

European's Welfare Association

Child protection policy

Date adopted: 10 September 2013

Last update date September 2014

Date for next review: September 2015

Signed:

The following designated person has been nominated by this supplementary school to refer allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities.

The designated person is: Elizabeth Kardynal

In the absence of the designated person, the matter should be brought to the attention of the second designated person.

The second designated person is: Agnieszka Cyl

The Childrens Services number for the area is: 01922 658170

The out of hours emergency number is: 0845 111 2836

Child protection policy

Objective

To contribute to the personal safety of all children/young people attending by promoting child protection awareness, good practice and safeguarding procedures.

Policy statement

We at Polish School in Walsall believe that children/young people have the right to be treated equally and to learn in a safe and friendly environment.

This policy is based on the following principles:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- all children/young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse
- all suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- staff/volunteers are trained to understand the nature of abuse and to be alert to matters of concern
- all staff/volunteers working in this complementary/supplementary school have a responsibility to report concerns to the designated person with responsibility for child protection at the school, and/or to the school's co-ordinator.

We aim to safeguard children/young people by:

- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff/volunteers
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children/young people, parents and carers and staff/volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children/young people appropriately
- following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff/volunteers
- providing effective management for staff/volunteers through support, supervision and training
- reviewing our policy and good practice regularly.

The role of the designated person

Every complementary/supplementary school or place of worship should have a designated child protection person, who must undergo child protection training. It is the responsibility of this person to make themselves available for consultation by staff, volunteers, visitors and children/young people and their families.

The name of the designated person and information about their duties should be displayed in the complementary/supplementary school or place of worship, so that everyone (including parents/carers) is aware of who to talk to if they have concerns.

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In the absence of the designated child protection person, a deputy must be identified.

The named person's role includes:

- ensuring that this policy is implemented throughout the school
- ensuring that all necessary enquiries, procedures and investigations relating to child protection are carried out
- reporting results of screening enquiries and preserving 'need to know' levels of confidentiality and access to secure records
- ensuring that all confidential records relating to child protection matters are kept secure
- liaising with social services at a formal and informal level on child protection matters, also with the police
- reporting allegations and suspicion of abuse to the appropriate authorities
- ensuring that there is adequate induction and training relating to child protection matters
- ensuring that each activity carried out by the school is sound in terms of child protection as regards personnel, practices and premises
- checking all incident reports made by staff/volunteers, countersigning them and making such reference to the appropriate authority as is appropriate.
- Ensuring robust systems are implemented for recording of information about children and young people, and to ensure information sharing is a key element in the safeguarding process.

Good practice

Before any activity starts, the designated person shall ensure that adequate child protection procedures are in place, as follows.

- Each parent must fill out a consent form for each child/young person attending the school.
- A register must be kept of all children/young people attending the school's activities, including information about arrival and departure times.
- A daily diary or signing-in book must be kept for all adults on the premises (staff members, volunteers, parents and visitors).
- Team members will record any unusual events on the accident/incident form or in the daily diary, unless this includes anything confidential.
- Where possible, staff/volunteers should not be alone with a child/young person, although it is recognised that there may be times when this may be necessary or helpful.
- The school recognises that physical touch between adults and children/young people can be healthy and acceptable in public places. However, staff/volunteers will be discouraged from this in circumstances where an adult and child/young person are alone together. Please refer to the Codes of Conduct policy given to all members of staff.
- All team members should treat all children/young people with dignity and respect in their attitude, language and actions.

Outings and trips

- All vehicles hired for outings must be insured, roadworthy and fitted with seatbelts.
- All drivers should travel with at least one escort. Drivers and escorts should have up-to-date CRB checks and should have been subject to appropriate recruitment procedures. All drivers and escorts should agree to abide by these guidelines.
- A roll call will be taken at the start of a journey and again before beginning the return journey; if the group is travelling in more than one vehicle, children/young people will be encouraged to travel in the same vehicle there and back.

