

Woodbridge School CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING

All staff have a duty of care to keep children safe and protect them from harm.

Procedures

Introduction

Woodbridge School recognises its legal duty under s175 Education Act 2002 and the 1989 Children Act and takes seriously its responsibilities to protect and safeguard the interests of all children. The school recognises that effective child protection work requires sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and a workforce that is competent and confident in responding to child protection situations.

Child Protection has to be considered within professionals' wider "safeguarding" responsibilities that include a duty to co-operate under the Children Act 2004. Within the context of Every Child Matters, this takes account of the need for children "being healthy and staying safe".

These procedures aim to provide a framework which ensures that all practice in the area of child protection is consistent with stated values and procedures that underpin all work with children and young people.

This document also seeks to make the professional responsibilities clear to all staff to ensure that statutory and other duties are met in accordance with Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board requirements and procedures.

Underpinning values

'During term time children spend half their waking hours in school and for some it is the only safe place in their lives. School staff are often the first people to identify concerns that children are being abused. They may be the first people that children tell about their experiences of abuse.'

Where there is a safeguarding issue, Woodbridge School will work in accordance with the principles outlined in the Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board Inter-agency Child Protection procedures:

- A child's welfare is paramount. Each child has a right to be protected from harm and exploitation and to have their welfare safeguarded.
- Each child is unique. Action taken by child welfare organisations should be child-centred, taking account of a child's cultural, ethnic and religious background, their gender, their sexual orientation, their individual ability and any special needs.
- Children, parents and other carers should be made aware of their responsibilities and their rights, together with advice about the power of professionals to intervene in their family circumstances.
- Each child has a right to be consulted about actions taken by others on his/her behalf. The concerns of children and their families should be listened to and due consideration given to their understanding, wishes and feelings.
- Individual family members must be involved in decisions affecting them. They must be treated with courtesy and respect and with due regard given to working with them in a spirit of partnership in safeguarding children's welfare.

- Open-mindedness and honesty must guide each stage of assessment and of operational practice. The strengths of individual family members, as well as their needs, should be given due consideration.
- Personal information is usually confidential. It should only be shared with the permission of the individual concerned, or unless the disclosure of confidential personal information is necessary in order to protect a child. In all circumstances, information must be confined to those people directly involved in the professional network of each individual child and on a strict “need to know” basis.
- Professionals should be aware of the effects of outside intervention upon children, upon family life and the impact and implications of what they say and do.
- Explanations by professionals to children, their families and other carers should be plainly stated and jargon-free. Unavoidable technical and professional terminology should be explained in simple terms.
- Sound professional practice is based upon positive inter-agency collaboration, evidence-based research and effective supervision and evaluation.
- Early intervention in providing support services under Section 17 of the Children Act (1989) is an important principle of practice in inter-agency arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of children.

Guidance on ‘Whether this is a Child Protection Matter’

Children's responses to trauma will be as individual as they are. Abuse can happen to any child in any family in any organisation or setting. Children are more likely to be abused by people they know.

If staff have significant concerns about any child they should make them known to the School's Designated (Deputy Head of the Senior School) or Deputy Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator (Headmaster, Master of the Abbey, Head of Queen's House). These concerns may include:

Physical abuse:

May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, inappropriate restraint, poisoning (including alcohol), burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional abuse:

Is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Neglect:

Is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or social or intellectual development? Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
- Neglect may also occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material such as sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Signs of abuse**Physical:**

A child may flinch when approached, be reluctant to change, cry or show instability, fear home, have behavioural extremes, show apathy or depression. A child may have unexplained injuries; these might be any of the following: do bear in mind that insect bites and acne can look remarkably like cigarette burns, and bruises from school games look like all sorts of suspicious things.

