

# WAKEFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOUNDATION

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

### General

The protection of children is the proper concern of everyone in a position to help. Primary responsibility for the care and protection of children rests with their parents or guardians but the safety and protection of children is of paramount importance to all those involved in their education.

The Governors believe that every pupil at a Foundation school should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse which in this policy means any type of neglect, non-accidental physical injury, sexual exploitation or emotional ill-treatment.

The policy and commitment at Wakefield Grammar School Foundation is to take all reasonable measures to safeguard and promote the welfare of each pupil in our care whether that be at a Foundation school or any other location whilst in our care. This is demonstrated in the policy aims below.

This policy is available to parents on request.

### Aims

To meet the commitment above, the aims of the Foundation in terms of child protection are:

- to ensure that we practise safe recruitment by checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and young people. Suitability is checked through mandatory enhanced CRB checks, the taking up of references, appropriate scrutiny of employment history and appropriate questioning at interview. To this end designated staff have received appropriate training in safer recruitment.
- to protect each pupil from any form of abuse, whether from an adult or another pupil;
- to be alert to signs of abuse both in the school and from outside;
- to deal appropriately with every suspicion or complaint of abuse;
- to design and operate procedures which promote this policy and which, so far as possible, minimise the impact upon the innocent of unfounded allegations;
- to support children who have been abused in accordance with their agreed child protection plan, which would be put forward through inter-agency agreement;
- to be alert to the needs of children with medical conditions;

- to operate robust and sensible health and safety procedures;
- to take all practicable steps to ensure that school premises are as secure as circumstances reasonably permit;
- to operate clear and supportive policies on drugs, alcohol and substance misuse;
- to consider and develop procedures to deal with any other safety and welfare issues which may be specific to individual children in our school or in our local area;
- to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in accordance with statutory guidance – ‘Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education’ (2007) and other associated regulations issued by the DCSF.

Every disclosure, complaint or suspicion of an abuse from within or outside the school will be investigated and will, in appropriate circumstances as set below, be referred to an external agency such as the Social Services Department of the local authority (SSD), the Child Protection Unit of the police (CPU) or the NSPCC in accordance with the procedures published by Wakefield Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC).

Children can develop a special and close relationship with school staff, and view them as significant and trustworthy adults. It is not surprising therefore that children if they have been abused, may confide or disclose to a teacher or other member of staff.

School staff are also in a unique position to notice any change in demeanour or circumstances. There is the opportunity to notice injuries, marks or bruises when children are doing P.E., games or swimming which might indicate a child has been abused.

### **Designated Person**

Each school has appointed a senior member of staff (“**Designated Person**”) to be responsible for matters relating to child protection and welfare. There will also be a Deputy Designated Person. The main responsibilities of the Designated Person are:

- to be the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and support staff, external agencies and any other in all matters of child protection;
- to coordinate the child protection procedures in the school;
- to maintain an ongoing training programme for all school employees;
- to monitor the creation, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to child protection;

- to liaise with the child protection duty officer at the SSD.

The Designated Person will:

- advise and act upon all suspicion, belief and evidence of abuse reported to him;
- keep the Head and the Deputy Designated Person informed of all actions, unless the Head is the subject of a complaint;
- liaise with the SSD and other agencies on behalf of the school.
- where a Foundation school falls within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting, the Designated Person will be responsible for liaising with the local statutory children's agencies as appropriate

If the Designated Person is unavailable or is himself or herself the subject of a complaint, his or her duties will be carried out by the Deputy "Designated Person". The Designated Person and Deputy Designated Person have undertaken appropriate training and one of them will attend refresher training every two years.

### **Signs of Abuse**

Whilst no list can be comprehensive and vigilance is always required, the following may be signs of abuse:

- The pupil says he or she has been abused or asks a question which gives rise to that inference.
- There is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a pupil's injury; the injury is unusual in kind or location; there have been a number of injuries; there is a pattern to the injuries.
- The pupil's behaviour stands out from the group as either being extreme model behaviour or extremely challenging behaviour; or there is a sudden change in the pupil's behaviour.
- The pupil asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons.
- The pupil's development is unexpectedly delayed.
- The pupil inexplicably loses or gains weight.
- The pupil appears neglected e.g. dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed.
- The pupil is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by his parents or carers.

