



Safeguarding Policy

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Contents

1. Introduction	2
1.1 Terminology	
1.2 What's the difference between Safeguarding and Child Protection?	
1.3 Principles and Aims	
2. Safeguarding Themes for students	3
2.1 Student Attendance	
2.2 Anti-Bullying	
2.3 Curriculum (including E-Safety)	
2.4 Use of digital images	
2.5 Inclusion and Diversity	
3. Safeguarding themes for staff and volunteers	4
3.1 Accessing the sites	
3.2 Staff conduct	
3.3 Child Protection	
3.4 Confidentiality	
3.5 Health and Safety	
3.6 Safer recruitment	
3.7 Managing allegations against staff & volunteers	
4. Other safeguarding themes	7
4.1 Partnership with Parents and Carers	
4.2 Partnership with other services	
4.3 External bodies, contractors and maintenance personnel	
4.4 Complaints	
5. Statutory Framework	8

1. Introduction

Safeguarding is **everyone's responsibility**. This policy sets out responsibilities of The Collett School, St Luke's School and Forest House Education Centre, according to the Children Act 2004 and adhering to Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance 2018 from the Department for Education, to ensure children, young people and adults are kept safe from harm.

1.1 Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

The aim of **safeguarding** is to enable children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

1.2 What's the difference between Safeguarding and Child Protection?

Safeguarding is an 'umbrella' term that incorporates child protection. **Child Protection** is the process and activities undertaken to fulfil statutory obligations to protect specific children who have been identified as suffering, or at risk of significant harm. All agencies and individuals should proactively **safeguard and promote** the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

1.3 Principles and Aims

Our Principles:

- The welfare of children, and their wishes and feelings are at the forefront when developing and carry out school activities.
- All children have equal rights to support and protection irrespective of their race, age, ability, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation and culture.
- All staff and volunteers have a professional role to identify and respond to the needs of children and report any concerns immediately.

We aim:

- To provide all staff (employed, contracted and volunteering) with the necessary information and training to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children.
- To provide parents cares and children with information about the school arrangements to keep children safe.
- To ensure safe and consistent best practice across the school.
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding children.

2. Safeguarding themes for students

2.1 Student attendance

In accordance with the schools' Attendance Policy, absences are rigorously pursued and recorded. The schools, in partnership with the appropriate agencies, take action to pursue and address all unauthorised absences in order to safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. We implement the statutory requirements in terms of monitoring and reporting children missing education (CME) and off-rolling and understand how important this practice is in safeguarding children and young people.

2.2 Anti-Bullying

The schools recognise the right of our children and young people to develop with confidence in an environment that is safe and free from the emotional and physical distress that can be seen as a result of bullying. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that procedures are in place that will monitor and address anti-bullying issues. There is a more detailed Anti-Bullying Policy available on the school website.

2.3 Curriculum (including E-Safety)

Children are taught to understand and manage risk through our PSHE education and sex and relationships lessons and through all aspects of school life.

The schools are committed to ensuring that children are aware of behaviour towards them that is not acceptable and how they can keep themselves safe. All children know that we have designated members of staff with responsibility for child protection and they are made aware of whom these persons are. We inform children of whom they might talk to, both in and out of school, their right to be listened to and heard and what steps can be taken to protect them from harm.

Subjects such as Personal, Social and Health Education discuss relevant safeguarding issues with the children. Please see the e-safety section of this policy for further details on this topic.

We have an e-safety policy. Our policy includes how we teach children to stay safe when using the internet in and out of school- including the risks of sharing content and images online and tackling bullying, including cyber bullying. Cyber-bullying by children, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures.

The Schools will ensure that appropriate filtering methods are in place to ensure that children are safe from all types of inappropriate and unacceptable materials.

2.4 Use of digital images

When joining the school, parents are asked whether the school has permission to photograph their child, how it may be used internally or shared. This can be updated at any time by the parent informing the school office who will then update the schools' database.