That said, this is an unpalatable list:

Fingertip bruising; thumb marks under clavicles; bruising on face or head; bruising on genitalia; bruising on limbs, often fingertips; linear bruising, belt or strap; linear burns; scalds and burns, dunking/splashing; adult bite marks; cigarette burns of different ages; mouth injuries, torn lips, gums, frenulum (the web of skin between top gum and top lip); ear injuries; bilateral black eyes (fist punch); intraocular haemorrhage; head injuries (blows or shaking); baby with non-moving limb (fracture); abdominal injuries (ruptured liver); other injuries diagnosed by x-ray.

If you see anything suspicious, do not enquire until you have consulted with the CPC, but record the injury in pictorial form (the CPC has the relevant sheet) as soon as possible, noting time, date, circumstances etc.

Sexual:

The behavioural signs of sexual abuse might be any of the following: do bear in mind here that many of these overlap with being a teenager. Mood changes, tantrums, aggression; insecurity, fear of men (another place or

person or activity); sleeping and eating disorders; anxiety, depression, despair; withdrawal, secretiveness; poor peer relationships; lies, stealing, arson; school failure, truancy; running away from home; suicide attempts, self-poisoning or mutilation; unexplained money; sexualised behaviour (drawings with sexual content, knowledge of adult sexual behaviour in young child or young person with learning difficulties); abuse of drugs, solvents, alcohol; promiscuity at an early age.

Once again, the procedure is to record and pass on your anxieties to the CPC rather than worrying about them. He will be in a position to spot any patterns based on information coming from all sources.

Neglect manifests itself through being unkempt or smelly; being chaotic with PE kit, and other school things; repeated illness; low self esteem; slow physical development; listlessness; hunger; having untreated medical conditions.

Emotional abuse manifests itself (often alongside other forms of abuse) through a lack of parent bonding; lack of parent time for relationship; and a punishment based regime at home (and in other environments). The child may be clingy; attention seeking; over ready to relate to others; have low self esteem, be apathetic; fearful or withdrawn; have sleeping disorders; have depression; may self-harm, or abuse drugs, drink or solvent.

Pupil on pupil abuse

In the case of physical, emotional or sexual abuse of a pupil by one or more pupils, the priority is to protect the interests of the abused pupil in the first instance, working in accordance with the procedures outlined in the paragraphs below. The designated child protection co-ordinator (the Deputy Head) will then consult with the Headmaster and other senior staff as appropriate, alongside any professional bodies such as Suffolk Safeguarding Board or the police, to formulate an appropriate disciplinary response regarding the perpetrators of the abuse.

There are three thresholds for and types of referral that need to be considered:

Is this a child with additional needs where their health, development or achievement may be adversely affected? Suffolk Children and Young People's Framework says practitioners should complete a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) when:

- Age appropriate progress is not being made and the causes are unclear or
- The support of more than one agency is needed to meet the child or young person's needs.

If this is a child with additional needs discuss the issues with the CPC who is a CAF trained practitioner, the child and parents. You will need to obtain parental consent for a CAF to be completed.

Is this child in need? s17 of the Children Act 1989 says:

- they are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development, without the provision of services by a local authority.

- their health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired without the provision of such services.
- they are disabled.

Is this a child protection matter? s47 of the Children Act 1989 says:

- children at risk or who are suffering significant harm.
- children suffering the effects of significant harm
- serious health problems.

If this is a child in need, discuss the issues with the designated child protection co-ordinator and parents. Obtain their consent for referral to Customer First (see below) or any other agency.

If this is a child protection matter, this should be discussed with the designated co-ordinator and will need to be referred to Customer First by the school as soon as possible.

It is the 'significant harm' threshold that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A professional making a child protection referral under S.47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

It is not possible to rely on one absolute criterion when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the extent of the harm suffered, the context within which it occurred and its duration.

Significant harm may also arise from a combination of significant events which are both acute and long standing and which may impair the child's physical, psychological and social development.

In order to both understand and establish significant harm, it is necessary to consider the family context, together with the child's development within their wider social and cultural environment. It is also necessary to consider any special needs, e.g. medical condition, communication difficulties or disability that may affect the child's development and care within the family. The nature of harm, in terms of ill-treatment or failure to provide adequate care also needs consideration alongside the impact on the child's health and development and the adequacy of care provided.

