

## Heckmondwike Grammar School

**Policy:** Child Protection Policy and Procedures

**Status:** Statutory

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## HECKMONDWIKE GRAMMAR SCHOOL ACADEMY TRUST

### CHILD PROTECTION POLICY & PROCEDURES

#### RATIONALE

Safeguarding the wellbeing of our students is the first priority at Heckmondwike Grammar School. This Child Protection Policy forms an essential part of our Safeguarding Policy Portfolio and demonstrates our commitment to ensure that our students feel safe and supported in our school.

The school seeks to provide an environment in which children feel safe and in which the atmosphere is one of trust, where they can be successful learners and reach their potential academically, socially, physically and emotionally. In doing this, the school will strive to enable children to feel confident about sharing their concerns on any issues. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that students receive effective support, protection and justice. The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and governors and are consistent with those of Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Board (KSCB) as well as the guidance provided in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018).

#### Policy aims

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to child protection to students, parents and other partners
- To ensure consistent good practice
- To contribute to the school's safeguarding portfolio

#### Terminology

- **Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of students refers to the process of protecting students from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that students grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and undertaking that role so as to enable those students to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.
- **Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to protect students who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.
- **Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.
- **Child** refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday.
- **Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

## The Role of the school

- Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school.
- The school recognises its duty to keep up to date with Child Protection issues and statutory requirements and to develop a practical policy which is clear to all staff, parents and pupils.
- The school will work within the framework provided by the Local Authority Safeguarding Policy and will report suspected cases of child abuse to Social Care / Kirklees Safeguarding Children Board and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigations.
- In line with statutory requirements, the school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for child protection. Currently this role is held by Simon Taylor (Assistant Head KS4). There are two deputy designated safeguarding staff who have received the training required and can deputise should the DSL be unavailable. These are currently Jeremy Barnett (Assistant Head KS3) and Helen Naylor (Assistant Head – Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form). Lindsey Halliday – Sixth form pastoral lead is currently deputising for Helen Naylor for the duration of Mrs Naylor's maternity leave.

## The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

- To be conversant with the Kirklees Local Authority Guidelines and Safeguarding Board advice and other related policies.
- To attend appropriate training provided by the Kirklees Safeguarding Board and other external providers as appropriate (updated every two years) to ensure that he has understanding of KSCB procedures and current practice/legislation in safeguarding and child protection.
- To be available to all staff of the school for consultation on child protection concerns.
- To compile a record of pupils in the school who require a Child Protection Plan and to keep this updated as notification is received. To liaise with relevant external professionals in ensuring that children with plans are monitored.
- Where required, to take part in child protection conferences or reviews and/or to provide reports to the reviews.
- To inform the Social Services' Child Protection Co-ordinator in writing when a child with a plan moves to another school and to inform the new school of the child's current situation.
- To work with the HR Director to identify and provide appropriate In-Service training in line with national requirements.

- To make sure all members of staff are aware of the role they and the designated leads have in child protection matters.
- To ensure that policy and procedures for child protection are reviewed and updated annually.
- To ensure the Deputy Designated Leads (JCB and HLN/LHY) are kept informed as appropriate in order that they might deputise for him in his absence.
- To liaise with the nominated Safeguarding governor to ensure the school meets statutory guidance.
- To ensure that temporary staff (including supply and ITT students), volunteers and visitors understand their role and responsibilities.
- To ensure that staff induction meets safeguarding requirements.
- To provide advice and guidance to parents as required and ensure that they have access to relevant HGS safeguarding policies through our website and receive hard copies on request.

### **The Role of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead**

- The deputy safeguarding leads are appropriately trained and are able to carry out those functions necessary to ensure the on-going safety and protection of students. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the deputy/ies will assume all of the functions above.

### **The Role of the Headteacher**

- To ensure that the commitment to Safeguarding is high profile in the strategic direction of the school.
- To ensure that the child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff.
- To ensure sufficient time and resources are allocated to enable the Designated Lead(s) to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of students and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings.
- To ensure that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the school whistleblowing procedures.
- To ensure that student safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.

### **The role of the link governor for safeguarding**

- To meet regularly with and support the work of the DSL.
- To ensure that the safeguarding and child protection policies are being followed in practice and to be involved in any policy review.
- To report back to the governing body to facilitate scrutiny and impact of safeguarding and to ensure compliance with statutory duties.

## Procedures for sharing concerns

- If a member of staff has any concerns about a child he or she should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or her deputies, or the Headteacher/Deputy Head if the matter is urgent and a designated safeguarding person is not available.
- If a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that person should not try to make a judgement about whether the disclosure is true or false but should listen with concern; not asking leading questions, and then report the discussion to the designated person. They must document the discussion and keep it safe, attaching a copy of any notes taken to the referral form. They must report the conversation to the designated person using the Student Safeguarding Concern referral form and, where possible, in person.

