



Safeguarding Children Policy

(including Child Protection)

Introduction

Fort Royal School fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school.

There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children;
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe;
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse;
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan;
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise 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 communicate, and are listened to;
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried and that adults are observant to any significant changes in demeanour;
- Include opportunities in the PSHE and ICT curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

Procedures

We will follow the procedures set out by the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE).

The school will:

- Ensure it has a Senior Designated Person (SDP) who has received appropriate training and support for this role;
- Ensure it has a member of staff who will act in the absence of the SDP;
- Ensure it has a nominated governor responsible for safeguarding children;
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and the governing body knows the name of the SDP and their role;
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the SDP;
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its responsibilities;

- Notify Children's Services Access Centre if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan;
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including attendance at strategy meetings, initial and review child protection conferences, core group and child in need review meetings;
- 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;
- Ensure that the duty of care towards its pupils and staff is promoted by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour and assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice;
- Be aware of and follow procedures set out by Children's Services and the WSCB where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer;
- Ensure safer recruitment practices are always followed.

Training

When staff join our school they will be informed of the safeguarding children arrangements in place. They will be given a copy of this policy and told who the SDP is and who acts in their absence.

The induction programme will include basic child protection information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, when and how to record a concern about the welfare of a child.

All volunteers, supply staff and regular visitors to our school will be told where our policy is kept, given the name of the SDP and informed of the school's procedures in reporting concerns.

All staff will receive training in child protection and safe working practice, updated every three years and with an emphasis on children with learning and physical disabilities.

Staff with specific responsibility for safeguarding children will receive inter-agency training at a level suitable to their role and responsibilities, updated every two years.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body will nominate a member to be responsible for Safeguarding Children and liaise with the SDP in matters relating to Safeguarding. It will ensure that Safeguarding Policies and procedures are in place, available to parents and reviewed annually.

The Headteacher will ensure that the Safeguarding Policies and procedures are fully implemented and followed by all staff and that sufficient resources are allocated to enable the SDP and other staff to discharge their responsibilities with regard to Safeguarding.

The SDP will co-ordinate action on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within the school ensuring that all staff, volunteers and visitors to the school know who the SDP is and who acts in his/her absence, that they are aware of their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and of their responsibility to report and record any concerns.

Managing a Disclosure

Teachers and other staff in schools are in a unique position to observe children's behaviour over time and often develop close and trusting relationships with pupils. If a child discloses directly to a member of staff, the following procedures will be followed:

- Listen carefully to what is said.
- Ask only open questions such as:
 - 'Tell me what happened.'
 - 'Please explain what you mean when you say
 - 'Can you describe the person?' or 'Can you describe the place?'
- Do not ask questions which may be considered to suggest what might have happened, or who has perpetrated the abuse, e.g. 'Did your Dad hit you?'
- Do not force the child to repeat what he/she said in front of another person.
- Do not begin an investigation.
- Report immediately to the SDP and complete a written record, using the child's words as far as possible.
- Any significant change in demeanour will be reported to the SDP

Information Sharing & Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential.

The Headteacher or SDP will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

Record Keeping

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse, will make notes as soon as possible (within the hour, if possible) writing down exactly what was said, using the child's own words as far as possible, or what has been noticed. All notes should be timed, dated and signed, with name printed alongside the signature. Concerns should be recorded using the school's safeguarding children recording system.

All records of a child protection nature should be passed to the SDP including case conference or core group minutes and written records of any concerns.

Supporting Children

We recognise 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 Services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children;
- The use of Early Intervention Services, including the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), when appropriate;
- Notifying Children's Services immediately there is a significant concern;
- Providing continuing support to a pupil about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school.

Supporting Staff

We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the SDP and to seek further support as appropriate.

In order to reduce the risk of allegations being made against staff, and ensure that staff are competent, confident and safe to work with children, they will be made aware of safer working practice guidance and will be given opportunities in training to develop their understanding of what constitutes safe and unsafe behaviour.

Safer Recruitment and Selection of Staff

The school has a written recruitment and selection policy statement and procedures linking explicitly to this policy. The statement is included in all job advertisements, publicity material, recruitment websites, and candidate information packs.

The recruitment process is robust in seeking to establish the commitment of candidates to support the school's measures to safeguard children and to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children or are otherwise unsuited to work with them.

Allegations against staff

We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff.

If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher, unless the allegation concerns the Headteacher, in which case the Chair of Governors will be informed immediately.

The Headteacher (or Chair of Governors) on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the LA's Senior Adviser for Safeguarding Children in Education.

The school will follow the LA procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which is readily available in the school.

Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

Complaints or Concerns expressed by Pupils, Parents, Staff or Volunteers

We recognise that closely observing and listening to children is an important and essential part of safeguarding them against abuse and neglect. To this end any expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual child will be listened to and acted upon in order to safeguard his/her welfare.

We will also seek to ensure that the child or adult who makes a complaint is informed not only about the action the school will take but also the length of time that will be required to resolve the complaint. The school will also endeavour to keep the child or adult regularly informed as to the progress of his/her complaint.

Positive Physical Intervention

Our policy on positive handling is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury or damage to property.

We understand that physical intervention of a nature that causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under management of allegations or disciplinary procedures.

Abuse of Position of Trust

We recognise that as adults working in the school, we are in a relationship of trust with the pupils in our care and acknowledge that it is a criminal offence to abuse that trust.

We acknowledge that the principle of equality embedded in the legislation of the Sexual Offenders Act 2003 applies irrespective of sexual orientation: neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable within a position of trust.

We recognise that the legislation is intended to protect young people in education who are over the age of consent but under 18 years of age.

Racist Incidents

Our policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under safeguarding children procedures.

Bullying

Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under safeguarding children procedures.

E-safety

Our Acceptable Use policy recognises that internet safety is a whole school responsibility (staff, pupils, parents).

Children and young people may expose themselves to danger, whether knowingly or unknowingly, when using the internet and other technologies. Additionally, some young people may find themselves involved in activities which are inappropriate or possibly illegal.

We therefore recognise our responsibility to educate our pupils, teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies.

Health & Safety

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the safeguarding of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

Safe Environment

The school undertakes appropriate risk assessments and checks in respect of all equipment and of the building and grounds in line with local and national guidance and regulations concerning health and safety.

The school has adequate security arrangements in place in respect of the use of its grounds and buildings by visitors both in and out of school hours.

Other Relevant Policies

The Governing Body's legal responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of children goes beyond basic child protection procedures.

The duty is now to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activity and functions. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other policies and guidelines, for instance:

- Complaints Procedure
- Behaviour Management including Positive Handling
- Anti-Bullying
- Trips and visits
- Medications Procedure
- Health and Safety
- Racial Equality
- Sex and Relationships Education
- Equal Opportunities
- E-safety

The above list is not exhaustive but when undertaking development or planning of any kind the school will need to consider safeguarding matters.

Contacts

Internal

[Judith Gudgeon](#)

Senior Designated Person for Child Protection

[Jane Long](#)

Person who acts in the absence of the Senior Designated Person

[Helen Sears](#)

Governor responsible for safeguarding children

External

Senior Adviser for Safeguarding Children in Education	01905 728902
Children's Services Access Centre	01905 768054
Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team	01905 768020
Police Public Protection Unit:	
24hrs non-emergency	0300 333 3000
Emergency	999
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000

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