



LSCB Model

Child Protection Policy

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Child Protection Policy for Dryden/Hill Top Federation

Responsibility for policy: Jane Bryant

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Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

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1. Introduction

The policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers and takes into account the current statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education (DfE) and local guidance issued by Gateshead Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). These duties are set out in the Education Act 2002 Sec 175/157, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016.

We will ensure that parents/carers are made aware of our child protection policy through its publication on our website.

This policy aims to provide all members of staff (paid and unpaid), governors, children and young people, and their families with a clear and secure framework for ensuring that all children in the school are protected from harm, both while at school and when off the schools premises.

The actions we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm are everyone's responsibility. All staff and volunteers involved with children have a responsibility to be mindful of issues related to their safety and welfare and a duty to report any concerns.

All staff will work to ensure that:

- Children and young people feel listened to, valued and respected.
- Staff are aware of indicators of abuse and know how to share their concerns appropriately.
- All paid and unpaid staff are subject to rigorous recruitment procedures.
- All paid and unpaid staff are given appropriate support and training.

School Commitment our staff across the federation are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse because of the day to day contact with children and are committed to referring those concerns via the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to the appropriate organisation, normally the Local Authority Children's Social Care, contributing to the assessment of a child's needs and, where appropriate, to ongoing action to meet those needs.

2. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL takes the lead responsibility for child protection, including support for other staff and information sharing with other agencies, developing policies and staff training. The DSL is a senior member of staff with the authority and seniority to carry out the functions of the role.

Responsibilities include:

- Act as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns.
- Refer suspected abuse and neglect to the Referral and Assessment Team. Referrals should be made in writing, following a telephone call to:
<https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/DocumentLibrary/LSCB/CP-ref-form-June-15.doc>
- Keep written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- Ensure that they or another member of staff attend Case Conferences, Core Groups, or other multi agency planning meetings, contribute to assessments and provide a written report that has been shared with parents.
- Ensure that there are clear procedures, known to all staff, which are followed where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Develop and update the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies ensuring that staff and children/families/parents are aware of them.
- Provide support and advice to all members of staff within the setting regarding child protection concerns.
- Keep the Executive Head informed about any issues that arise.
- Ensure that cover is provided for the role when absent from the setting.
- Ensure that a child's Child Protection file is copied for the new educational establishment when a child moves educational settings, and that this file is transferred securely and separately from the main pupil file.
- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate training and maintain training records.
- Co-operate with any requests for information from the Local Authority, such as child protection training returns and self-evaluative forms for safeguarding and child protection, in compliance with Section 11, Children Act 2004.
- Provide an annual report for the Executive Head Teacher/Governing Body, detailing any changes to policy and procedures, training undertaken by all staff and governors, number and types of incidents/cases and number of children subject to a child protection plan.

- Apply confidentiality appropriately and in line with HM Gov. [Information Sharing Guidance 2015](#)

3. Recognising Abuse

In the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, a **child** is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

Both Dryden and Hill Top schools have 6th form provision which caters for learners who are over the age of 18 and can be classed as vulnerable adults. The procedures that are followed for our under 18 year olds will be followed in respect of older learners in the Dryden and Hill Top Federation although working with adult services.

Types of Abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

- **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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and 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 insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), 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 maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

- **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

- **Neglect:** 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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer 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); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

4. Child Protection Procedures

All staff should feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role.

Information about possible abuse may come to a member of staff in several ways - direct allegation from a child that has been abused, through a friend, relative or other child, through a child's behaviour or through observation of an injury to the child.

You may have a concern about a child's wellbeing based on:

- Something the child /parent /care has told you.
- Something you have noticed about the child's behaviour, health, or appearance.
- Something another adult/professional said or did.

Even if you think your concern is minor, the DSL may have more information that, together with what you know, represents a more serious worry about a child. It is never your decision alone how to respond to concerns – but it is **always** your responsibility to share concerns, no matter how small.

