

FULNECK SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Fulneck School fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection, and will ensure that this policy is available on the school website.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy:

1. Ensuring safe recruitment is practised in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children, by following the Independent School Standards Regulations.
2. Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
3. Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
4. Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
5. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

In-School procedures for protecting children (see summary appendix 2)

It is recognised that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the PSHCE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to build resilience, and support them in recognizing, and staying safe from potentially abusive situations, or disclosing ongoing, or incidents of abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out by the City of Leeds Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills, with particular regard to 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' (DCSF 2006), to:

- Ensure Fulneck has a designated senior person with status and authority, for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. This person will receive training in child protection and inter-agency working every two years. In Leeds, this training is "Working Together" and "Contributing Effectively in Child Protection Procedures". **The Child Protection**

Officers at Fulneck are The Head of Junior School (Mr David Goulbourn) to deal with any Junior School concerns and Mr Neil Barlow (Senior Pastoral Tutor) to deal with Senior School concerns . David Goulbourn is also the designated person in charge of Child Protection for EYFS and will consult with the EYFS manager, Miss Sarah Tooley, on any Child Protection issues in the Foundation Stage.

- Ensure Fulneck has a nominated governor responsible for child protection. **The nominated governor is Mr Larry Fairclough.**
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and the responsibilities of the role.
- Training in child protection will be undertaken by the Head and staff every three years, with part-time and voluntary staff who work with children being made aware of the arrangements.
- The Principal, Vice Principal, Junior Head and nominated governors will undertake the safer recruitment course, developed by the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services, currently being reviewed and to be managed by the Children's Workforce Development (Council).
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- Notify Children's Social Care if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed. CRB checks, and checks of identity, background, qualifications, references, medical fitness, overseas checks and permission to work in UK will be made. Fulneck School accepts responsibility for ensuring that checks and procedures apply to any staff who work with pupils on another site (e.g. in a separate institution) and that assurance is obtained.
- Ensure that the Governing Body undertakes an annual review of the school's child protection policies and procedures, and of the efficiency with which the

related duties have been discharged. Any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements will be remedied without delay.

It is recognised that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Children's Social Care, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

Fulneck will report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority, within one month of leaving the school 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. Arrangements for alternative accommodation away from children will be made in cases where a member of boarding staff is suspended pending investigation of a child protection nature.

The roles of members of staff

- The Designated Senior Member of Staff

The designated Child Protection Officer is Mr Neil Barlow (Senior School) and Mr David Goulbourn (Junior School). Along with the Principal they are responsible for co-ordinating all child protection activity, contacting the Children's Social Care to register concern about a child's welfare and implementing measures relating to child protection. They must:

- Be conversant with Safeguarding Children Board procedures
- Consult and refer cases under Safeguarding Children Board procedures
- Organise training on child protection within the School

- Attend training
- Keep the Principal informed if appropriate
- Be aware of the role of other agencies
- Keep appropriate records
- Support staff
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and the implementation of the School's Child Protection policy.

If the Child Protection Officers are absent for any reason, the Principal acts as the Designated Senior Member of Staff.

- Consultations/ Referrals

If the Child Protection Officer considers that there may be a case of significant harm, or needs advice he will inform the Children's Social Care of his concerns. If the case meets the criteria for eligibility, the Children's Social Care department will make background enquiries including liaising with the police. If the concerns appear well founded, a strategy discussion will follow, normally within two working days. At this point a decision will be taken either to proceed with an S47 Enquiry/Criminal Investigation or not. If the concerns are substantiated and the child is deemed at continuing risk of significant harm, a Child Protection Conference will be convened.

- Record Keeping

Child Protection Records are kept securely by the Child Protection Officer separately from other pupil records.

Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff

All staff have a professional duty to:

- be alert to signs of abuse;
- take immediate action in the pupil's best interest by reporting any evidence of abuse;
- know the role of the Child Protection Officer and School procedures;
- enquire about the progress of individual cases in which they are/have been involved and thereafter accept their restricted role as the case becomes the province of other agencies;
- record accurately in writing information that may be required in Child Protection procedures. Notes should include the time, date, place and people who were present as well as what was said.

