



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

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This policy is due for review on 16/01/24

Key contacts

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.
- 1.2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as
 - Protecting children from maltreatment
 - Preventing impairment of children's health or development
 - Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - Taking action to enable children to have the best outcomes
- 1.3. Child protection is the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- 1.4. All staff, but especially the DSL will consider the context within which incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

2 OUR ETHOS

- 2.1. We believe that our organisation should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, emotional and moral development of the individual child.
- 2.2. We recognise the importance of providing an environment that will help children feel safe and respected. We recognise the importance of enabling children to talk openly and to feel confident that they will be listened to.
- 2.3. We recognise that all adults within the organisation, including permanent and temporary staff and volunteers have a full and active part to play in protecting children.

3 SCOPE

- 3.1. In line with the law, this policy defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 years.
- 3.2. This policy applies to all members of staff, including all permanent, temporary and support staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and external service or activity providers.

4 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- 4.1. This policy and the accompanying procedure have been developed in accordance with the following statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures:
 - *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children, July 2018*
 - *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2019*
 - *Pan-Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures*
 - *Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, July 2018*

5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 The organisations lead person with overall responsibility for child protection and safeguarding is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL is Stephen Mowat. To ensure that there is appropriate cover for this role at all times we also have a deputy DSL, they are: Alasdair Davies. The DSL's responsibilities are described in Appendix A.
- 5.2 All staff members, volunteers and external providers know how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse, how to respond to pupils who disclose abuse and what to do if they are concerned about a child.

6 SUPPORTING CHILDREN

- 6.1 Our organisation will support all pupils by:
- ensuring education on online safety, enabling children and parents to learn about the risks of new technologies and social media and to use these responsibly;
 - ensuring that children stay safe, recognise when they do not feel safe and identify who they might or can talk to;
 - providing pupils with a number of appropriate adults to approach if they are in difficulties;
 - encouraging development of self-esteem and self-assertiveness while not condoning aggression or bullying;
 - liaising and working together with other support services and those agencies involved in safeguarding children;
 - monitoring children who have been identified as having welfare or safeguarding concerns and providing appropriate support.
 - ensuring that all staff are aware of the early help process, and understand their role in it, including acting as the lead professional where appropriate.
 - ensuring that all staff understand the additional safeguarding vulnerabilities for certain groups of children or characteristics, and how to address them.
- 6.2 Additional vulnerabilities and characteristics can include:
- Looked after children
 - Previously looked after children
 - Care leavers
 - Children with special educational needs or disabilities
 - Young carers
 - Children showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
 - Children frequently go missing from care or from home
 - Children misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
 - Children at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
 - Children in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse
 - Children who have returned home to their family from care;
 - Children showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect;
 - Children at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
 - Privately fostered children
- 6.3 Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges and additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

To address these additional challenges our organisation will ensure that these children receive additional monitoring and pastoral support.

7 CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE

- 7.1 A structured procedure in line with Pan-Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures and Keeping Children Safe in Education: 2019, which will be followed by all members of the organisation in cases where there are welfare or safeguarding concerns. This is detailed in Appendix B.
- 7.2 In line with the procedures, the Children's Social Care Single Point of Advice (SPoA) will be notified as soon as there is a significant concern, or where a referral is required.
- 7.3 The names of the DSLs will be clearly advertised in the organisation and workshops with a statement explaining the organisations role in referring and monitoring welfare and safeguarding concerns.
- 7.4 We will ensure all parents and carers are aware of the responsibilities of staff members to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and act in the best interests of children by publishing the policy and procedures on our website and by referring to them in our introductory materials.

8 REPORTING CONCERNS AND RECORD KEEPING

- 8.1 All safeguarding and welfare concerns, discussions and decisions made will be recorded in writing and kept in line with the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance Keeping Records of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns Guidance for Early Years Settings, Schools and Colleges.
- 8.2 Hate incidents, e.g. racist, homophobic, gender or disability-based bullying, are reported, recorded and considered under safeguarding arrangements.
- 8.3 When a student joins our school, and there is a record of safeguarding or welfare concerns, we will ensure that this information is shared appropriately with the DSL and designated members as necessary.