*Members of staff should be aware of the dangers involved in promising confidentiality. What staff are able to promise is that **the child's interests will be safeguarded**. Staff should refer to guidance from SAT if unsure.*

## Procedures for making referrals

- The designated lead will be responsible for reporting allegations, disclosures or suspicions/concerns to Social Care. In his absence, the deputy designated lead(s) will refer to the Headteacher in the first instance and may then be responsible for reporting to Social Services in his absence.
- The school has a pro-forma for recording details of a referral. This will be used to keep a record of referrals. All referrals will also be logged on CPOMS and any records scanned and attached to the incident file.
- Formal and informal contacts with the Kirklees Safeguarding Children Board will assist this procedure and help determine whether a case needs referral or not, i.e. a S.17 (Child in Need) or S.47 a Child Protection Investigation for a child in danger of "Significant Harm" [Ref. Children Act 1989].

## Procedures regarding record-keeping

- The designated lead is responsible for ensuring that records referring to child protection issues are kept separately from pupils' normal school records in a locked filing cabinet.
- The record of pupils with a Child Protection Plan will be kept in the DSL's room, though this does not exclude staff being made aware of pupils who have a Plan where this is appropriate.

## Abuse of trust

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards students is unacceptable and that their conduct towards students must be beyond reproach.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a student under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that student is over the age of consent.

### **Students who may be particularly vulnerable**

Some students may have an increased risk of abuse and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions, and child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge student's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances.

Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and in order to ensure that all of our students receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to students who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs
- young carers
- living in a domestic abuse situation
- affected by parental substance misuse
- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and/or maltreatment (including Female Genital Mutilation) on the grounds of race, culture, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage or radicalisation.

### **Confidentiality and sharing information**

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the student and staff involved, but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, his deputies, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with GDPR 2018 principles. Information is:

- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept no longer than necessary
- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- secure

Confidential Incident/Referral Forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort should be made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen.

Child protection information will be stored separately from the student's school file (in a locked filing cabinet in the DSL's office) and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR which means that students and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a student or parent to see child protection records, they should refer the request to the Headteacher.

GDPR does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children.

The school's policy on confidentiality and information-sharing is available to parents and students on request.

### **Support for those involved in a child protection issue**

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. We will support students and their families and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact. Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a student, separate link people will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest. (See Managing Allegations policy)
- responding sympathetically to any request from students or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety

- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support, including referral to Occupational Health where appropriate
- following the procedures laid down in our whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- co-operating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

### **In service-training**

There are many issues surrounding child protection of which staff need to be aware. SAT will undertake to help raise staff awareness in the following ways:

- Inform **ALL** staff of their responsibilities in terms of child protection.
- Ensure all new staff are conversant with the Kirklees framework and the school policies.
- Provide reading material for all staff and after school discussion sessions for those who wish to explore the issues involved.
- Ensure all staff have read the child protection and safeguarding policies and signed to confirm it.
- Work with the Inset Co-ordinator to look for appropriate staff Inset from outside agencies.
- SAT will also attend follow-up courses as they become available to keep up to date with current requirements and practice.

### **Inset for staff will include a look at the following issues:**

What is Child Abuse?

How to recognise the signs

What to do and what to say when a child makes a disclosure

Impact of abuse

Allegations made against a member of staff

Confidentiality

Online / E-safety

Safeguarding – wider understanding

Risk Assessments

Child Protection Conferences and Core Groups

Safer recruitment is also concerned with Child Protection – Appendix 1 (attached) is the overview document for key steps to safeguarding in relation to recruitment processes at HGS.

## Appendix 1

### **Steps to Safeguarding in the Recruitment Process at HGS**

Statement of intent is on all recruitment advertisements providing the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

A HGS Application Form must be completed in full by any candidate applying for a post.

A disclosure is included on the HGS Application Form asking for candidates to declare any convictions, cautions or bind-overs.

The Application Form also makes candidates aware that an enhanced DBS check is completed before taking up employment.

A person specification, job description and further particulars for the post are made available for each vacancy, within these materials it reinforces that an essential criterion for the post is suitability to work with children and the DBS check is evidence which would confirm this.

The Recruitment Policy is publicly displayed on the HGS website and available in the Staff Handbook for all staff to view.

References are requested for short-listed candidates, one being their most recent employer. One question specifically asks of their suitability to work with children.

When short-listing the panel identify any gaps / anomalies / discrepancies in the candidates history so that this can be scrutinised at the interview.

When candidates are invited to interview they are asked to bring photographic ID, proof of address and Qualification certificates (originals). The invitation letter which candidates receive makes them aware again, that a DBS check would be carried out if they are successful. This documentation is verified at interview and copies are taken.

At least one member of the selection panel has completed accredited Safer Recruitment Training.

At least one question in interview asks candidates a question about safeguarding, a few examples include:

- (1) What motivates you to work with young people?
- (2) Sixth formers and staff can often be very similar in age and share common interests, where should teachers draw the line in terms of their relationships with sixth formers?
- (3) How can you contribute to making the school safe for students?
- (4) What advice would you give to a colleague about helping students with faltering progress in one to one sessions after school?

The offer letter for the successful candidate explains that the post is conditional until the usual safeguarding checks take place.

An enhanced DBS and List 99 is carried out before employment is taken up and they are checked on the Employer Access checking service on the DfE website.