Dealing with disclosures (see appendix 1)

Remember that the priority is to protect the pupil. The matter should be taken seriously. Listen but do not judge and reassure the pupil that s/he has done the right

thing in speaking to an adult. As soon as it appears that a pupil is likely to be informing you about abuse of any type, make it quite clear to the pupil that you cannot offer confidentiality. Inform the pupil that you have to tell others. Only inform those with a need to know. If the child comes back to talk at a later stage s/he should be advised that you cannot comment or advise but you can listen.

Do not

- contact the parents yourself;
- interrogate the pupil;
- speak to anyone about whom allegations are made, including colleagues;
- promise confidentiality;
- ask a pupil outright if s/he or others have suffered abuse;
- ask leading questions (eg “ Did s/he do X to you?”). **Do** use phrases such as “Is there anything else you want to tell me?” or “What do you want to tell me?”
- Never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected or alleged abuse yourself
- Never think abuse is impossible in the School, or that an accusation against someone you know well and trust is bound to be wrong.

Action to be taken by staff if they believe a child has been abused in some way

- The pupil’s welfare is paramount and takes precedence over **every other** consideration (parents, staff etc). Mr Neil Barlow (Senior School) and Mr David Goulbourn (Junior School) carry the legal duty, as Child Protection Officers, for all Child Protection matters. They will assume responsibility for the appropriate action, where necessary in consultation with the Principal.
- Children can suffer abuse (including sexual abuse) at the hands of other children in which case it must be taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult and be subject to the same Child Protection procedures.

What happens next?

- i) The Child Protection Officer, in consultation with the Principal, will decide upon any action needed to ensure the immediate protection of the pupil concerned
- ii) If appropriate parents should be aware of information held on their children and kept up to date regarding any concerns or developments. **However, do not disclose to a parent any information held on a child if it would put the child at risk of significant harm**
- iii) These concerns are raised with Children’s Social Care, possibly on an informal basis in the first instance.
- iv) In the event of a serious incident the Child Protection Officer, in consultation with the Principal, must refer the matter to Children’s Social Care within 24 hours.

- v) Arrangements for supporting the pupil and informing parents will be made by the Principal in consultation with Children's Social Care.
- vi) The Child Protection Officer may convene an immediate conference of relevant parties (such as Principal, Head of Boarding, School Nurse, Form Tutor, Head of Juniors etc) to review the evidence
- vii) The School is not required to diagnose abuse (this is a matter for doctors, Children's Social Care and the Police). But if immediate action on abuse is deemed necessary, the Child Protection Officer will make instant referral to the Education Leeds Advice and Information team by telephoning **0113 3951211**. If it is necessary to make a referral to social care, the CPO will contact them on: **0113 222403**. Out side office hours (8.30am – 5.00pm) the emergency duty team number is 0113 2409536.. If it is a police matter but not an emergency the number to call is 0845 606060. Police emergencies should be dealt with in the usual way – dial 999

Allegations against members of staff

(Please consult the allegations procedure produced by Leeds Safeguarding Children Board at www.leedsiscb.org.uk)

Teachers and other Members of Staff must protect themselves and Staff should bear in mind that even innocent actions or comments can sometimes be misconstrued. Children may find being touched uncomfortable or distressing for a variety of reasons. It is also important not to touch pupils, however casually, in ways or on parts of the body that may be considered indecent.

In circumstances which involve a Member of Staff the responsibility for dealing with the matter lies with the Principal.

Teachers and other Members of Staff who hear an allegation of abuse against another member of staff should immediately report the matter to the Principal, unless the Principal is the person against whom the allegation is made. In this case, the Chairman of Governors should be contacted. Immediate suspension of the Member of Staff is only one of a number of options which will be considered.