### **Responsibilities**

## **The Governors**

- The Governing Body will appoint a Named Governor to liaise with the schools' Designated Person on safeguarding pupils' issues.
- The governors will ensure that the Head has named a Designated Person and a Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding Pupils in each school also and ensure that they are appropriately trained and receive further updating at least every two years.
- The governing body will receive and consider annually a report from the Head on safeguarding pupils in the school.
- The Named Governor will determine appropriate training (in liaison with the Designated Person) for the governing body.
- The governing body will review this policy at least annually and determine any changes to the policy and procedures as appropriate. Any deficiencies or weaknesses identified in the Child Protection arrangements will be remedied without delay.
- The Governing Body will also review the efficiency with which the procedures have been discharged during the year.

## **The Head**

- The Head is responsible for the implementation of the policy and ensuring that the outcomes are monitored. The Head will report annually to the governors on the working of the policy in his/her school.
- The Head will appoint a Designated Person and Deputy Designated Person
- The Head will ensure that all staff including the Head receive training in Child Protection every three years.

## **Employees**

- Every employee is under a legal duty to safeguard the welfare of pupils and to protect pupils from abuse
- All employees whether teaching staff or support staff, including supply teachers and other visiting staff and those supporting school trips, will be informed of the Designated Persons' name(s) and the school's policy for the protection of children in one or more of the following ways.
  - During their first induction to the school
  - Through the staff/personnel handbook
  - Whole staff training or briefing meetings
- Employees must know how to access and implement the procedures, independently if necessary.
- Employees need to be alert to the signs of harm and abuse. They should report any concerns if not immediately, as soon as possible, that day to the

Designated Person or named deputy. If in any doubt they should consult with the Designated Person.

- Employees must ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegation or harm to a pupil.
- Employees must keep a sufficient record of any significant disclosure, complaint or conversation or event
- All relevant national and local procedures will be made available for staff reference and will be located at known points in the schools.

## **Procedures**

### **Reporting to the Designated Person**

Any concerns about pupils must be discussed with the Designated Person (or the named deputy in his/her absence) as soon as possible and at least by the end of the teaching session.

### **Immediate response to the child**

It is vital that any staff actions do not abuse the child further or prejudice further enquiries. The following are guidelines for staff:

- listen to the pupil, if what is said causes shock or distress try not to show it;
- keep an open mind and not take a decision as to whether or not abuse has taken place
- it is acceptable to observe bruises but not to ask a child to remove or adjust their clothing to observe them;
- if a disclosure is made the pace of the conversation should be dictated by the pupil without their being pressed for detail by being asked such questions as “what did they do next?” or “where did they touch you?”. The staff role is to listen not to investigate. Staff must use open questions such as “is there anything else you want to tell me?”
- accept what the pupil says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking questions such as “why didn’t you tell me before?”;
- do acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you this;
- don’t criticise the perpetrator, this may be someone they the pupil is close to;
- **don’t promise confidentiality**, reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing, explain whom needs to be told (the Designated Person) and why. It is important not to make promises that cannot be kept such as “I’ll stay with you all the time” or “it will be alright now”.

### **Recording Information**

Staff should:

- make a written record of the conversation at the time or immediately afterwards; record the date, time, place and context of the disclosure or concern, recording facts and not assumption and interpretation. Notes must be signed and dated;

- observed injuries and bruises should also be recorded;
- note the non-verbal behaviour and the key words in the language used by the pupil (do not translate into “proper terms”);
- pass the record to the Designated Person;
- any evidence (for example scribbled notes, text messages, emails, clothing) must be safeguarded and notified to the designated person;

### **Action by the Designated Person**

Subject to the paramount safety and welfare of the pupil, the Designated Person will consider the following:

- the procedures published by Wakefield Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC). A copy of these procedures is available at each school.
- the nature and seriousness of the suspicion or disclosure. A disclosure involving a serious criminal offence will always be referred to the SSD or the police without further investigation within the school.
- the wishes of the pupil who has disclosed, provided that the pupil is of sufficient understanding and maturity and properly informed. However, there may be times when the situation is so serious that decisions may need to be taken, after all appropriate consultation, that override a pupil’s wishes.
- the wishes of the pupil’s parents, provided they have no interest which is in conflict with the pupil’s best interests and that they are properly informed. Again, it may be necessary, after all appropriate consultation, to override parental wishes in some circumstances. If the Designated Person is concerned that disclosing information to parents would put a child at risk, he will take further advice from the relevant professionals before making a decision to disclose.
- duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable.
- the lawful rights and interests of the school community as a whole, including its employees and its insurers.
- if there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the Designated Person may consult with SSD or other appropriate professionals on a confidential basis without identifying the family. However, as soon as sufficient concern exists that a child may be at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made without delay. If the initial referral is made by telephone, the Designated Person will confirm the referral in writing to SSD promptly. If no response or acknowledgement is received within three working days, the Designated Person will contact Social Services again.
- if there is a pattern of behaviour which may lead to welfare concerns as a result of a period of monitoring of behaviour by the Designated Person in response to concerns raised.