9 SAFER WORKFORCE AND MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- 9.1 All individuals at our organisation will be subjected to safeguarding checks in line with the statutory guidance.
- 9.2 We will ensure that agencies and third parties supplying staff provide us with evidence that they have made the appropriate level of safeguarding checks on individuals working in our organisation. We will also ensure that any agency worker presenting for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

- 9.3 We will ensure that alternative provision providers provide evidence that they have made the appropriate level of safeguarding checks on individuals working for their organisation.
- 9.4 Job description and person specification related to working with young people will have a clear statement about the safeguarding responsibilities of the post holder.
- 9.5 We have a procedure in place to handle allegations against members of staff and volunteers. This procedure is detailed in Appendix B.

10 STAFF INDUCTION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 10.1 All new members of staff, including newly-qualified teachers and teaching assistants, will be given an induction which includes the following:
- Issue and explain the safeguarding and child protection policy
 - Issue and explain the staff behaviour policy/code of conduct
 - Explain the role of the DSL and share the identities of the DSL and all DDSLs
 - All new members of staff are expected to read the above mentioned documents and to sign an acknowledgement of this.
- 10.2 The induction and ongoing training of staff will include the following key aspects:
- Staff understand the difference between a safeguarding concern and a child in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm.
 - Staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
 - When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child.
 - Staff understand that children's poor behaviour may be a sign that they are suffering harm or that they have been traumatised by abuse.
 - If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL or deputy DSL.
 - If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately.
 - Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action.
 - The DSL or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the DSL (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from SPoA. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL (or deputy) as soon as is practically possible.
- 10.3 The DSL will update safeguarding and child protection knowledge and skills regularly, and at least annually, to keep up with developments relevant to the role.
- 10.4 All staff members will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. The DSL will provide briefings on any changes to safeguarding and child protection legislation and procedures and relevant learning from local and national serious case reviews as required, but at least annually.
- 10.5 The nominated governor for safeguarding and child protection will attend Governor Services training prior to or soon after appointment to the role; this training will be updated every three years.

- 10.6 We will ensure that staff members provided by other agencies and third parties have received appropriate safeguarding and child protection training commensurate with their roles before starting work.
- 10.7 On the first occasion which staff members provided by other agencies and third parties, they will be provided with details of the safeguarding arrangements, which will include identifying the DSL and the process for reporting welfare concerns.
- 10.8 The organisation will maintain accurate records of staff induction and training.

11 CONFIDENTIALITY, CONSENT AND INFORMATION SHARING

- 11.1 We recognise that all matters relating to safeguarding and child protection are confidential.
- 11.2 The DSL will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis, and in the best interests of the child.
- 11.3 All staff members are aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.
- 11.4 All staff members have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 11.5 All our staff members who come into contact with children will be given appropriate training to understand the purpose of information sharing in order to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- 11.6 We will ensure that staff members are confident about what they can and should do under the law, including how to obtain consent to share information and when information can be shared without consent. This is covered in greater detail in Appendix B.

12 INTER-AGENCY WORKING

- 12.1 We will develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, including agencies providing early help services to children, the police and Children's Social Care.

13 CONTRACTORS, SERVICE AND ACTIVITY PROVIDERS AND WORK PLACEMENT PROVIDERS

- 13.1 We will ensure that contractors and providers are aware of our safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures. We will require that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations use our procedure to report concerns.

14 WHISTLEBLOWING AND COMPLAINTS

- 14.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff members fail to do so.
- 14.2 We will ensure that all staff members are aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of safeguarding and child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they will speak with the DSL or with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Should staff not feel able to raise concerns they can call the NSPCC *dedicated* helpline on 0800 028 0285.

14.3 We have a clear reporting procedure for children, parents and other people to report concerns or complaints, including abusive or poor practice.

15 SITE SECURITY

15.1 All staff members have a responsibility to ensure our buildings and grounds are secure and for reporting concerns that may come to light.

15.2 We check the identity of all visitors and volunteers. Any individual who is not known or identifiable will be challenged for clarification and reassurance.

15.3 The organisation will not accept the behaviour of any individual, parent or anyone else, that threatens school security or leads others, child or adult, to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse the person access to the school site.

16 QUALITY ASSURANCE

16.1 We will ensure that systems are in place to monitor the implementation of and compliance with this policy and accompanying procedures. This will include periodic audits of welfare concern and safeguarding files and records by the DSL

16.3 The senior management will ensure that action is taken to remedy without delay any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in safeguarding and child protection arrangements.

