

## **Safeguarding (Child Protection Policy)**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the equivalent Surecare Residential policy and Attendance and Absence Policy, e – Safety and ICT use Policy Behaviour Policy

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Last review	July 2017
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**At the heart of all our policies at White Trees Independent School  
are the following principles:**

1. Everyone in our school can learn and achieve.
2. Everyone in our school has the potential to be successful
3. We build quality relationships with one another and everyone we work with
4. The success of our school is based on high expectations, mutual trust and respect, caring for each other and taking responsibility.
5. Our vision is to provide our students with the confidence, skills, and ambition to take the next steps towards a successful and productive life so they can contribute positively in society.

## Introduction

Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education – DfE, 2016)

This Child Protection Policy is for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers and the wider school community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our school. It should be read in conjunction with the following:

Safer Recruitment Policy, Staff Code of Conduct Policy, Physical Restraint and Intervention Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour and Rewards Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Educational Visit Policy, E-safety Policy. It should also be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2016).

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 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 all children to have the best outcomes

## Statutory framework

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (Section 157 for Independent schools) places a statutory responsibility on the governing body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). All professionals must work in accordance with the SET Procedures (LSCB, 2018).

White Trees Independent School works in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2016) – draft version (DfE, 2018) effective September 2018.

Working Together (HMG, 2015) – updated version expected June 2018 Education Act 2002

Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex (ESCB, 2017)

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015) Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015)

Sexual Offences Act (2003) Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006

Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (HMG, 2015) Data Protection Act 1998 What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (HMG, 2015)

Searching, screening and confiscation (DfE, 2018) Children Act 1989 Children Act 2004

Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE, 2017),

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (S. 74 - Serious Crime Act 2015)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, 2017)

Data Protection Act 2018

### Roles and responsibilities

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them and to provide a safe environment in which they can learn and achieve their full potential. However, there are key people within schools and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures.

### The Governing Body

The governing body ensures that the policies, procedures and training in our school are effective and comply with the law at all times. It ensures that all required policies relating to safeguarding are in place and that the child protection policy reflects statutory and local guidance and is reviewed at least annually.

The governing body ensures there is a named designated safeguarding lead and deputy safeguarding lead in place. The governing body ensures the school contributes to inter-agency working, in line with statutory and local guidance. It ensures that information is shared and stored appropriately and in accordance with statutory requirements. The governing body ensures that all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction and that it is then regularly updated. All staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to keep our children safe. The governing body ensures that children are taught about safeguarding, including online, ensuring that appropriate filters and monitoring systems for online usage are in place. Our children will be taught how to

keep themselves safe through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. The governing body and school leadership team are responsible for ensuring the school follows recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. It adheres to statutory responsibilities to check adults working with children and has recruitment and selection procedures in place following 'Safer Recruitment' policies. It ensures that volunteers are appropriately supervised in school.

### The Designated Safeguarding Lead

There are 2 designated safeguarding leads in our school. Billie Daniels (Headteacher) and Becky Verallo- Graves (Inclusion Leader) this structure ensures that there is always a DSL on site to take lead responsibility for managing child protection referrals, safeguarding training and raising awareness of all child protection policies and procedures. They ensure that everyone in school (including temporary staff, volunteers and contractors) is aware of these procedures and that they are followed at all times. They act as a source of advice and support for other staff (on child protection matters) and ensure that timely referrals are made in accordance with current SET procedures. They work with the local authority and other agencies as required.

If for any reason the designated safeguarding leads are unavailable, Lukas Bradon (Learning Leader) is the Deputy Designated safeguarding lead and will act in their absence.

### The Headteacher

The Headteacher works in accordance with the requirements upon all school staff. In addition, they ensure that all safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are followed by all staff.

### All school staff

Everyone in our school has a responsibility to provide a safe learning environment in which our children can learn. All staff members are prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help and understand their role within this process. This includes identifying any emerging problems so appropriate support may be provided and liaising with the designated safeguarding lead to report any concerns. All staff members are aware of and follow school processes (as set out in this policy) and are aware of how to make a referral to Social Care if there is a need to do so.

### **Types of abuse / specific safeguarding issues**

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2016) defines abuse as the maltreatment of a child. "Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or 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"

The four main types of abuse referred to in Keeping Children Safe in Education are:

- Physical - which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, scalding, poisoning, drowning, suffocation or otherwise causing physical harm to a child
- Emotional- involves conveying to children that they are worthless, inadequate and unloved resulting in poor self -esteem and little self- respect
- Sexual - involves forcing or encouraging a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. This may include physical contact or non- physical contact such as watching child pornography or sexual acts
- Neglect - may involve failure to provide for basic needs such as shelter, adequate clothing , medical treatment and protection from danger

Staff at White Trees Independent School are aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so we are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection.