## **Referral Guidelines**

A referral to the SSD or police will not normally be made where:

- the disclosure does not involve a serious criminal offence; and
- a referral would be contrary to the wishes of a pupil who is of sufficient maturity and understanding and properly informed, and contrary also to the wishes of the pupil's parents; and
- the case is one that can be satisfactorily investigated and dealt with under the school's internal procedures, the parents being kept fully informed, as appropriate.

However, if during the course of the internal procedures, it appears that the situation is more serious, the Designated Person will again consider whether a referral should be made.

## **External Agencies**

Whether or not the school decides to refer a particular complaint to the SSD or the police, the parents and pupil will be informed in writing of their right to make their own complaint or referral to the Social Services Department or the Child Protection Unit of the police and will be provided with contact names, addresses and telephone numbers, as appropriate.

## **Allegations Against Staff**

The Foundation has procedures for dealing with allegations against staff (and volunteers who work with children) that aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded allegations.

Suspension will not be an automatic response to an allegation. Full consideration will be given to all options, subject to the need to ensure:

- the safety and welfare of the pupils or pupil concerns; and
- the need for a full and fair investigation.

In the event of an allegation against a member of staff, including the Head, it should be reported to the Designated Person as noted in the Procedures above, unless the allegation is against the Designated Person in which case it should be reported to the Deputy Designated Person.

The Designated Person or Deputy Designated Person should then report the allegation to the Head who will consider the facts before deciding whether the member of staff should be suspended pending further investigation. If the allegation is against the Head then the Designated Person should inform the Chair of the Governing Body

who will make the decision whether to suspend the Head pending further investigation.

### **Allegations Against Pupils**

A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the school during the investigation and the Foundation's Behaviour and Discipline policy will apply.

### **Suspected Harm From Outside The School**

A member of staff who suspects that a pupil is suffering harm from outside the school should seek information from the child with tact and sympathy using "open" and not leading questions. A sufficient record should be made of the conversation and he or she should refer the matter to the Designated Person for advice.

### **Confidentiality**

Staff have the professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly investigating agencies. If a pupil confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child sensitively that he/she has a responsibility to refer the matter to the Designated Person for the child's own sake. At the same time, the child should be reassured that the matter will be only be disclosed to the Designated Person, who will then decide on appropriate action. Staff who receive the information about children and families in the course of their work should have the information only within professional context. Child protection records should be kept securely locked.

Personal information about all pupils and their families is regarded by those who work in this school as confidential. All staff will aim to maintain this confidentiality. All records relating to child protection incidents will be maintained by the Designated Person and only shared as is consistent with the protection of children.

### **Parents**

- Parents play an important role in protecting their children from abuse. The Foundation is required to consider the safety of the pupil and should a concern arise professional advice will be sought prior to contacting parents.
- The Foundation will work with parents to support the needs of their child.
- The Foundation aims to help parents understand that the Foundation's schools, like all others, have a responsibility for the welfare of all pupils and have a duty to refer cases to the Social Services in the interests of the child.

### **Individuals leaving the Foundation**

The Foundation will report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority, within one month of leaving the Foundation, 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.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The Designated Person will monitor the working of the policy within each school and will report as required to the Head.

The Head will report to the Foundation Governors annually on the working of the policy.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Spokesman of the Governors**

## **Appendix 1**

### **Indicators of Abuse and Neglect**

#### **Injuries**

Bruises or abrasions especially about the feet, head, genitals or other parts of the body where they would not normally be expected to occur given the age of the child.  
Damage or injury to the mouth of a child e.g. bruises or cut lips.

Bite marks.

Burns and/or scalds especially small circular burns (often cigarette burns).

Bilateral injuries such as two black eyes – this rarely occurs accidentally.

Fractures in very young children.

Poisoning and other misuse of drugs

Repeated minor injuries and/or self harming

#### **Other signs include:**

Lethargy.

Withdrawal.

Wariness.

Passivity.

Frozen awareness.

An unkempt, dirty appearance.

Developmental retardation without a medical condition.

Over-solicitous behaviour towards adults.

Failure to thrive or grow without an underlying medical condition.