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- Staff/volunteers accompanying trips will carry the contact numbers for the home organisation and emergency services in the event of an alert being necessary.
- If a child/young person goes missing while on a trip, staff/volunteers should instigate an immediate search. If the child/young person cannot be found within half an hour, the appropriate security staff/volunteers and the police should be notified.
- If, having notified security staff/volunteers and the police, the child/young person cannot be found, the parents/carers of the child/young person must be notified immediately.
- The care of the remaining children/young people is paramount. It is imperative that they return to the home site as quickly as possible, while a senior staff/volunteers member remains at the visit site to co-ordinate contact between security staff/volunteers and the child's/young person's parents/carers.

Use of premises by other organisations

In the event of a room or rooms on the premises being used by other organisations, the letting agreement should ensure that the hiring organisation works to approved child protection procedures and/or that those hiring the room(s) read and agree to abide by these guidelines.

Safe recruitment

All staff/volunteers will be appointed by at least two members of the management committee.

Most staff and all volunteers will work in teams or in open environments where they are not alone with children. Where necessary, staff members (but not volunteers) may work alone with children/young people, providing that they have completed a satisfactory probationary period.

All staff/volunteers will:

- be given a clear job description or role description, setting out expectations for their work and conduct
- show that they meet the person specification for the post or role
- fill in a form on first appointment and annually at the start of each school year, to update their personal details, previous and current work/volunteering experience and qualifications
- supply the names of two referees, who will be contacted personally
- be required to complete an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check on appointment, and every three years thereafter, giving photographic and other evidence of identity and including a formal declaration of any criminal convictions
- be taken through child protection policy and procedure on induction, followed by annual training to remind them of procedures and important concepts
- be supervised by a named manager
- be observed at work by the school's co-ordinator.

Responding to allegations of abuse

Allegations against a member of staff/volunteer

The school will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports their concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child/young person. Where there is a complaint against a member of staff/volunteer, there may be three types of investigation: criminal investigation, child protection investigation or disciplinary/misconduct investigation. The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but this will not necessarily be the case.

Concerns about poor practice

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, this will be dealt with as a misconduct issue.

If the allegation is about poor practice by the school's designated person, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the chair of the management committee, who will advise how to deal with the allegation and whether or not the school should initiate disciplinary proceedings.

Internal enquiries and suspension

The designated person will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended, pending further police and social services inquiries.

Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries, the school will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be handled sensitively. This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the school must reach a decision based upon the available information. This might suggest that, on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child/young person must remain of paramount importance throughout.

What to do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred

- 1 You must report your concerns immediately to the designated person at your school.

Step-by-step guidance for staff/volunteers on dealing with their earliest concerns is provided on the card 'What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused'. This guidance is produced by the Department of Health and endorsed by the local authority. Copies of the card must be available to every member of staff and volunteer.

The designated person will:

- obtain information from staff/volunteers, children/young people or parents/carers who have child protection concerns and record this information
- assess the information quickly and carefully and ask for further information, as appropriate
- consult with a statutory child protection agency such as the local social services department or the NSPCC to clarify any doubts or worries
- ensure that the parents/carers of the child/young person are contacted as soon as possible, following advice from the social services department
- make a referral to a statutory child protection agency or to the police without delay.

If the school's designated person is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the chair of the management committee, who will refer the allegation to social services.

- 2 Suspicions will not be discussed with anyone other than those named above.
- 3 It is the right of any individual to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies. If, for any reason, you believe that the designated people have not responded appropriately to your concerns, then it is up to you to contact the child protection agencies directly.
- 4 If a child makes a disclosure of abuse:
 - make notes as soon as possible (ideally within one hour of being told)
 - write down exactly what the child/young person has said, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately before you were told (for example, what activity was taking place)

- record dates, times and when you made the record
- keep all your handwritten notes secure
- report your discussion to the designated person as soon as possible
- if the designated person is implicated, you need to report to the second designated person
- if both are implicated, report to social services
- do not discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those nominated above
- the designated person must consider carefully whether or not it is safe for a child/young person to return home to a potentially abusive situation, and, if necessary, they should take immediate action to contact social services in order to discuss putting safety measures into effect.