In the event of an allegation of abuse of, or inappropriate behaviour toward, a child or young person being made against a Member of Staff, the Senior Manager within the Organisation (SMO), who may be the Principal, will immediately refer the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), within the Safeguarding Children Board. The LADO, in discussion with the SMO, will determine what course of action to take place, and if any other agencies should be involved.

If the Principal is wholly satisfied that the pupil or pupils is/are not at risk of significant harm and that a reportable offence has not been committed she will consider the separate need for disciplinary action. In that case an investigation at school level would be necessary.

If an allegation is made against the Principal, then this should be referred to the Chairman of Governors. The same procedure as above should be followed, involving the LADO.

Occasionally unfounded or false allegations of abuse are made. Staff should be guided by the following advice in an attempt to avoid false allegations and situations which may give rise to misinterpretation:

- Avoid whenever possible unobserved situations of one-to one contact with a child. If they are unavoidable, always keep a door open and try to ensure that you are within the hearing of others.
- Do not offer to transport children alone in your car without telling another colleague that this is what you propose to do.
- Do not engage in or allow any sexually provocative games whether based on talking or touching or engage in “horseplay” involving pupils.
- Never make suggestive or discriminatory comments to a pupil
- Never enter a pupil’s room where a pupil may be changing his/her clothes without getting his/her consent to enter.
- Avoid “favouritism” and singling out “troublemakers”.
- Never trivialise child abuse.

Members of staff visiting boarding houses, particularly those housing members of the opposite sex, must exercise discretion and common sense. Members of Staff should not let individual pupils, into their homes, and should avoid seeing pupils there even in pairs.

If you wish to contact Ofsted direct on a Child Protection matter please ring:

08456 404040

Whistleblowing

Staff have a duty to report concerns that a pupil is at risk of abuse, being abused or has been abused to the Child Protection Office as the interests of the pupil is paramount. However, fear of reprisal is an issue for Staff in reporting abuse by colleagues. The Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998) provides protection against victimisation for persons, acting in good faith, who raise concerns about a wide variety of malpractices in the public interest.

When establishing the validity of any cause for concern, care will be taken by the School to:

- protect the identity of the whistleblower;
- avoid alerting anyone about whom a concern has been raised;
- avoid alerting other colleagues who may warn the subject of the concern;
- record all the information;
- keep all records secure and confidential.

In an emergency

If a pupil is in need of immediate protection (eg day pupil refusing to go home due to fear of violence):

- i) Report the situation to a member of the Senior Leadership Team who must inform the Child Protection Officers (or Principal) who may contact Social Services
- ii) If this is not possible contact Children's Social Care : **0113 2224403** or the Emergency Duty Team on **0113 2409536** out of office hours.
- iii) If Children's Social Care cannot be contacted call the Police – they have emergency powers under the Children Act. The number is 0845 606060 (Switchboard)
- iv) Write a detailed report, including any allegations, evidence, dates, times and follow-up action. A copy should go to the CPO.

In addition, the following apply as Fulneck School is a boarding school:

- (i) A briefing will be given to any boarders in positions of responsibility over other pupils, on appropriate action to take should they receive any allegations of abuse;
- (ii) A policy, known to staff and used in practice, for searching for and, if necessary, reporting any boarder missing from school. This policy is as follows: on suspicion of a boarder being missing the Head(s) of Boarding and duty member of boarding staff will be contacted. A search of the school/boarding house should be undertaken. If the boarder is not found then the Police and the Principal should be contacted immediately. A search of the surrounding school grounds and local environment will be undertaken by school staff. On arrival, the Police will take charge of the search. The parents will be contacted by the Head of Boarding once the Police have been informed;
- (iii) Concerns or allegations can also be made to Ofsted at the Independent and Boarding Team, Royal Exchange Buildings, St Ann's Square, Manchester, M2 7LA (08456 014772);
- (iv) Immunity from 'whistle blowing' in good faith will be provided.