### Peer on peer abuse

White Trees Independent School may be the only stable, secure and safe element in the lives of children at risk of, or who have suffered harm. Nevertheless, whilst at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may instead be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviours towards other children.

Our school recognises that some children may abuse their peers and any incidents of peer on peer abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and will follow the same procedures.

Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include bullying (including cyber bullying), on-line abuse, gender-based abuse, 'sexting' or sexually harmful behaviour. We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in school and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs. We use lessons and assemblies to help students understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Our school understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse.

(see the following policy advice)

Equality Policy

E-Safety Policy

Transgender Full Guidance

[See next page for Child Protection Policy and Procedures –Safeguarding Flowchart](#)

## **Child Protection Policy and Procedures –Safeguarding Flowchart**

### **Procedure to follow when you have reason to suspect that a student is suffering or likely to suffer some form of significant harm or an allegation of abuse is made**

You must inform the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Headteacher, (Billie Daniels) Inclusion Leader (Becky Verallo- Graves) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Lukas Bradon) Learning Leader or Head Office in their absence (see below) immediately and seek guidance- You must make direct contact with one of the above options- **leaving messages is not acceptable**

If at any time a student gives you information about being harmed, or the prospect of being harmed, you must tell them that the information they have given you will have to be shared with more senior members of staff and **cannot be kept confidential**. They are likely to need support with this

Record immediately what the pupil has said and in their own words. If possible there should be another suitable adult present but NOT the person against whom an allegation has been made' **Listen carefully, do not ask leading or probing questions but allow them to be clear over what has happened**

The School DSL(s) (as above) **MUST:**

1. Immediately contact Emma Barr, Director on 07840 892305 or Director Ayshea Praide on 07972 905999 and state urgent CP matter
2. Following discussion with the above and if agreed contact the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB)
  - Allegations regarding external person (non- SureCare) contact the Social care department in the borough where the child resides. Agree with Social Care the contacting of parents
  - Allegations regarding SureCare staff: contact the LSCB in the borough where the school is based
  - Agree with the LSCB the contacting of parents
3. Contact the Local Authority SEN officer
4. If the allegation is against the Headteacher please contact Emma Barr
5. If the allegation is against Emma Barr please contact the LADO directly
6. Cc Emma Barr and Ayshea Praide in all correspondence relating to Child Protection issues for auditing purposes

The School DSL (above) must provide the following notifications within the timescales given below:

- A written report to the LSCB and Head Office at the earliest opportunity on the day of the allegation
- It is a statutory duty to inform the Secretary of State and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) within one month of a person leaving the school if a person ceases to work for the school and there are grounds for believing that they may be unsuitable to work with children or may have committed serious harm

Remember: If at any time you have concerns about a student and especially if you suspect that they are suffering or likely to suffer some form of significant harm, you must tell the schools DSL named above and record your concerns in writing. Not to do so would be considered a disciplinary offence

**Please Note Carefully: any allegation of child abuse against any member of SureCare Group staff, including an allegation against yourself must be treated with the utmost seriousness and passed immediately to the DSL**

### Children with special educational needs and disabilities

White Trees Independent School understands that children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children.

This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability, without further exploration
- Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

### Children missing from education

All children, regardless of their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have are entitled to a full-time education. Our school recognises that a child missing education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and will follow the school procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education.

Parents/carers should always inform us of the reason for any absence and where contact is not made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agency (Missing Education and Child Employment Service, Social Care or Police).

Our school must inform the local authority of any student who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without school permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

### Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse, which can happen to boys and girls from any background or community. The following definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) from the Department of Education (DfE, 2017) states:

"Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology".

It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. White Trees Independent School is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will lead on these issues and work with other agencies as appropriate.

### Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse.

As of October 2015, the Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015) introduced a duty on teachers (and other professionals) to notify the police of known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

Our school will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with existing local safeguarding procedures.

### Forced marriage

A forced marriage is one entered into without the full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used and is a crime. Our staff understand how to report concerns where this may be an issue.

### Prevention of radicalisation

As of July 2015, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015) placed a new duty on schools and other education providers. Under section 26 of the Act, schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty. It requires schools to:

- teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and must promote community cohesion
- be safe spaces in which children / young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas
- be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues

CHANNEL is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. All staff members understand how to identify those who may benefit from this support and how to make a referral



## Procedures

All staff members have a duty to identify and respond to suspected / actual abuse or disclosures of abuse.

