# Operational Policy: Homai Campus Outdoor Learning Environment (NAG 5)

## Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ

## Statement of Intent:

The Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ (BLENNZ) Board of Trustees, through the Principal, will safeguard the health and safety of ākonga, parents, whānau and staff using the Outdoor Learning Environment (OLE) during times BLENNZ is open for business. This includes the school day as well as out of hours for ākonga and other visitors who are on site during term time or who are enrolled in a BLENNZ approved programme.

School hours are 8.15am – 3.15pm. With the exception of ākonga and whānau who are staying on site, outside of these hours the Board is not responsible for the supervision of people who come on to BLENNZ grounds without the permission of the Board or a member of the Senior Management Team. This includes people who use the grounds for recreational purposes, as a shortcut, or for any other purpose. People who come on to the grounds without permission will be managed in terms of school security.

## Policy Requirements:

1. All structures and surfacing in the Outdoor Learning Environment (OLE) will comply with NZS 5828:2004. The early childhood outdoor play area will also comply with the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008. These require services to have premises and facilities that support safe and health practices (Regulation 45(1)(a)(ii) and includes structures, equipment and surfacing. Newly installed playground equipment or safety surfacing must have a certificate of compliance to show that it is installed according to instructions.

2. Outdoor play areas (including all new and existing equipment) will be chosen, constructed or adapted, as far as practicable, to ensure maximum independent access for ākonga who are blind, deafblind and low vision, including those with additional physical needs.

3. The OLE is not covered by Ministry of Education insurance. BLENNZ will therefore have it has its own contents insurance to cover damage, loss or destruction.

4. BLENNZ will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that ākonga on the BLENNZ Homai Campus site out of school hours will come to no harm. This means ensuring the grounds are locked and equipment that requires supervision is put away at the end of each day.

5. Under the Health & Safety Code of Practice BLENNZ is responsible for making sure ākonga are not able to climb on to roofs or shade sails. Whilst this responsibility only extends to students and other people on the school grounds with BLENNZ’s permission, ensuring structures are not easy to climb will also minimise the risk to people on BLENNZ grounds outside of school hours and without BLENNZ’s permission.

6. Ākonga will be supervised by BLENNZ staff when undertaking activities in the OLE in the course of their regular programmes. Long term residential ākonga will be informed of any risks or health and safety issues prior to unsupervised access. Ākonga visiting the campus for National Assessment or for any other authorised purpose, are the responsibility of the accompanying adult(s) during times they may have access to the OLE.

7. Groups using the school grounds/OLE with the Board’s permission e.g. weekend sports groups, should have a third party occupancy agreement with BLENNZ to protect the interests of both BLENNZ and the third parties.

8. Although BLENNZ property is Crown-owned, it is not public land in the sense that members of the public have unrestricted access to it. Anyone on school grounds without permission is trespassing. Notices to this effect are displayed in the OLE.

9. At all times helmets will be used when bikes and similar recreational equipment such as skateboards, scooters, roller-skates, go-karts etc are ridden either on the bike track or in other places on the BLENNZ Homai Campus site. The only exception to this will be when ākonga are learning to wear a helmet on a small push along bike.

10. The OLE fitness equipment can only be used by ākonga after they have been made aware of the safe use of the equipment by the person responsible for them. Signage instructions in the safe use of this equipment will be available at each fitness station.

11. Staff will take all reasonable steps to ensure that premises and facilities, and other equipment on the premises are kept in good repair, maintained regularly and kept free of hazards. A regular inspection programme to ensure playground equipment and surfacing is properly maintained will be undertaken to ensure any necessary repairs and maintenance can be completed promptly. The Site manager undertakes this on a monthly basis. The Safety Register Checklists are kept for audit purposes. Systems will be in place to facilitate the reporting of health and safety concerns.

## Supporting Documents:

[Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2015/0070/latest/DLM5976660.html)

[Link to Ministry of Education Website - Health and Safety in Schools](http://education.govt.nz/school/health-safety-and-wellbeing/health-and-safety-requirements/)

[Link to ACC Website](https://www.acc.co.nz/)

[School Trustees Association Website - Health & Safety in Schools](http://www.nzsta.org.nz/employer/employment-conditions/health-and-safety)

Approved: 

Date: 16/2/2022

Next Review: 2024