



Child Protection Policy

Policy Statement

Everyone employed by Tettenhall College has a responsibility in relation to child protection. In most cases this will be the referral of concerns to his/her line manager. In day-to-day contact with children at risk, staff have an opportunity to note concerns and to meet with parents and other associated adults.

Increasingly, schools are expected to work with, support and sometimes lead different agencies to enable the most appropriate form of intervention to take place. This policy aims to outline the role that the school will have, the procedures that staff should take and guidance on issues related to child protection generally. It is not exhaustive. All staff should use as a rule of thumb the needs and safety of the child as being at the centre of any decision they make.

It is necessary for the School to have specific guidelines for staff so that our Child Protection policy is understood and followed by all staff members. It should be pointed out that the guidelines are drawn up with the welfare of the children in mind, but also with the recognition that members of staff have legal responsibilities under the Children Act and the five outcomes of 'Every Child Matters'. Tettenhall is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Colleagues are reminded that members of staff could possibly be involved in legal action if matters of this nature are ignored or not dealt with in the appropriate matter. However, staff who report such matters in good faith will not be subject to disciplinary action if allegations are subsequently discovered to be unfounded.

The Deputy Head is the Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO) with the Children's Services (Wolverhampton Child Services Board - WCSB) Department/DCSF, and this includes a principal responsibility within the school for Child Protection. The designated CPLO and Boarding House Line Manager, the Deputy Head, continues to attend bi-annual updates from national conferences and the Local Safeguarding Children Board - formally Social Services - (WCSB) annual updates and other relevant NSPCC courses. All staff, teaching and non-teaching are given some child protection training every 2-3 years; and the CPLO bi-annually outlines child protection policies and updates all non-teaching staff. He is assisted in the Early aspects of child protection by the designated officer, Sarah Fisher.

The Aims of the Policy

The aims of this policy are:

- to raise awareness of individual responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse
- to provide a systematic means of monitoring, recording and reporting of concerns and cases
- to provide guidance on recognising and dealing with suspected child abuse
- to provide a framework for inter-agency communication and effective liaison
- to identify strategies and interventions available to support children at risk.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Physical, emotional and sexual abuse or neglect of children does occur, and we need to be watchful for signs of such abuse. It would be easy to think that such things could not happen to children at Tettenhall College, but any school could be deluding itself as a number of institutions have recently found out to their cost.

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Child abuse occurs throughout society and affects children of all ages. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. A child may be abused or neglected by parents, co-habitees, step-parents, substitute parents, siblings, relatives, friends, neighbours and strangers. A child may be abused at home, at school, in an institutional or community setting and may be subject to more than one type of abuse.

a. Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation may be described as fabricated or induced illness by carer.

b. Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve 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 ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

c. **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or in watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

d. **Neglect**

Neglect is 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. It 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.

PROCEDURE

Signs to watch out for

These may include:

- a) bruising or markings that cannot be accounted for by a known physical injury, or participation in games, or as the result of a child's normal activity
- b) signs of depression
- c) signs of unpredictable mood swings
- d) being withdrawn
- e) unusual seeking of attention
- f) deterioration in appearance and personal hygiene

For more extensive information see the WCSB Policy and Procedures information on the S: Drive)

What to do if you suspect a child is being abused or neglected.

If any member of staff suspects that a child is being abused or neglected, the most important point is that the matter should not be kept to oneself or dealt with purely personally:

- a) Recording should be factual, non-emotive and non-judgmental and on the relevant 'Incident Record' form, located on the S: Drive (S:\child protection\school policies).
N.B. An allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to criminal investigation, so don't do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as ask a child leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegations of abuse.
- b) Ensure that the child is not in need of immediate medical attention.
- c) Discuss the matter immediately with either the Deputy Head or the Headmaster.
- d) If, as a result of that discussion, the Headmaster and Deputy Head think the matter should be taken further, they will arrange to alert the WCSB (Head of Safeguarding Officer) within 24 hours of any meeting having occurred and then in writing within 48 hours. If any allegations were to be made against staff then the

Disciplinary Procedure would be followed. If any member of staff is dismissed for a child protection incident the ISA will be informed.