Decide whether you need to find out more by asking the child, or their parent to clarify your concerns, being careful to use open questions. It is important to remember that any questioning should be limited to the minimum necessary to seek clarification and strictly avoiding 'leading' by making suggestions or asking questions that suggest an answer. It is vital that subsequent enquiries should not be prejudiced by detailed questioning in school.

Let the child/parent know what you plan to do next if you have heard a disclosure of abuse or you are talking with them about your concerns. Do not promise to keep what s/he tells you secret as you may need to inform the child or third party that they are obliged to pass on information to other members of staff such as the DSL and/or Head Teacher, according to circumstances, as well as to other local agencies.

The child or third party may need reassurance that their concerns will be handled sensitively and discreetly. For example, 'I am worried about your bruise and I need to tell Mrs Smith so that she can help us think about how to keep you safe'.

Inform the DSL immediately. If the DSL is not available, inform their Deputy. If neither are available, speak to the Executive Head Teacher or another senior member of staff. If there is no other member of staff available, you must make the referral yourself.

Make a written record as soon as possible after the event, noting:

- Name of child.
- Date, time and place.
- Who else was present?
- What was said/what happened/what you noticed - speech, behaviour, mood, drawings, games or appearance.
- If child or parent spoke, record their words rather than your interpretation.
- Analysis of what you observed and why it is a cause for concern.

The DSL may take advice from the Referral and Assessment Team Duty Worker.

The DSL may make a referral to Referral and Assessment Team Duty Worker. The referral will note previous intervention by the school with the child, any relevant history relating to the child, their siblings or the family.

The DSL shares information with other relevant professionals, recording reasons for sharing information and ensuring that they are aware of what action the other professionals will take as a result of information shared.

The DSL informs parent that they have made a CP referral, if the parent does not already know. On occasion the Duty Officer may suggest a delay in informing the parent in cases of suspected abuse, or where informing the parent may put the child at further risk, to prevent the child being harmed or intimidated (and retracting their disclosure).

The DSL remains in close communication with other professionals around the child and with the family, in order to share any updates about the child.

If a child protection investigation is undertaken the DSL and other key school staff will:

- Work closely and collaboratively with all professionals involved in the investigation, to keep the child safe.
- Attend an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) when invited and provide updated information about the child.
- Attend any subsequent Child Protection Review Conferences (RCPC's).
- Attend Core Group meetings and take an active role in the implementation of the protection plan.

5. Safe Practice

Safer Recruitment

Safeguarding Children in Education (2015) outlines Safer Recruitment processes in education settings. At least one member of staff on every recruitment panel has undertaken training in Safer Recruitment. Safer Recruitment processes aim to:

- Deter potential abusers by setting high standards of practice and recruitment.
- Reject inappropriate candidates at the application and interview stages.
- Prevent abuse to children by developing robust policies and agreeing on safe practice.

Allegations against Staff

Allegations of abuse can be made by children and young people and they can be made by other concerned adults.

All allegations against staff or volunteers should be immediately brought to the attention of the Head of School

The Head of School should liaise with the Executive Headteacher and take the following actions:

- Ensure that the child reporting the allegation is safe and away from the member of staff against whom the allegation is made.
- Contact the LADO immediately.
- Contact the parents/carers of the child, following advice from the LADO.
- Attend strategy meetings convened by the LADO and act upon the decisions made at these meetings.
- Make a referral to the Children's Service where the child resides, if appropriate.
- Suspend the member of staff or review his/her working arrangements, pending the investigation, following advice from the LADO and other key professionals.

If an allegation is made against the Head of School or Executive Headteacher, this should be brought to the attention of the Chair of Governors. In all cases the LADO should be notified.

The LSCB website provides information on who to report allegations to the LADO.
http://gatesheadlscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_alleg_staff.html

Suspension should be considered when:

- There is a cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm or
- The allegation warrants investigation by the police or
- The allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal

Any disciplinary investigation should be carried out once the child protection investigation has been completed.