Allegations of physical injury or neglect

If a child/young person has a symptom of physical injury or neglect, the designated person will:

- contact social services for advice in cases of deliberate injury or concerns about the safety of the child/young person, but they must not inform the parents/carers
- seek emergency medical attention if necessary
- inform the child's/young person's doctor of any suspicions of abuse
- in other circumstances, speak with the parent/carer and suggest that medical help/attention is sought for the child/young person
- if appropriate, encourage the parent/carer to seek help from social services
- if the parent/carer fails to act, seek advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- in the case of real concern, contact social services for advice.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the designated person will:

- contact the social services duty social worker for children and families directly, but must not speak to the parent or to anyone else
- seek advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- collect and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and provide this information to social services, but should not attempt to carry out any investigation into the allegation or suspicion of sexual abuse
- while allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse should normally be reported to the designated person, their absence should not delay referral to social services.

Responding to a child making an allegation of abuse

- It is important not to make promises that you may not be able to keep. Do not say that you will keep confidential what a child/young person is about to tell you, as you may have a duty to share it with others.
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others.
- Stay calm and listen carefully to what the child/young person is saying.
- Allow the child/young person to continue at their own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure the child/young person that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.

- As soon as possible, record in writing what was said, using the child's/young person's own words.
- Make a note of the date, time, any names mentioned and to whom the information was given, and ensure that the record is signed and dated.

Helpful statements to make

- 'I believe you (showing acceptance of what the child/young person says).'
- 'Thank you for telling me.'
- 'It's not your fault.'
- 'I will help you.'

Do not say:

- 'Why didn't you tell anyone before?'
- 'I can't believe it!'
- 'Are you sure that this is true?'
- 'Why? Who? When? Where?'

Never make promises you can't keep.

WALSALL CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES CAN BE VIEWED VIA www.wlscb.org.uk

Support for dealing with the aftermath of abuse

Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children/young people, parents/carers and members of staff/volunteers may need. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The Directory of the British Association for Counselling is available from the British Association for Counselling, 1 Regent Place, Rugby CV21 2PJ, tel: 01788 550 899, fax: 01788 562189.

Appendix 1

Definitions of abuse

These definitions are based on those from *Working together to safeguard children* (Department of Health, Home Office, Department for Education and Employment, 1999).

Physical abuse

- May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, scalding, poisoning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It may also occur when a parent or carer feigns symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII) or Munchausen Syndrome by proxy

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent maltreatment of a child such to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children they are worthless and unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or "making fun" of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capacity, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber 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.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

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 development may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

These four definitions do not minimise other forms of maltreatment.

Note

Recent guidance identifies other sources of stress for children/young people and families, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, the mental illness of a parent/carer or drug and alcohol misuse. These may have a negative impact on a child/young person's health and development and may be noticed by an organisation caring for a child/young person. If it is felt that a child/young person's well-being is adversely affected by any of these situations, the same procedures should be followed.

Recognising and responding to abuse

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place but the possibility should be considered.

Physical signs of abuse

Physical signs of abuse may include:

- any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or games
- unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- cigarette burns
- bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds
- injuries which have not received medical attention
- neglect, undernourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care
- repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse may include:

- fear of parents/carers being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed in front of others – for example, wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- depression
- withdrawn behaviour
- running away from home.

Emotional signs of abuse

Emotional signs of emotional abuse may include:

- a failure to thrive or grow, particularly if a child/young person puts on weight in other circumstances – for example, in hospital or away from their parents/carers
- sudden speech disorders
- persistent tiredness
- development delay, in terms of either physical or emotional progress.

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Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- obsessions or phobias
- sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- inappropriate relationships with other children and/or adults
- being unable to play
- attention-seeking behaviour
- fear of making mistakes
- self-harm
- fear of the parent/carer being approached regarding their behaviour.

Sexual abuse

Physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- pain or itching in the genital/anal area
- bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, such as becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge which is beyond the child's/young person's age or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bed-wetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- a child/young person saying they have secrets that they cannot tell anyone about
- substance or drug abuse
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- not being allowed to have friends (particularly during adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way with adults.