Making referrals

Where a child is registered at school, consultation must take place with the school's designated teacher or Child Protection co-ordinator who will often be the most appropriate person to initiate any referral. A written record of your concerns should be made using the school's internal recording form. This should then be given to the Designated Child Protection co-ordinator who will then make the decision if a referral is needed to the Customer First Team, such referral being made within 24 hours of the disclosure or suspicion of abuse.

For referral to Customer First phone 08456 023023 and speak to the operator. You will need to follow this up with written confirmation on the Multi-agency referral form.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue that needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. This is a complex area and involves consideration of a number of pieces of legislation.

You can never guarantee confidentiality to a child, as some kinds of information may need to be shared with others. A suggested form of words that may help when talking to children is as follows:

“I will keep our conversation confidential and agree with you what information I can share, unless you tell me something that will affect your personal safety or that is illegal, but I will tell you if I am going to pass information on and who to.”

Professionals can only work together to safeguard children if there is an exchange of relevant information between them. This has been recognised in principle by the courts. However, any disclosure of personal information to others, included social service departments, must always have regard to both common and statute law.

Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (Data Protection Act 1998 European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8). Wherever possible consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, however, consent may not be possible or desirable but the safety and welfare of the child dictate that the information should be shared.

The law requires the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 statutory agencies have a duty to co-operate. Therefore, if the Police or Social Care/Services are conducting a Section 47 investigation under the 1989 Children Act, staff must share requested information relevant to the investigation. Legal advice should be sought if in doubt from the County Legal Services Department.

Talking to and listening to children

Children who choose to disclose may have already overcome a variety of obstacles in their own mind: fear and threats, guilt and shame, fear of implications, fear of not being believed or heard; they may not properly recognise an experience as abuse.

If a child chooses to disclose, you SHOULD:

- be accessible and receptive;
- listen carefully and uncritically at the child's pace;
- take what is said seriously;
- reassure the child that they are right to tell;
- tell the child that you must pass this information on;
- make a careful record of what was said, date (include year) and sign it..

You should NEVER:

- tell the child that 'everything will be alright';
- take photographs or examine an injury;

- investigate or probe aiming to prove or disprove possible abuse – never ask leading questions;
- make promises to children about confidentiality or keeping ‘secrets’;
- assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- jump to conclusions or react with shock, anger or horror;
- speculate or accuse anybody;
- confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved;
- offer opinions about what is being said or about the persons allegedly involved;
- forget to record what you have been told;
- fail to pass the information on to the correct person;
- ask a child to sign a written copy of the disclosure.

For children with communication difficulties or who use alternative/augmented communication systems, you may need to take extra care to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are identified and interpreted correctly, but concerns should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children.

Record keeping

Well kept records are essential in situations where it is suspected or believed that a child may be at risk from harm.

Records should:

- state who was present (including a note of all witnesses), time, date (including year) and place;
- use the child’s words wherever possible;
- be factual/state exactly what was said and describe any injury seen;
- differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation;
- be written in ink and signed by the recorder, noting full name and position;
- include a note of to whom the information was passed and what action was taken.

Attendance at Child Protection Conferences

The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator or their deputy will be expected to attend the initial Child Protection Conference.

If a child is made subject to a Child Protection Plan it may be more relevant for the class teacher or head of year to attend the subsequent core group meetings.

Protecting yourself against allegations of abuse

Anyone who has contact with children is in a position of trust.

You should seek to keep your personal contact with children under review and seek to minimise the risk of any situation arising in which misunderstandings can occur. The following sensible precautions can be taken when working alone with children:

- work in a room where there is a glass panel in the door or leave the door open.
- make sure that other adults visit the room occasionally.

- avoid working in isolation with children unless thought has been given to safeguards.
- must not give out personal mobile phone numbers or private e-mail addresses, unless under exceptional circumstances.
- must not give pupils lifts home in your cars, unless under exceptional circumstances.
- must not arrange to meet them outside of school hours.
- must not chat to pupils on the social websites.