The schools recognise the importance and usefulness of including the children's use of technology within the classroom, such as an iPad. With this brings lots of opportunities for children across all age ranges to explore and learn in an explorative and creative way. The use of a technology item,

such as an iPad is likely to have a camera and children will be using the camera as part of their learning experience. However, the use of iPad's and other tablet equipment could also present risks if children are left to use the equipment without appropriate supervision. It is therefore understood that the school will ensure that all usage of iPads within the schools will be supervised by an adult at all times.

2.5 Inclusion and Diversity

Some children may be at increased risk of neglect and or abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

Our school ethos promotes and accepts the differences between all children and adults. In practice this is about ensuring inclusion of individuals and treating them fairly and equally, no matter the diversity of their race, gender, age, disability, religion or sexual orientation.

Promoting equality and diversity in education is essential for both teachers and children. The aim is to create a classroom environment where all children can thrive together and understand that individual characteristics make people unique and not 'different' in a negative way.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2018), to ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection.

3. Safeguarding themes for staff and volunteers

3.1 Accessing the sites:

The control of visitors, contractors and maintenance personnel is a fundamental part of our site security for the safeguarding of both people and property. The schools will take all reasonable efforts to control access to the buildings and grounds of the school in order to prevent unauthorised access to children and ensure the personal safety of staff. A security risk assessment will be completed and reviewed annually as part of our ongoing accessibility and security improvements planning.

The access control procedures for the sites are:

- **All staff, volunteers and visitors must sign in at reception upon arrival**
- **Staff have an identity badge which should be worn at all times during working hours.** *The exception to this would be when engaging in physical activities which would make wearing the badge impractical, in which case the identity badge may be temporarily removed for the activity and put back on as soon as possible. If the staff member chooses to remove their identity badge, it should be accessible to show others at all times.*
- **Visitors and volunteers may be asked for proof of identity when signing in if the visitor or volunteer is unable to provide proof of identity on demand, the school reserves the right to refuse access to the site and asked to leave.**
- **Visitors and volunteers will be given an identity sticker or badge which must be worn when on site at all times**
- **Visitors and volunteers not displaying their identity badge will be challenged and, unless able to provide one, will be escorted back to reception to sign in or leave the site as appropriate.**
- **All staff and long-term volunteers will have appropriate background checks** - allowing them to move around the site independently and as appropriate.

- **Visitors or short-term volunteers who do not have appropriate background checks or are not able to provide evidence of one will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times when on site.**
- Visitors should arrange appointments/meetings via reception or a member of staff allowing for this to be scheduled in advance.
- **All staff, volunteers and visitors must sign out at reception when leaving the site, even if planning to return later on the same day.**

The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual (child or adult) 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 remove the individual from the school site and/or refuse access for that individual to the school site.

3.2 Staff Conduct

All adults who come into contact with our children have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a legal duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of our children are competent, confident and safe to do so.

The Teachers' Standards (DfE,2011) are augmented by standards of personal and professional conduct e.g. ethics and behaviour, in and out of school. Teachers are expected to 'uphold public trust in the profession by showing tolerance and respect for the rights of others, not undermining fundamental British values and ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability'.

All staff will be provided with a copy of our school's code of conduct that outlines requirements of staff behaviour at induction. These are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children. All staff and volunteers are expected to carry out their work in accordance with this guidance and will be made aware that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.

The link below will direct you to the current government guidance on safer working practice which we share with staff:

<http://www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Guidance-for-Safer-Working-Practices-2015-final.pdf>

Staff and children sign ICT Acceptable Use Agreements. For staff this includes a section on the use of digital images and clarification about the position regarding the use of personal mobile phones/cameras for taking pictures. Where volunteers are supporting school staff, they should abide by the same rules as schools' staff as far as is reasonable.

3.3 Child Protection

There is a detailed Child Protection Policy operating within the schools, available on the schools' website. It is the Governing Body's duty to ensure the policy is reviewed annually and any deficiencies within the policy addressed immediately.

Any Safeguarding or Child Protection concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputies without delay, in accordance with the Child Protection policy's 'Reporting' section.

