

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



Safeguarding Children in a non-formal educational context

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of everyone working with young people. The Education Act 2002 section 175 places a duty on the Lead Teacher and Governing Body to ensure their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

This is reinforced in 'Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment in Education' (2007). Safeguarding encompasses the range of policies and measures schools have in place for all children. It includes elements that are designed to protect children from harm as well as preventative measures.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Working Together (2015) as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 (KCSE 2016) outlines: Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating. All school staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

In our school, safeguarding children includes the following.

- A caring ethos: There are people to talk to: teachers, mentors and ancillary staff.
- Policies/Guidance: Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct Policy, Anti-bullying policy, Whistle-blowing Procedures, Safe Recruitment, Behaviour Policy, Policies relating to children's medical needs, Special Educational Needs, Health and Safety policies.
- Curriculum: Safeguarding through our curriculum: exploring issues, thoughts and feelings; promoting skills and confidence to articulate and express views and feelings; know how to stay safe online. Circle time, SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of learning), Drama workshops.
- Health and Safety: Premises, equipment and grounds.

Common Assessment Framework

This may be used where certain children have any unmet needs under the five Every Child Matters Outcomes:

1. Stay safe
2. Be healthy
3. Enjoy and achieve
4. Make a positive contribution to their community/ society
5. Improve economic well being, free from the negative impact of poverty.

Our general safeguarding measures lead on to other specific procedures and guidance: CAF (The Common Assessment Framework) Operational Guidance for Practitioners August 2008, Children in Need (LSCB website) and Child Protection.

Monitoring and review

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Next review: January 2024

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All YOUTH DRAMA employees have a responsibility to protect children from bullying, harassment, physical, sexual and emotional abuse and/or neglect. It is of paramount importance that children at YOUTH DRAMA feel safe, secure and free from any form of abuse. Our School is committed to the protection and promotion of the children's welfare and to providing an environment in which they may thrive.

All staff, teaching and non-teaching, are involved in a rolling programme of child protection training. Appointments policies and procedures acknowledge the importance of addressing issues involving the safeguarding of children. Every adult who has unsupervised contact with children is subject to UK Enhanced Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checking procedures (to work with young people).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for YOUTH DRAMA is Stephen Woods. Liaison with appropriate authorities (Safeguarding Children Officers, Social Services, Police, etc) is his responsibility entirely. Louise Woods is also trained in Child Protection issues and will deputise in Stephen Woods' absence.

Designated staff for Child Protection

Stephen Woods, Louise Woods

Key contacts with regard to child protection are:

Front Door
0345 2000 109

Front Door (evenings and weekends).
0330 333 7475

Report concerns about a child to North Tyneside Council
<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/488/are-you-worried-about-child>

Children's Safeguarding Standards Unit (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)
0191 2774636

Initial Response Service (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday)
0191 2772500 - Newcastle
0345 2000109 - North Tyneside Adult, Children and Young People's Services

Fostering Unit
0191 2863311

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
0191 2774636

Police Child Protection Unit
Phone: 101

Designated Doctor Safeguarding Children
0191 2824753

Safeguarding Advisor Schools
0191 2115391

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Principal Education Welfare Officer
0191 6438386

Child Employment Officer - Linda Whitehead
0191 6438397

Key Points relating to effective safeguarding

In the event of serious allegations the DSL will refer the matter to the Police Family Protection Unit or Social Services Department the same day. The Interdependent Agencies will provide immediate guidance.

Never presume that abuse is an impossibility. Children may confide in young people or other children rather than adults. An awareness amongst peer mentors of these referral procedures is imperative.

Child Protection measures always operate in the best interest of the child. Child Protection Records will be confidential and access limited to a 'need to know' basis.

This policy is available to all staff and parents.

ALL CHILD PROTECTION REFERRALS SHOULD BE IMMEDIATE AND CERTAINLY WITHIN 24 HOURS OF ANY INCIDENT.

Staff Guidelines

The Safeguarding Children guidelines and other relevant current legislation is available at any time on our website and at the central office.

Definitions of Categories of Abuse

ABUSE is defined as physical, sexual or emotional neglect. The following categories of abuse are recognised for the purposes of the Child Protection Register:

NEGLECT: Persistent or severe neglect, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

PHYSICAL INJURY: Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child.

SEXUAL ABUSE including HOMOPHOBIC ABUSE: Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE: Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection.

Reporting Procedure

If you know or suspect that a young person is being abused you must refer the matter immediately to

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Stephen Woods or Louise Woods.