Neglect

Physical signs of neglect may include:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children/young people
- being constantly dirty or smelly
- loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- inappropriate dress for the conditions.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect include:

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- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Appendix 2

Good practice guidelines

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

- always working in an open environment (for example, avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets)
- treating all children/young people equally, and with respect and dignity
- always putting the welfare of each child/young person first
- maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children/young people (for example, it is not appropriate for staff/volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child/young person or to share a room with them)
- building balanced relationships based on mutual trust, empowering children/young people to share in the decision-making process
- making school activities and other off-site activities, fun, enjoyable and safe
- keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance
- involving parents/carers wherever possible – for example, by encouraging them to take responsibility for children/young people in changing rooms
- ensuring that parents/carers, staff/volunteers, coaches or officials work in pairs, if groups have to be supervised in changing rooms
- ensuring that, when mixed groups are taken away, they are always accompanied by a male and a female member of staff/volunteer (but remember that same-gender abuse can also occur)
- ensuring that, at tournaments or residential events, adults do not enter children's/young people's rooms or invite children/young people into their rooms
- being an excellent role model, including not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children/young people
- giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children/young people and not pushing them against their will
- securing written consent from parents/carers for staff to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment
- keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given
- requesting written consent from parents/carers, if it is necessary for staff/volunteers to transport children/young people in their cars.

Practices to be avoided

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the person in charge in the club or of the child/young person's parents – for example, if a child/young person sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or if a parent/carer fails to arrive to pick up a child/young person at the end of a session.

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- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children/young people away from others.
- Avoid being in a situation where you are alone with a child, e.g. taking a child/young person to an event, or dropping them off in your car.

Practices never to be sanctioned

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- share a room with a child/young person
- allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- allow children/young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child/young person, even in fun
- reduce a child/young person to tears as a form of control
- allow allegations made by a child/young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- do things of a personal nature for children/young people or disabled adults that they are able to do for themselves
- invite or allow children/young people to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

Please note

It may sometimes be necessary for staff/volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children/young people, particularly if they are young or disabled. These tasks should be carried out only with the full understanding and consent of parents/carers and of the child/young person involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices, where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing or where there is physical contact – for example, lifting or assisting a child/young person to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

**ALL ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE BY STAFF SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE HEAD/MANAGER/CHAIR OF GOVERNORS AND REFERRED TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER, TONY MCGREGOR
01922 646640**

Appendix 3

Reporting allegations or suspicions of abuse

If you have any concerns about a child/young person being abused, you should inform the designated person named below.

Organisation:

Name:

Job/role:

Address:

.....

..... Postcode:

Important contacts outside the organisation

Local Safeguarding Children Board: 01922 646640

Childrens Services office: 01922 658170

Out of Hours Emergency number: 0845 111 2836

Police station: 0345 113 5000 or 999 in emergency

Local Authority Designated Officer (allegations against staff) 01922 646640 (Tony McGregor)

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Reporting suspected abuse

Confidential recording sheet

Organisation:

Name of person reporting:

Name of child/young person:

Age and date of birth:

Ethnicity:

Religion: First language:

Disability:

Parent's/carer's name(s):

Home address:

.....

Postcode: Tel:

Are you reporting your own concerns or someone else's? Please give details.

.....

.....

.....

Give a brief description of what has prompted the concerns – include date, time and an outline of specific incidents.

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Any physical signs? Behaviour signs? Indirect signs?

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.....

Have you spoken to the child/young person? If so, what was said?

.....

.....

Have you spoken to the parent(s)/carer(s)? If so, what was said?

.....

.....

Has a specific person been alleged to be the abuser? If so, please give details.

.....

Have you consulted anyone else? Please give details.

.....

Name of person reported to:

Date and time of reporting:

Signature of person reporting:

Today's date:

Action taken:

Notes

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Policy agreed on behalf of the management committee

Signed:

Date: