible fraudulent action to determine the likelihood or not of such evidence;
 - v. Seek legal advice; or
 - vi. Inform the Manager, National Operations, Ministry of Education local office and or the school's auditors.
 - d. Once all available evidence is obtained the Principal shall consult the Board Chairman. The Board Chairman may then consider it necessary to seek legal or other advice as to what further action should be taken. A discussion may be required at Board level.
 - e. If a case is considered to exist the Principal in conjunction with the Board Chairman will follow the following procedures:
 - i. Inform the person in writing of the allegation that has been received and request a meeting with them at which their representative or representatives are invited to be present.
 - ii. Meet with the person who is the subject of the allegation of theft or fraud and their representatives to explain the complaint against them.
 - iii. Obtain a verbal or preferably a written response (all verbal responses must be recorded as minutes of that meeting, and the accuracy of those minutes should be attested by all persons present).
 - iv. Advise the person in writing of the processes to be involved from this point on.
3. The Board recognises that supposed or actual instances of theft or fraud can affect the rights and reputation of the person or persons implicated. All matters related to the case shall remain strictly confidential with all written information kept secure. Should any delegated staff member or any other staff member improperly disclose information the Principal shall consider if that person or persons are in breach of confidence and if further action is required. Any action the Principal considers must be in terms of the applicable conditions contained in their contract of employment and any code of ethics or code of responsibility by which the staff member is bound.
4. The Board affirms that any allegation of theft or fraud must be subject to due process, equity and fairness. Should a case be deemed to be answerable then the due process of the law shall apply to the person or persons implicated.

5. Any intimation or written statement made on behalf of the School and related to any instance of supposed or actual theft or fraud shall be made by the Board Chairperson who shall do so after consultation with the Principal and if considered appropriate after taking expert advice.

Allegations Concerning the Principal or a Trustee

1. Any allegation concerning the Principal should be made to the Board Chairman. The Chairman will then investigate in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 4 of this Policy.
2. Any allegation concerning a member of the Board of Trustees should be made to the Principal. The Principal will then advise the manager of the local office of the Ministry of Education and commence an investigation in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 4 of this Policy.

Approval

1. When the Board approved the Policy it was agreed that no variations of this Policy or amendments to it can be made except by the unanimous approval of the Board.
2. As part of its approval the Board requires the Principal to circulate this Policy to all staff, and for a copy to be included in the Westminster Christian School manual, copies of which shall be available to all staff. The school policy manual shall also be made available to students and parents at their request. The Board requires that the Principal arrange for all new staff to be made familiar with this Policy.

Conclusion

This policy will be reviewed every five years.

Date approved: 19th June 2007

Date Reviewed: June 2009
August 2010
October 2016
December 2021