Definitions and indicators of child abuse (these are intended for guidance and should not be used as a check-list

There are four categories of child abuse defined in the Children Act:

- Physical Abuse
- Neglect
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse

Physical Abuse

This includes non-accidental bruises and abrasions, slap marks, black eyes, damage to the mouth, bite marks, cigarette burns and fractures. Physical harm may also be caused when a carer suffers from Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment to a child's health or development. This may involve exposing the child to cold, starvation or other dangers or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical treatment causing a failure to thrive.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional Abuse is the severe, adverse effect, on the behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, or the exploitation or corruption of children. It may involve seeing or hearing the abuse of another person (e.g. in domestic abuse situations). All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment. This category is used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

Sexual Abuse

This involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities that they may not fully comprehend, and to which they are unable to give informed consent, or that violate social taboos about family roles. These may involve non-contact activities such as looking at pornography.

Neglect - Examples which may indicate neglect

Hunger

Tiredness or listlessness

Child dirty or unkempt

Poorly or inappropriately clad for the weather

Poor school attendance or often late for school

Poor concentration

Affection or attention seeking behaviour

Untreated illnesses/injuries

Pallid complexion

Stealing or scavenging compulsively

Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example growth, weight

Failure to develop intellectually or socially

Neurotic behavior

Physical abuse - Examples which may indicate physical abuse.

Patterns of bruising; inconsistent account of how bruising or injuries occurred

Finger, hand or nail marks, black eyes

Bite marks

Round burn marks, burns and scalds

Lacerations, wealds

Fractures

Bald patches

Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning

Unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather

Fear of going home or parents being contacted

Fear of medical help

Fear of changing for PE

Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance

Violence or aggression towards others including bullying

Isolation from peers

Sexual abuse - Examples which may indicate sexual abuse

Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge

Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching

Reluctance to go home

Inability to concentrate, tiredness

Refusal to communicate, selective mutism

Thrush, Persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains

Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia

Attention seeking behaviour, self mutilation, substance abuse

Aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation

Unusually compliant

Regressive behaviour, Enuresis, soiling

Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately

Depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group

Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming

Bruises, scratches in genital area

Emotional abuse - Examples which may indicate emotional abuse

Over-reaction to mistakes, continual self deprecation

Delayed physical, mental, emotional development

Sudden speech or sensory disorders

Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies

Neurotic behaviour: rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches

Self harming, drug or solvent abuse

Fear of parents being contacted, Running away, compulsive stealing

Masturbation,
Appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia
Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis

Responses from parents

Research and experience indicates that the following responses from parents may suggest a cause for concern across all four categories:

- An unexpected delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed
- An unawareness or denial of any injury, pain or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb)
- Incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development
- Reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries
- Frequent presentation of minor injuries
- Unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child
- Alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse
- Parents request removal of the child from home
- Violence between adults in the household

Reviewed: February 2013

Approved by Governors: February 2013

Next review date: February 2014

Person responsible for policy: Child Protection Officer

Appendix One

Dealing with a disclosure of abuse

When a child tells me about abuse s/he has suffered, what must I remember?

- Stay calm
- Do not transmit shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the child. Tell her/him you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you.
- Never enter into a pact of secrecy with the child. Assure her/him that you will try to help but let the child know that you will have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
- Tell her/him that you believe them. Children very rarely lie about abuse; but s/he may have tried to tell others and not been heard or believed.
- Tell the child that it is not her/his fault.
- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information.
- Listen and remember.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you.
- *Praise the child for telling you. Communicate that s/he has a right to be safe and protected.*
- Do not tell the child that what s/he experienced is dirty, naughty or bad.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender.
- Be aware that the child may retract what s/he has told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- At the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know. As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations.

NB It is not education staff's role to seek disclosures. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk.

Immediately afterwards

You must not deal with this yourself. Clear indications or disclosure of abuse must be reported to social services without delay, by the Principal / Designated Teacher using the correct procedures as stated in the guidelines.

Listening to and supporting a child/young person who has been abused can be traumatic for the adults involved. Support for you will be available from your Designated Teacher or Principal or from the Education Leeds Child Protection Team (Tel:0113 3951211).

Appendix Two

Summary of in-school procedures to follow where there are concerns about a child