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is a criminal offence for anyone working in an education setting to have a sexual relationship with a pupil even when the pupil is over the age of consent.

Any use of physical force or restraint against pupils will be carried out and documented in accordance with the relevant physical restraint policy. If it is necessary to use physical action to prevent a child from injury to themselves or others parents will be informed.

Children will not be punished by any form of hitting, slapping, shaking or other degrading treatment.

Allegations of abuse against a professional. Unsuitability to work with children.

Children can be the victims of abuse by those who work with them in any setting. All allegations of abuse of children carried out by any staff member or volunteer should therefore be taken seriously.

Staff, and senior boarders in position of responsibility, are required to report to the Headmaster, the Chair of Governors, or to Ofsted (08456 404040), any concern or allegation about school practices or the behaviour of colleagues which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm; the School provides staff making such a report with immunity from retribution or disciplinary action for 'whistleblowing' in good faith.

Allegations of abuse made against staff, whether historical or contemporary, should be reported to, and dealt with by, the Headmaster (or the Chair of Governors in his absence), not the designated child protection co-ordinator. If the allegation is against the Head then the Chair of Governors should deal it with. The Head / Chair should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer to discuss the allegation. In the case of serious harm, the police should be informed from the outset.

If an allegation is received by the Headmaster or Chair of Governors the following should be considered: has the member of staff:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children?

This initial conversation will establish the validity of any allegation and if a referral is needed to Customer First. If this is the case a strategy meeting will be called that the Head / Chair should attend.

The decision of the strategy meeting could be:

- investigation by the Suffolk Safeguarding Team
- police investigation if there is a criminal element to the allegation
- single agency investigation completed by the school which should involve the Schools Senior HR advisor

If a member of the boarding staff is suspended pending an investigation of a child protection nature, arrangements for alternative accommodation for that staff member away from children will be made.

The fact that a member of staff offers to resign should not prevent the allegation procedure reaching a conclusion.

The name of any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children will be reported to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (PO Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA, tel 0300 123 1111) within one month of leaving the school, whether the departure was a result of dismissal, non-renewal of a fixed-term contract, no longer engaging (or refusing to engage) a supply teacher provided by an employment agency, termination of the placement of a student teacher or other trainee, no longer using staff employed by contractors, no longer using volunteers, resignation, or voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering. The report submitted is to include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible (failure to do any of the above constitutes an offence).

Recruitment, supervision and training for staff

When recruiting new members of staff the school follows the guidance given in the Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment in Education, and the Suffolk guidelines. The school ensures that CRB checks are undertaken in line with County Council HR policy and that references are taken up and obtained and that qualifications are verified.

Newly appointed staff will have initial training in Child Protection as part of their induction programme. They should be aware of the Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board procedures as part of that induction programme, and be given a copy of the school's Safeguarding Policy.

They should also complete the Level 1 Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Young People training provided by the School. The initial Child Protection training given to each member of the service should be updated every three years and recorded.

E-Safety

The growth of different electronic media in everyday life and an ever developing variety of devices including PC's, laptops, mobile phones, webcams etc place an additional risk on our children.

Internet chat rooms, discussion forums or social networks can all be used as a means of contacting children and young people with a view to grooming them for inappropriate or abusive relationships. The anonymity of the internet allows adults, often pretending to be children, to have conversations with children and in some cases arrange to meet them.

Access to abusive images is not a 'victimless' act as it has already involved the abuse of children. The internet has become a significant tool in the distribution of indecent photographs of children and should be a concern to all those working with pupils at this school.

Pupils can engage in or be a target of bullying using a range of methods including text and instant messaging to reach their target. Mobile phones are also used to capture violent assaults of other children for circulation (happy slapping).

Pupils are made aware of the dangers through curriculum teaching particularly PSHE and sex education.