## Disclosures

Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead). Do not say that you will keep what the student is about to tell you as confidential, before the student has confided in you as have a duty to share it with others

All action is taken in accordance with the following guidance;

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2016)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2015)
- 'Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex' (ESCB, 2017)
- PREVENT Duty - Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015)

## Training

The Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy undertake Level 3 child protection training at least every two years. The Headteacher, all staff members and governors receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated and in line with advice from the (LSCB).

In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

Records of any child protection training undertaken is kept for all staff and governors. The school ensures that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy) also undertakes training in inter-agency working and other matters as appropriate

## Professional confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection.

A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including parents / carers or pupils), or promise to keep a secret.

In accordance with statutory requirements, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and may require further referral to and subsequent investigation by appropriate authorities.

Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the Designated Lead (or Deputy) with other relevant staff members. This will be on a 'need to know' basis only and where it is in the child's best interests to do so.

### Records and information sharing

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school, the nature of such records and when these records can be shared with other agencies. Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm.

Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the rights to a private and family life would not prevent sharing where there are real safeguarding concerns.

Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk or abuse or neglect.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, will record it as soon as possible, noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map to record), giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken. This is then presented to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy), who will decide on appropriate action and record this accordingly.

Any records related to child protection are kept in an individual child protection file for that child (which is separate to the pupil file). All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially and will be retained for 25 years after the pupil's date of birth, or until they transfer to another school / educational setting. Where a pupil transfers from our school to another school / educational setting (including colleges), their child protection records will be forwarded to the new educational setting. These will be marked 'Confidential' and for the attention of the receiving school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, with a return address on the envelope so it can be returned to us if it goes astray. We will obtain evidence that the paperwork has been received by the new school and then destroy any copies held in our school. Where a student joins our school, we will request child protection records from the previous educational establishment (if none are received).

### Interagency working

It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Leads to ensure that the school is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any child protection conference called for children on the school roll or previously known to them. Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with the parent(s) / carer(s). Whoever attends will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions at the conference.

If a child is subject to a Child Protection or a Child in Need plan, the Designated Safeguarding Leads will ensure the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, emotional well-being, academic progress, welfare and presentation.

If the school is part of the core group, the Designated Safeguarding Leads will ensure the school is represented, provides appropriate information and contributes to the plan at these meetings.

Any concerns about the Child Protection plan and / or the child's welfare will be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of significant harm. In this case the Designated Safeguarding Leads will inform the child's key worker immediately and then record that they have done so and the actions agreed.

#### Allegations about members of the workforce

All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are outlined in the Staff Handbook / Code of Conduct. The school works in accordance with statutory guidance and the SET procedures (LSCB, 2018) in respect of allegations against an adult working with children (in a paid or voluntary capacity). Section 7 of the current SET procedures provides detailed information on this. The school has processes in place for reporting any concerns about a member of staff (or any adult working with children).

Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff will be referred to the Headteacher (or in their absence Head Office). This role is distinct from the designated safeguarding lead as the named person should have sufficient status and authority in the school to manage employment procedures. Staffing matters are confidential and the school operates within statutory guidance around Data Protection.

Where the concern involves the Headteacher, it should be reported direct to the Chair of Governors. SET procedures (LSCB, 2018) require that, where an allegation against a member of staff is received, the Headteacher, senior named person or the Chair of Governors must inform the duty Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the Children's Workforce Allegations Management Team on 03330 139 797 within one working day.

However, wherever possible, contact with the LADO will be made immediately as they will then advise on how to proceed and whether the matter requires Police involvement. The school does not carry out any investigation before speaking to the LADO

#### Promoting positive mental health and resilience in school

Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community and we recognise that schools play a key part in this. Our school wants to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all staff and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which increase someone's vulnerability and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resiliency. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter balance and promote further growth of resilience. It is vital that we work in partnership with parents/carers to support the well-being of our students.

Parents/carers should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

### Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is 'making a disclosure in the public interest' and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider school community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example students in the school or members of the public.

All staff members are made aware of the duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of staff in line with the school's Code of Conduct / Whistleblowing policy. We want everyone to feel able to report any child protection / safeguarding concerns.

However, for members of staff who feel unable to raise these concerns internally, they can call the the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

Parents or others in the wider school community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on: 0808 800 5000 (24 hour helpline) or [email: help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