In the boarding houses if any allegations were to be made about a live-in house tutor or the Housemaster/mistress, then arrangements to provide alternative accommodation away from the child concerned would be made, pending any investigation of a child protection nature. The school would also ensure that all effective links are developed with relevant agencies and co-operation, as required, with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.

- e) If neither the Headmaster nor Deputy Head is willing to take the matter further, then the member of staff is perfectly entitled to contact the WCSB personally (01902 555392).
- f) If, however, it is decided by all not to take the matter further, then a report must be produced indicating the nature of the original concern and the reason why it was not taken further.

How to react if you are told of abuse or neglect.

If a child tells a staff member of actual abuse or neglect:

- a) Reassure the child that he/she is doing the right thing to inform a staff member about it and he/she will be protected and helped.
- b) Do not make any unwise promises of confidentiality.
- c) Explain that in order to help you need to share the information you are being given with people who know how to help.
- d) Allow the child to lead the discussion if a disclosure is made, but do not press for details by asking questions, eg “what did they do next?”
- e) Take notes of the conversation. Remember the welfare of the child is of paramount importance.
- f) If a child withdraws the allegations at this point, you must still take further action.
- g) Staff members must not ignore the matter or keep the matter to themselves; they must not attempt to make a physical examination of the child or to be involved in detailed cross-examination. The child’s family must not be contacted, but instead the matter must be passed on immediately to the Deputy Head Master or the Headmaster who must then inform the WCSB.

Procedures for Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

The School policy is that brief notes should be kept at the time of the incident or immediately after with the subsequent completion of a critical incident sheet. Records may be used in legal proceedings and must be kept accurate and secure. All records should be copied to the designated person and should include factual information rather than assumption or interpretation. The child's own language should be used to quote rather than a translation.

Records may be used at a later date to support a referral to an external agency.

Identification of injury from abuse.

If a child has sustained an injury which might be the result of abuse by the parents/guardians etc. a staff member must:

- a) Obtain immediate medical help
- b) Not contact parents or guardians personally
- c) Inform the Deputy Head and the Headmaster who will then inform WCSB.

If all are in agreement that parents should be contacted by the School, this is the responsibility of the Headmaster or the Deputy Head.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Designated Person

The designated person is the Deputy Head Teacher who also liaises with the designated EYFS co-ordinator.

The designated person will:

- co-ordinate action within the school and liaise with social care and other agencies over cases of abuse and suspected abuse
- act as a source of advice within the school
- ensure that staff are familiar with the school policy and procedure
- make child protection referrals, recording and reporting accordingly
- liaise with agencies about individual cases
- organise training on child protection within school with the CPD co-ordinator
- ensure that appropriate strategies for recording and reporting incidents are kept within school
- provide appropriate feedback to members of staff as and when

2. The Governing Body

The governing body and proprietor will:

- be responsible for undertaking reviews of the procedures that apply to child protection
- be responsible for receiving and discussing updates provided by the designated person as part of the Head's report.

3. School Staff

School staff should:

- be alert to the signs of abuse as detailed in this policy
- report any concerns immediately, where possible to the designated teacher or his/her deputy
- consult with the designated teacher if in any doubt as to how to proceed
- follow the advice given in this policy in relation to how to handle disclosures.

Partnerships with Parents

It is important that the school has an established approach to working with parents. Parents' and children's need for privacy should be respected. However, the priority is the needs of the child and effective liaison is crucial for this.

It should be recognised that families from different backgrounds and cultures will have different approaches to child-rearing. These differences should be acknowledged and respected provided they do not place the child at risk as defined later in this policy.

Where possible school staff should work with and share information with parents. Permission for liaison and information sharing with outside agencies should be sought unless it places the child at risk. In these cases it is preferable to seek advice from social care or make a child protection referral.

INTER AGENCY LIAISON

Social Care Meetings

At times school staff will be called to participate in meetings organised and chaired by social care. These might include:

- register reviews
- case conferences
- professionals' meetings in which representative professionals from different agencies are asked to meet to discuss children and their families with a view to providing support or making recommendations in terms of next stages of involvement
- core group meetings in which a “core” group of professionals associated with the family are asked to meet to review the progress of actions decided at case conferences and register reviews.