17 POLICY REVIEW

17.1 This policy and the procedures will be reviewed every year. All other linked policies will be reviewed in line with the policy review cycle.

17.2 The DSL will ensure that staff members are made aware of any amendments to policies and procedures.

18 LINKED POLICES AND PROCEDURES

18.1 The following policies are available from the naturebytes website:

- Online Safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy

APPENDIX A

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

1 Managing referrals

- 1.1 The designated safeguarding lead will:
- Refer cases of suspected abuse to East Sussex children's social care as required.
 - Support staff who make referrals to East Sussex children's social care.
 - Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required.
 - Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.
 - Liaise with agencies providing early help services and coordinate referrals from the school to targeted early help services for children in need of support. Monitor any cases referred to early help and consider referral to children's services where the situation does not improve.

2 Work with others

- 2.2 The designated safeguarding lead will:
- As required, liaise with the "case manager" and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member.
 - Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
 - Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
 - Cooperate with Children's Social Care for enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
 - Attend, or ensure other relevant staff members attend, child protection conferences, core group meetings and other multi-agency meetings, as required.
 - Liaise with other agencies working with the child, share information as appropriate and contribute to assessments.

3 Training

- 3.1 The designated safeguarding lead will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role.
- 3.2 Their knowledge and skills will be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including the East Sussex continuum of need and the SPOA referral arrangements.
 - Ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the schools safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
 - Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
 - Are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals which are in line with East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance; *Keep Records of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns*

- Are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college.
- Can recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.
- Maintain accurate records of staff induction and training.

4 Raise Awareness

- 4.1 The designated safeguarding lead will:
- Ensure the safeguarding and child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately.
 - Ensure safeguarding and child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.
 - Ensure the safeguarding and child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.
 - Link with the East Sussex LSCB to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.

5 Availability

- 5.1 The DSL or a deputy will always be available during work hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- 5.2 Where any activities take place outside of regular hours, the DSL will be available to be contacted during this time.

6 QUALITY ASSURANCE

- 6.1 Monitor the implementation of and compliance with policy and procedures, including periodic audits of child protection and welfare concerns files
- 6.2 Take lead responsibility for remedying any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in safeguarding and child protection arrangements.

APPENDIX B

Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedure

1 DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 **Abuse**, including neglect, is a form of maltreatment. A person may abuse or neglect child by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused within their family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.
- 1.2 **Children** are any people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday; a 16-year-old, whether living independently, in further education, in the armed forces or in hospital, is a child and is entitled to the same protection and services as anyone younger.
- 1.3 **Child protection** is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and refers to activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.
- 1.4 **Early help** means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years to teenage years.
- 1.5 **Harm** is ill treatment or impairment of health and development, including impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.
- 1.6 **Safeguarding children** is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** is defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children: July 2018*
- protecting children from maltreatment;
 - preventing impairment of children's health and development;
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

2 CATEGORIES OF ABUSE

2.1 **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such that it causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve:

- making a child feel worthless, unloved or inadequate
- only there to meet another's needs
- inappropriate age or developmental expectations
- overprotection and limitation of exploration, learning and social interaction
- seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another, e.g. domestic abuse
- making the child feel worthless and unloved - high criticism and low warmth
- serious bullying (including cyberbullying)
- exploitation or corruption

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

2.2 **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, it may involve a parent failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care givers
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

Depending on the age and capacity of the child, staff should be aware of possible self-neglect, where a child may not be following medical guidance or taking medication as prescribed. Where this is the case this should be raised as a safeguarding concern.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

2.3 Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

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

2.5 Child sexual exploitation is also sexual abuse; it involves children and young people receiving something, for example accommodation, drugs, gifts or affection, as a result of them performing sexual activities, or having others perform sexual activities on them. It could take the form of grooming of children, e.g. to take part in sexual activities or to post sexual images of themselves on the internet.

2.6 Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also collude with and commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

7 WHAT ACTION TO TAKE IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

7.1 When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child.

7.2 If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL or deputy DSL.

7.3 If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately.

7.4 Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action.