Any person having suspicion of child abuse involving Stephen Woods or Louise Woods must report such to Front Door: 0345 2000 109

If a young person asks to speak to you about a confidential matter you must hold the interview in a room which allows for appropriate privacy. It is advisable to suggest to the young person that another adult is present. If the young person is unwilling to have another adult present, try to ensure that a colleague knows that the interview is taking place.

Always point out to the young person that you cannot guarantee complete confidentiality. Depending on the problem other colleagues may 'need to know'.

There will be occasions when a distressed young person needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comforting such as that given by a parent. It should be ensured that what is – and what is seen by others to be – normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact. Stephen Woods advises all members of staff to avoid all forms of physical contact, for their own protection.

If a young person makes some disclosures to you which fall within the defined categories of abuse, always use the RECEIVE, REASSURE, REACT, RECORD, SUPPORT procedure:

RECEIVE what is said: accept what you are told – you do not need to decide whether it is true or not. Listen without showing shock or disbelief.

REASSURE the young person: acknowledge her/his courage in telling; do not promise confidentiality; remind them that she/he is not to blame (but avoid criticising the alleged perpetrator – young people often love adults who abuse them); reassure her/him but do not promise what you may not be able to deliver: 'everything will be all right now' (it may not be).

REACT: respond to what the young person has said but do not interrogate; avoid leading questions such as 'Was it your father? Did he touch your breasts?' Questions such as this can be used by defence counsel in a subsequent court case to suggest that you contaminated the young person's evidence; ask open-ended questions: 'Do you want to tell me anything else?' 'And?' 'Yes?' Where necessary, clarify what has been said to you so that you are clear and able to decide whether this is an abusive situation. There is a careful judgement to be made in ensuring that you have enough information to make an appropriate referral and allowing a young person to talk without being silenced, while making sure that you have not inadvertently led the young person, perhaps by an assumption behind the question. For example, asking 'Were you sitting up or lying down when this happened?' contains the answer in the question. Explain what you will do next.

RECORD: Make brief notes as soon as possible, during the interview if you can. Write up a subsequent record – include time, date, place. Describe observable behaviour. Record the actual words the young person used as far as possible. Do not destroy your original notes, however scrappy or incomplete, as these can be required as evidence.

SUPPORT: consider what support is necessary for the young person (refer to Headteacher or deputy teachers). Ensure that you get support, as such interviews can be stressful.

PROCEDURES

NSPCC Guidance, "Talking about difficult topics"

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/talking-about-difficult-topics/>

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WHEN A YOUNG PERSON IS MISSING DURING YOUTH DRAMA COURSE

Staff should:

- initiate enquiries
- inform the Headteacher
- inform the course leader. The course leader will advise about contact with the young person's family, and with the police if required.

Children achieve their maximum potential in an environment which is safe, secure and supportive of all their needs, including any needs they have for protection from abuse. Our school is committed to promoting the welfare of all children by working in partnership with parents, with the Local Authority (LA) and with all relevant agencies and partners in child protection, in accordance with locally agreed procedures and practices.

Our policy applies to all members of the YOUTH DRAMA community in its widest sense, including children and young people, their parents/carers, staff, governors, visitors, specialist staff, and all the local and wider community where they interface with the school. Within its framework, the policy outlines their entitlements and responsibilities in securing the protection of children who attend the YOUTH DRAMA.

Where a Local Authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the Children Act states that: "the Authority shall make, or cause to be made, such enquiries as they consider necessary to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare". (Section 47, Children Act 1989).

YOUTH DRAMA will work with the LA in assisting in identification, recording and communicating concerns and offering support in cases where children are suffering from, or vulnerable to, harm. In support of the ethos of our school, the staff and governors are committed to the following principles:

- The welfare and well-being of the child is of paramount importance.
- Our policy works on the premise that abuse takes place in all communities and that schools are particularly well-placed to identify and refer concerns and also to act to prevent children and young people from being abused.
- We respect and value each child as an individual.
- We are a listening school, and encourage an environment where children feel free to talk, knowing that they will be listened to.
- The protection of children from abuse is a whole school issue, and the responsibility therefore of the entire school community.
- Our policy should be accessible in terms of understanding and availability. As a result the definition of child abuse and the key signs and symptoms are known and understood by all, and procedures are known and understood by all.
- Our policy will be developed in consultation with our relevant partners in Child Protection.
- We will use the school curriculum to resource our children to protect themselves from abuse, both as victims and as potential perpetrators.
- The school runs in an open, transparent way and areas of secrecy are discouraged.

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