The **Designated Safeguarding Leads** (DSL) across the association of St Luke's School, Forest House Education Centre and The Collett School are:

- **Josh Pollard** (St Luke's School and The Collett School)
- **Lyn Mastroddi** (Forest House Education Centre)

The **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads** are:

- **Stephen Hault-Allen** (across the association)
- **Kasia Fejcher-Akhtar** (across the association)
- **Jamie Caple** (St Luke's School)
- **Pam Stocks** (The Collett School)
- **Huw Bucknell** (Forest House Education Centre)

The broad areas of responsibility for the Designated Safeguarding Lead are listed in the Child Protection policy.

All Child Protection concerns will be managed in accordance with the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures. A copy of these procedures can be found at www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk.

Children's Services telephone number **0300 1234043** (including out of hours)

3.4 Confidentiality

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

Safeguarding information will be stored and handled in line with the GDPR 2018. The DSL will normally obtain consent from the child/parent to share sensitive information with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so (e.g. to help to protect a child), the DSL may share information without consent and will record the reason for this. Safeguarding records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. The schools will retain this information on the pupil file and transfer to the next school/archive the information in line with the GDPR. The schools will only share information about children with adults who have parental responsibility for a pupil. Please see Hertfordshire's Pupil Safeguarding Records Guidance at www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/child_protection/policy/local.shtml#pupilsafe for further information.

3.5 Health and Safety

We have a Health & Safety Policy which demonstrates the consideration we give to minimising any risk to the children when on the school premises and when undertaking activities out of school under the supervision of our staff. At all times there has to be appropriate staffing levels and when off-site, appropriate and agreed pupil / adult ratios are maintained. The lead adult always assesses visits/trips as to the level of risk and all trips are finally authorised by the Head of School.

Our school has lone working risk assessments in place and procedures for staff where there is a security risk due to the need to work alone; staff at high risk will receive appropriate training.

A copy of the Health and Safety Policy is available and on our websites.

3.6 Safer Recruitment

Our recruitment process selects, screens, trains and supervises staff and volunteers so that the appointment of unsuitable people can be deterred and rejected from working with children.

The schools promote to potential volunteers and potential employees the stringent child protection measures that are in place to ensure the safety of our pupils.

The schools have a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service 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. 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 Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and/orHR.

Our school also adhere to the updated guidance issued by The Department for Education in 2018 regarding persons who are disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006.

3.7 Managing Allegations Against Staff & Volunteers

Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for the children at our schools. We do recognise that sometimes the behaviour and actions of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

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 many allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children.

We will take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults in our school are safe to work with children. We will always ensure that the procedures outlined in Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Inter-agency Procedures and Part 4 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DfE (2018) are adhered to and will seek appropriate advice from the Local Authority DesignatedOfficer (LADO).

The Hertfordshire LADO Service can be contacted on **0300 123 4043**.

4. Other Safeguarding themes

4.1 Partnership with Parents and Carers

The schools are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

The schools share a purpose with parents to educate, keep children safe from harm and have their welfare promoted. We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. The schools will share with parents any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm. We encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have with the class teacher or Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputies.

4.2 Partnership with Other Services

Our schools recognise that it is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with other agencies that are partners of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board. There is a joint responsibility on all these agencies to share information to ensure the safeguarding of all children.

4.3 External bodies, contractors and maintenance personnel

Where the Governing Body transfers control or otherwise allows the use of school premises to external bodies (such as sports clubs) or service providers during or out of school hours, we will ensure that these bodies or providers have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to coordinate with the school on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the bodies or providers.

4.4 Complaints

The schools have a Complaints Procedure available to parents, pupils and staff who wish to report concerns. This can be found on the schools' website.

All reported concerns will be taken seriously and considered within the relevant and appropriate process. Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with under the specific procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff.

5. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, the schools will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- Children & Families Act 2014
- Education Act 2002 (Section 175/157)

Outlines that Local Authorities and School Governing Bodies have a responsibility to "ensure that their functions relating to the conduct of school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are its pupils".

- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Procedures (Electronic)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Part One- information for all school and college staff (DfE, September 2018) – APPENDIX 1
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2015)
- The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005
- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Section 26, The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (PREVENT duty)
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (Section 74 Serious Crime Act 2015)