7.5 The DSL or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the DSL (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of staff to take advice from SPoA. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL (or deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

8 DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE MADE BY A CHILD – ADVICE FOR ALL MEMBERS OF STAFF

- 8.1 If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff or volunteer should follow this guidance.
- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
 - Only ask questions when necessary to clarify.
 - Accept what is being said.
 - Allow the child to talk freely – do not put words in the child's mouth.
 - Reassure the child that what has happened is not his or her fault.
 - Do not make promises that you may not be able to keep.
 - Do not promise confidentiality – it may be necessary to refer the child to Children's Social Care.
 - Stress that it was the right thing to tell.
 - Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
 - Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
 - Inform the DSL without delay.
 - Complete the child protection incident/welfare concern form and pass it to the DSL.
 - Dealing with a disclosure from a child and safeguarding issues can be stressful. Consider seeking support for yourself and discuss this with the DSL.

9 DISCUSSING CONCERNS WITH THE FAMILY AND THE CHILD – ADVICE FOR THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

- 9.1 In general, you should always discuss any concerns the organisation may have with the child's parents. They need to know that you are worried about their child. However, you should not discuss your concerns if you believe that this would place the child at greater risk or lead to loss of evidence for a police investigation.
- 9.2 **If you make a decision not to discuss your concerns with the child's parents or carers** this must be recorded in the child's safeguarding file with a full explanation for your decision.
- 9.3 **It is important to consider the child's wishes and feelings**, if age appropriate, as part of planning what action to take in relation to concerns about their welfare.
- 9.4 When talking to children, you should take account of their age, understanding and preferred language, which may not be English. It is also important to consider how a disabled child may need support in communicating.
- 9.5 How you talk to a child will also depend on the substance and seriousness of the concerns. You may need to seek advice from Children's Social Care or the police to ensure that neither the safety of the child nor any subsequent investigation is jeopardised.
- 9.6 If concerns have arisen as a result of information given by a child, it is important to reassure the child but not to promise confidentiality.
- 9.7 **It is expected that you discuss your concerns with the parents and seek their consent to making a referral to Children's Social Care, unless you consider that this would place the child at increased risk of significant harm.**
- 9.8 **You do not need the parents' consent to make a referral if you consider the child is in need of protection**, although parents will ultimately be made aware of which organisation made the referral.

9.9 If parents refuse to give consent to a referral but you decide to continue, you need to make this clear to Children's Social Care.

9.10 **If you decide to refer the child without the parents' consent, make sure to record this with a full explanation of your decision.**

9.11 When you make your referral, you should agree with Children's Social Care what the child and parents will be told, by whom and when.

11 CHILDREN'S SOCIALCARE-LED RESPONSES TO CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

11.1 Once Children's Social Care has accepted our referral as needing a social-care-led response, we will cooperate with Children's Social Care and the police in any emergency action they take using their legal powers for immediate protection of the child.

12 INFORMATION SHARING AND CONSENT

12.1 It is essential that people working with children can confidently share information as part of their day-to-day work. This is necessary not only to safeguard and protect children from harm but also to work together to support families to improve outcomes for all.

12.2 The Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 are not barriers to sharing information and **do not change duties under safeguarding**. They are there to ensure that personal information is managed in a sensible way and that a balance is struck between a person's privacy and public protection.

12.3 We should be sharing any concerns we have with parents at an early stage, unless this would put a child at greater risk or compromise an investigation. Parents need to know what our responsibilities are for safeguarding and protecting children and that this involves sharing information about them with other professionals.

12.4 Be clear about the purpose of sharing confidential information and only share as much as you need to achieve your purpose.

12.5 Try to get consent from parents (or the child, if they have sufficient understanding¹) to share information, if possible. However, **you do not need consent if you have serious concerns about a child's safety and well-being. If you decide to share information without consent, you should record this with a full explanation of your decision.**

12.6 **Consent should not be sought from parents or carers (or the child, if they have sufficient understanding), if:**

- it would place a child at increased risk of harm; or
- it would place an adult at risk of serious harm; or
- it would prejudice a criminal investigation; or
- it would lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to a child; or
- required by law or a court order to share information.

¹ Children aged 12 or over may generally be expected to have sufficient understanding. Younger children may also have sufficient understanding. All people aged 16 and over are presumed, in law, to have the capacity to give or withhold their consent, unless there is evidence to the contrary.

- 12.7 **Consent is not necessary** in cases where Children's Social Care are making child protection enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Information needs to be shared with Children's Social Care; staff members must make sure to record what information has been shared.
- 12.8 If you are in any doubt about the need for seeking consent, get advice from the DSL or from the Children's Social Care Single Point of Advice.
- 12.9 Keep a record of your decision to share information, with or without consent, and the reasons for it. Remember also that it is just as important to keep a record of why you decided not to share information as why you did so.