At these meetings, representatives, normally the Head or the designated CPLO, from the school should be ready to report back providing information about

- attendance and punctuality
- academic achievement
- child's behaviour and attitude
- relationships with peer group and social skills generally
- child's appearance and readiness for school
- contact with parents/carers
- any specific incidents that need reporting.

Prior to the meeting, teachers and other adults working closely with the child will be asked for their comments. Following the meeting feedback will be given and staff brought up-to-date with any actions that are needed.

CARE REGISTER AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Where children are on the child protection register and leave one school for another, the designated teacher must inform the receiving school and the key worker. If the child leaves the school with no receiving school, details should be passed to the principal education social worker (ESW).

Education staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with the investigative agencies. Members of staff should not promise confidentiality but can let the child know that only those who need to know will be informed and always for the child's own sake.

Staff should be careful in subsequent discussions and ensure that information is only given to the appropriate person. All staff should be kept aware of issues relating to confidentiality and the status of information they may hold.

Members of staff, other than the designated member and those involved closely, should only have enough details in order to help them to act sensitively and appropriately to a pupil. Sensitive information regarding pastoral issues and for children on the child protection register is kept separately in a folder in the closed section of the office. Discretion should be used when talking about the personal and changing circumstances of children, e.g. when a child goes into care.

Supporting Children at Risk

For children at risk, school may be the one stable place from which they can expect security and reassurance. It is not only about being alert to potential abuse but providing the support to help children through difficult times. Providing them with the coping skills that can help avoid situations arising and deal with the emotional difficulties afterwards if they do.

The Personal Education Plan

Children who are “looked after” will have their own personal education plan (PEP). The PEP is part of the care plan. It is a record of what needs to happen in order to enable the young person to “fulfil their potential”. It should reflect other education plans such as IEPs.

Support in School

All class teachers and year group leaders are responsible, in conjunction with other school staff, for the pastoral needs of the children in their care. This includes maintaining opportunity for children to share their concerns and follow the guidance in this document. Care should always be taken in regard to the discussion of sensitive issues and advice should be sought where there are concerns.

Within the curriculum there will also be opportunities to discuss issues which some children might find sensitive. Care should be taken particularly in relation to discussion about families and their make-up. Assumptions about members of families and the presence of both parents should be avoided both in discussion and the presentation of materials. During health and safety and sex education lessons, staff should be alert to the fact that some children will have very different experiences and may find content at odds with their own experiences. Staff should make themselves familiar with the background of the children in their care in order to avoid distress.

Out of term time child protection statement for Nursery and Holiday Clubs.

The Holiday Club and Nursery are open throughout the holidays in the Drive School and the staff are employed all year round to ensure consistency for our parents and their children. In the event of a child protection issue developing the staff will continue to follow the procedure in the CP policy above and contact the CPLO or the Headmaster on the private numbers provided or through the Bursar's office. However, in the event of an issue of concern arising and the designated CPLO the Headmaster or Bursar not available, staff should initially try to contact Sarah Fisher (Designated EYFS Child Protection co-ordinator and Deputy Head of the Drive School) or secondly Hilary Jones (Nursery Manager or Allison Highfield (Kindergarten Manager). In the unlikely event of any of the above not being contactable the member of staff should contact WCSB direct. The relevant contact numbers for WCSB can be found on the notice boards in the Nursery and the Deputy Head's office, along with contact numbers for (CPLO) and Senior staff during the holiday period.

Safer Recruitment

“Tettenhall College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.”

At Tettenhall College we make decisions of suitability using evidence from:

- references
- an application form which outlines their full employment history and qualifications
- interviews
- identity checks
- any other checks undertaken, for example medical suitability

To prevent ‘Unsuitable People Working with Children’ at the School we follow the legislative requirements for safer recruitment. There are also three processes in place to prevent unsuitable people from working with children and young persons:

- a) Pre-appointment checks and the follow up of an individual’s referees stated in any application;
- b) Criminal Records Bureau checks; and
- c) Arrangements for reporting individuals to the Secretary of State on the grounds of misconduct under the Vetting and Barring scheme.

Also in any interview, one of the panel will be trained as a result of completing the relevant on-line or face to face training prescribed by the DCSF and approved by NCLS. It has been completed by the Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster and Bursar.