



Home Tree School

Safeguarding Policy – Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



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Introduction

This policy is written in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2023 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. This policy is written for schools/colleges in England only. There is an extension to this policy for those offering accommodation to students as:

- A Residential Special School
- A Children's Home attached to the School
- Post 16 Specialist college and attached accommodation.

The purpose of this policy is to clearly define the difference between Child Protection and Safeguarding. This policy is in place to ensure that all staff including the DSL have clear guidance on how to manage a concern of abuse or harm to a child externally.

Wider Policies support this Child Protection Policy. All are numbered and sit alongside to create the school safeguarding policy.

1. Child Protection Policy
2. The Role of the DSL Policy
3. Child on Child Abuse Policy
4. Filtering and Monitoring Policy
5. Managing Low Level Concerns Policy
6. Absent from Education Policy
7. Schools Safer Recruitment Policy
8. Managing Contextual Risks to Children

Aims of this policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that:

- Staff know the difference between safeguarding and child protection
- Staff know the difference between an allegation and disclosure
- staff know how to identify a child protection concern and,
- know how to respond to an allegation of abuse
- The DSL is clear on their role and can respond and record concerns without delay
- The DSL is clear on a multiagency approach to child protection.

Child Protection and Safeguarding – What’s the difference?

Safeguarding is an overarching, **preventative** action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children’s health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- acting to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It is **responsive** and focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

Abuse or Neglect

If staff believe a child is not their 'usual self' or have reason for concern, they must report this in writing, to the Headteacher. These links show general indicators for the signs of abuse and neglect, **this list is not exhaustive** -

- [Spotting the signs of child abuse | NSPCC](#)
- [Neglect is also Child Abuse: Know All About It | NSPCC](#)

Staff management of allegations/disclosures

Allegation – a claim or assertion that someone has done something illegal or wrong, typically one made without proof.

Disclosure - the act of making something previously unknown, known.

When there is a suspicion a child has been harmed by a person working with them, or a child discloses abuse, staff must ensure this is passed to the right person. This policy will guide staff in how to record and pass information quickly to prevent the child from risk of further harm.

The person who an allegation or concern is first reported to, should treat the matter seriously and demonstrate professional curiosity.

They should not:

- Investigate or ask leading questions
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations
- Promise confidentiality - the person/persons should be advised that the concern will be shared on a 'need to know' basis

They should:

- Make a written record of the information (using where possible, the child's / adult's own words), including the time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, what was said and anyone else present
- Sign and date the written record
- Immediately report the matter to the Headteacher, or deputy in their absence
- Where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation, the information should be reported to the Proprietor via andrew.sutherland@caretech-uk.com

All staff must understand what is an allegation. They must know what to do when they receive an allegation and they must ensure that the child knows the information will be shared. If staff do not feel they have the skills, knowledge or experience to receive an allegation or support a child, they must inform the Headteacher immediately so that additional training can be sourced.

The role of the Headteacher

Upon receipt of a concern, the headteacher must pass the concern to:

- the host Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- If required, the child's Social Worker and, where appropriate, the child's parent/carer
- If the headteacher believes a crime has been committed then the police should also be informed.



- The headteacher must also inform their Regional Director.

The headteacher must ensure that the immediate action is taken to ensure the child is safe. If unsure the headteacher must discuss these actions with the LADO.

The headteacher must ensure that the allegation and actions taken are recorded on BehaviourWatch.

The LADO will inform the manager of next steps and whether an investigation is required. If an internal investigation is required the manager must consult with the Regional Director and C&R Team.

For allegations or disclosures made in Children's Homes attached to the school site, Ofsted must be notified under Regulation 40 [Tell Ofsted about an incident: children's social care notification - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/tell-ofsted-about-an-incident-childrens-social-care-notification). Managers must also complete sections 1, 2 and 3 of the SUI and escalate their concerns.

Timescales for reporting

Immediately

- staff should raise with the headteacher
- Staff ensure that the child is kept safe from immediate danger and risk.
- Police to be called if a crime has been alleged.

At the earliest opportunity/end of the working day

- LADO informed.
- Regional Director informed
- If required HR informed
- SUI completed.

Within 24 hours

- Communication with LADO regarding safeguards required to keep child safe.
- Section 1, 2 AND 3 of SUI completed
- If required (for children's homes) Regulation 40 notification to Ofsted
- Ensure identified actions to keep the child safe have been implemented.

Within 48 hours

- Section 4-6 and 7-8 of SUI completed and e-mailed to SUI@Caretech-uk.com
- Feedback from LADO regarding whether incident is investigated internally or whether a S47 is required.

Within 5 days

- Management Investigation to be completed (if appropriate and no S47)
- SUI Section 12 - 14 completed and sent to SUI@Caretech-uk.com



- Chase all agencies if a S47 investigation is required for dates of meetings and coordinate visitors to the home.
- If required (for children's homes) Update Ofsted via Reg 40 of outcome of allegation.
- E-mail to Head of Quality and Head of Policy of any gaps in staff practice which will lead to a revision of policy.

If a S47 remains ongoing

- Chase agencies every 3-5 days for updates.
- Inform SUI inbox, RD of any significant updates.

If there is no outcome after 30 days

- Headteacher to chase outcome with MASH
- Operations Manager and RD to be informed
- C&R team to be updated.

Upon conclusion of S47

- Ensure that RD and C&R updated with outcomes and lessons learned.
- Staff to update the child's plans including risk assessments of children involved.
- If required (for children's homes) notification to Ofsted to confirm end of S47 and lessons learned.
- E-mail to Head of Quality and Head of Policy of any gaps in staff practice which will lead to a revision of policy.
- If a member of staff has been found guilty of gross misconduct on a safeguarding issue, the manager must inform DBS with the outcome of any disciplinary action.
- If the member of staff leaves their post prior to completion of disciplinary process then the hearing will continue in their absence in line with the disciplinary policy.

Managing concerns or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold

As part our whole school / college approach to safeguarding, our schools / colleges promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. In doing this we aim to ensure:

- identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early
- reduce the risk of abuse, and
- ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school/college are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the school/college.

All concerns must be reported to the headteacher immediately. The headteacher will need basic information to decide on how to escalate, this information will include, the names of the child/children involved, their age, a description of the allegation and any factors which could place the child at further risk.



The headteacher/principal can decide whether this can be managed as a low-level concern or will require a referral to an external agency such as LADO.

Staff must familiarise themselves with local partnership arrangements for their respective area and ensure that they adhere to these. For example, what may be considered a 'low level' concern in one area may constitute a safeguarding concern requiring LADO involvement in another.

External handling of allegations

When the Headteacher / Principal have decided that an allegation is not low-level then they must report without delay to the LADO [Report child abuse to a local council - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/report-child-abuse-to-a-local-council).

Review

This Policy was written on 08 November 2023. A review will be annually as a minimum.

However, subject to a significant safeguarding concern this policy and all other attached policies will be reviewed and monitored as part of a lessons learned review.

Written by:

This policy was written by Matt Nicholls – Head of Policy Children’s Services, it was reviewed by Christina Leath – Group Safeguarding Director. This policy has been reviewed by the DSL of the School and agreed by the head of the Governance Board.