13 RECORD KEEPING

- 13.1 Accurate and timely record keeping is an important part of accountability to children and their families and will help us in meeting our key responsibility to respond appropriately to welfare concerns about children.
- 13.2 Records should be factual, accurate, relevant, up to date and auditable. They should support monitoring, risk assessment and planning for children and enable informed and timely decisions about appropriate action to take.
- 13.3 All staff members, volunteers, contractors and activity providers should ensure that they record and report safeguarding concerns in line with guidance from the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership – *Keeping Records of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns Guidance for Early Years Settings, Schools and Colleges*.
- 13.4 The DSL will ensure that records are maintained accurately for children with safeguarding concerns and that stand-alone files are created and maintained in line with requirements of the above guidance.

14 PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGE AND DISAGREEMENTS

- 14.1 Working with children and families, and in particular child protection work, is stressful and complex, as well as involving uncertainty and strong feelings. To ensure that the best decisions are made for children, we need to be able to challenge one another's practice.
- 14.2 We will promote a culture that enables all staff members to raise, without fear of repercussions, any concerns they may have about the management of safeguarding in the school. This may include raising concerns about decisions, action and inaction by colleagues about individual children. If necessary, staff members will speak with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 14.3 Cooperation across agencies is crucial; professionals need to work together, using their skills and experience, to make a robust contribution to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare within the framework of discussions, meetings, conferences and case management.
- 14.4 If there are any professional disagreements with practitioners from other agencies, the DSL will raise concerns with the relevant agency's safeguarding lead in line with guidance in the Pan-Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures.

15 SAFER RECRUITMENT

- 15.1 Our recruitment and vetting procedures help prevent unsuitable people from working with children.
- 15.2 Our job advertisements and application packs make explicit reference to the organisations commitment to safeguarding children, including compliance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) process and clear statements in the job description and person specification about the staff member's safeguarding responsibilities.
- 15.3 All staff members who have contact with children, young people and families will have appropriate pre-employment checks, which will be scrutinised, in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education: September 2019*

16 PROCEDURE FOR MANAGING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE MADE AGAINST ORGANISATIONS STAFF MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS

- 16.1 Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well being and very best outcomes for the children. We do recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.
- 16.2 Allegations sometimes arise from a differing understanding of the same event, but when they occur they are distressing and difficult for all concerned. We also recognise that some allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children.
- 16.3 We will take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that our members and volunteers are safe to work with children.
- 16.4 If an allegation is made or information is received about an adult who works in our school which indicates that they may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the information should inform the DSL immediately. Should an allegation be made against the DSL, this will be reported to a Director.
- 16.8 We will refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our school, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO and/or the Personnel/HR lead for the organisation.

17 THE USE OF 'REASONABLE FORCE'

- 17.1 There are circumstances when it will be appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.
- 17.2 When managing incidents of positive handling the organisation will consider whether to liaise with the LADO, where it is thought that the physical intervention may lead to an allegation.

Changes to LADO referrals

The existing LADO mobile and landline numbers are no longer in use and should not be contacted. Please do not email the LADOs direct. The existing mobiles and personal email addresses currently in use will not be routinely monitored and could lead to a delay in the LADOs responding to your enquiry.

Instead, please follow the procedures below, this will ensure that:

- The correct information is gathered at the point of contact
- Referrals can be responded as quickly as possible
- Signposting to other teams can be affected.

All referrals that involve allegations against those who work, volunteer or care for children should to be referred to SPOA using a Statement of Referral template. If there is an allocated team or social worker, then they should be your first point of contact.

If there is an allegation where a criminal offence might have been committed, contact the police AND social care for advice before taking any further action.

If a LADO consultation is required, please go to the [LADO webpage](#) and complete the online referral form. The LADO/Assistant LADO will contact you by phone or email and offer advice as normal.

All referral/consultation requests must include the following information for adults and children and some of the fields in the referral will be mandatory:

- Full names, dates of birth and addresses
- Relevant employment history including any previous disciplinary investigations, allegations or complaints you are aware of
- Details of any employment in another local authority
- Details of any secondary roles the adult might have if known or make enquiries about this as part of the referral process.