Supporting Children

We recognise that children who are abused, or who witness violence or domestic abuse, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They can feel helpless, humiliated and feel a sense of blame. School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in their lives. Many other aspects of school provision support the aims of this policy. Schools play an important role in making children and young people aware both of behaviour towards them that is not acceptable, and of how they can help keep themselves safe.

When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum - The non-statutory framework for personal, social and health education (PSHE) provides opportunities for children and young people to learn about keeping safe. PSHE curriculum materials provide resources that enable schools to tackle issues regarding healthy relationships, including domestic violence, bullying and abuse. Discussions about personal safety and keeping safe can reinforce the message that any kind of violence is unacceptable, let children and young people know that it is acceptable to talk about their own problems, and signpost sources of help.
- A school ethos which provides a positive, supportive and secure environment which gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- Application of the school behaviour policy which will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they remain valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Effective liaison with other support services for pupils who have been harmed or abused or at risk of being harmed or abused.
- Ensuring that when a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan or where there are other safeguarding concerns, transfers to a new school, their child protection file is transferred to the new school immediately and securely (see record keeping) and inform child's social worker.

Supporting Staff

- Safer Recruitment processes will be followed at all times in accordance with DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015) Part 3.
- Effective checks and references are an essential element of safer recruitment.
- All staff will be given the school's Staff Code (in the staff handbook) so will have access to advice and guidance on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour.

This guidance covers appropriate dress, the use of appropriate boundaries, social contact outside setting (including on social networking sites), the receiving and giving of gifts and favouritism and the safe use of technology. In the event of any complaint or allegation against a staff member or volunteer, the Head Teacher should be notified immediately. If it relates to the Executive Head Teacher or Heads of school, the Chair of Governors should be informed without delay.

- Staff may find issues relating to child protection upsetting and may need support which should be either provided directly by the school or sourced elsewhere by them.

Visitors

- No visitors, including tradespeople, should be allowed to wander around the premises unaccompanied when children and young people are present.
- Staff should be alert to strangers frequently waiting outside a venue with no apparent purpose.
- Children should not be collected by people other than their parents unless written notification has been received in advance.

6. Links to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies regarding the safety and welfare of children. Together these make up the suite of policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this school. Our suite of policies are set out below:

- Anti-bullying including On-line Bullying
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality Principles
- Central record of Recruitment and Vetting Checks
- Complaints Procedures
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Freedom of Information/Confidentiality/Information Sharing
- Abuse linked to culture, faith or belief e.g. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)/Forced Marriage/Honour Based Violence
- Health and Safety
- Intimate Care Policy
- Physical Intervention
- Sex Education (SRE Policy)
- Special Education Needs
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy- in staff handbook
- Staff Discipline and Grievance Procedures
- Touch Policy

In addition Gateshead Interagency Child Protection Procedures outlines response to specific safeguarding issues and can be accessed via: <http://proceduresonline.com/gateshead/lscb/> and broad government advice can be accessed on the issues listed above at the GOV.UK website.

7. Implementation and Dissemination

This policy is reviewed annually by the DSL and is approved by the Board of Governors. All members of staff read and agree to the child protection policy before the start of their employment.

All children, young people and their families will have access to and agree to the policy before enrolment. It is important for families to be aware of actions staff may take if there are any concerns for a child or a young person's safety, and for them to understand that they might not be consulted before action is taken. Knowing about child protection procedures ahead of time helps parents to engage better in the process, meaning that change is more likely to take place.

8. Useful contacts

Gateshead Council

The Referral and Assessment Team (R&A) – Duty System

Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead, NE8 1HH
0191 433 extensions 2505/2349/2410/3417/2540/2653

Out of Hours Social Care Duty Team.

0191 477 0844

Referral email address:

R&Aduty@gateshead.gov.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Nicholas Leon
Safeguarding Children Unit, 1st Floor Civic Centre, Gateshead.
0191 433 3554, 07714 957 868
nicholasleon@gateshead.gov.uk

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