Protection is Prevention

- Software is in place to minimise access and to highlight any person accessing inappropriate sites or information.
- Pupils will be encouraged to discuss openly their use of technology and anything which makes them feel uncomfortable. (If this results in child protection concerns the schools designated child protection co-ordinator should be informed immediately)
- Pupils should not give out their personal details, phone numbers, schools, home address, computer passwords etc
- Pupils should adhere to the school policy on mobile phones.

The police will be involved if there is any criminal element to misuse of the internet, phones or any other form of electronic media.

Boarding pupils: School House

In accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, senior pupils in School House who have been given positions of responsibility over other pupils in the House are briefed by the Child Protection Co-ordinator and the Housemaster on appropriate action to take should they receive any allegations of abuse, in line with the procedures for staff.

Working with sexually active young people under the age of 18

For detailed advice, please read the document *Working with sexually active young people protocol, SSCB Final Version 01 02 08*. This can also be resourced via the website:

www.onesuffolk.co.uk/scb/PoliciesAndProtocols . Any member of staff who hears, either directly or indirectly, of sexual activity of pupils should report this as soon as possible to the CPC. For children under 13 a referral will always be made; for those between 13 and 16 the capacity of the young person to understand what they are engaging in influences the judgements on how to proceed, but such decisions should only be taken by the CPC in consultation with others. For those over 16 but under 18 sexual activity is no longer an offence, but the young people are still afforded protection under the Children Act of 1989.

Links with other policies and documents

This procedures document should also be considered within the context of other policies and documents relating to our work with children and young people and held at school either on the intranet, Head's office or with the CPC.

Key documents are:

- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education: DfES 2007
- Introduction to Safeguarding Children and Young People, Level One, SSCB September 2007
- Safeguarding Children in Education for Senior Designated Professionals, SSCB October 2009
- Safeguarding children: Dealing with allegations of abuse against Teachers and Other Staff, DfES 2005; SSCB 2007
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings: DCSF 2009
- Working with sexually active young people protocol, SSCB Final Version 01 02 08
- Every Child Matters: What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: DfES 2006
- National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools: Department of Health 2002
- Woodbridge School Behaviour and Attendance policies
- Woodbridge School Anti Bullying, use of mobile, and use of ICT policies
- Woodbridge School Whistle Blowing policy

Resources

Safeguarding is important to all members of staff.

The governing body have to ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable the necessary tasks to be carried out properly under Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board procedures including attending meetings, collating and writing assessment reports, and staff training. The Governing Body will also ensure that all Governors have an understanding of safeguarding issues and that policies and procedures are in place in school to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils in the school.

Safeguarding awareness will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate to ensure all the pupils understand what is meant by safeguarding and how they can be safe.

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The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator (CPC) is Michael Streat (Deputy Head);

The Deputy Designated Child Protection Co-ordinators are Stephen Cole (Headmaster), Nicholas Garrett (Master of Abbey); Jan King (Head of Queen's House);

The nominated Governor for Safeguarding is Professor Jane Wright.

Any of these people can be contacted if you have a safeguarding concern in the school.

Other Useful Contacts

Southern Area safeguarding manager:

Tina Wilson 01473 581871

tina.wilson@cyp.suffolkcc.gov.uk

Customer First:

08456 023023

0808 800 4005

Professionals' line

08456 066167

Emergency duty service

01473 299669

Police

999 or 01473 613500

Advice on safeguarding issues in an educational setting:

Catherine Lee; Professional Adviser Education Safeguarding 01473 260112
Margaret Smith; Senior Education Welfare Officer – Southern Area 01473 584771
Nigel Shaddick; Senior Education Welfare Officer – Western Area 01473 352170
Kelly Waters; Senior Education Welfare Officer - Northern Area 01502 405271

Training:

Charlotte Bloomfield scbtraining.administrator@suffolk.gov.uk 01473 260638/9

Websites:

Independent Safeguarding Authority: www.isa.gov.org
Child Exploitation and Online protection centre: www.ceop.gov.uk
Suffolk Safeguarding: www.onesuffolk.co.uk/scb

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