

DOCUMENT A

Policy

Safeguarding Children



Review Date: Autumn 2019

Review Schedule: Annual

Person(s) Responsible: Head teacher/Lead First Aid Practitioner

Introduction

Polish School of Native Subjects in Jersey has written this Safeguarding Children's policy to provide an understanding of Safeguarding and to establish internal procedures which demonstrate the Organisation's values and commitment in this particular area. It provides guidance for trustees, staff and volunteers about what to do in specific circumstances.

Within the area of safeguarding, it is vital that all staff, including volunteers, know what to do if they are concerned about a child or young person. It is equally important that others are aware that the Organisation takes the safety and welfare of children at risk into consideration in every activity that is undertaken.

The first part of this document provides the Organisation's Safeguarding Children's Policy followed by internal Procedures.

The Organisation accepts that having a Safeguarding Children's Policy and internal Procedures are not enough in themselves to cover the wider remit of caring for children and young people, which is primarily about prevention; the organisation will also develop suitable training and provide advice to trustees, staff and volunteers where necessary.

Safeguarding Children Policy

The Organisation is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and young people, recognising its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children at risk from harm, abuse and exploitation.

The Organisation acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

Trustees, staff, volunteers and the Organisation's members will endeavour to work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

In implementing this Safeguarding Children Policy, the Organisation will:

- Ensure that all trustees, staff, volunteers and members understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation;
- Ensure that all trustees, staff, volunteers and members understand their responsibility to work at all times towards maintaining high standards of practice;
- Ensure that all trustees, staff, volunteers and members understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child at risk, or a trustee, staff, volunteer or member's conduct

towards a child at risk, to the Organisation's named/designated person for safeguarding issues which will be Monika Pal, School Director

- Ensure that the named/designated person Monika Pal understands their responsibility to refer any safeguarding concerns to the statutory agencies (i.e. Police and / or Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH));
- Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of trustees, staff or volunteers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner;
- Provide opportunities for all trustees, staff or volunteers to develop their skills and knowledge, particularly in relation to the welfare and protection of children;
- Ensure that children and young people are enabled to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues and will have access to the Organisation's Complaints Procedure;
- Endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the welfare and safeguarding of children and young people.

Commitment

The Organisation is fully committed to protect and promote individual human rights, the capacity for independence and improved wellbeing so that children stay safe and are at all times protected from abuse or neglect.

The central purpose of the Organisation's Safeguarding Children Policy and internal Procedures is to ensure that people know how to recognise signs of abuse and neglect and, where they do occur, that there is an appropriate response to protect those affected from further harm.

Definitions

A Child

Anyone under the age of eighteen, in Jersey.

What is abuse?

The following definitions are based on those identified in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015:

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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development, and may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;

- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another e.g. where there is domestic violence and abuse;
- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger;
- Exploiting and corrupting children.

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

Sexual Abuse

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 (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, including online and with mobile phones, or in the production of, pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or 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.

In addition; Sexual abuse includes abuse of children through sexual exploitation. Penetrative sex where one of the partners is under the age of 16 is illegal, although prosecution of similar age, partners is not usual. However, where a child is under the age of 13 it is classified as rape.

Neglect

Neglect is 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 misuse, maternal mental ill health or learning difficulties or a cluster of such issues. Where there is domestic abuse and violence towards a carer, the needs of the child may be neglected.

Once a child is born, neglect 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.

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

Procedure for what to do if you suspect abuse

All staff, volunteers and members must take the following action where appropriate:

- Ensure the child or young person is safe.
- Listen carefully to what the individual has to say, but do not ask questions other than to clarify what has been said.
- Inform the child disclosing abuse that you cannot keep this information confidential and must pass this information on to the Organisation's named person for safeguarding issues.
- Contact the emergency services if urgent medical help is required.
- Contact the School Director Monika Pal immediately. If the School Director is unavailable then the School Deputy Director Anna Aleksander should be contacted. If you are unable to contact the School Deputy Director because you suspect they may be involved in the abuse, you should contact the School secretary Eliza Piotrowska
- The School Director or Deputy Director will decide whether to contact MASH (Tel: 519000)
- The School Director or Deputy Director will decide whether to contact the Police if it is suspected that a crime has been committed (Tel: 612612 or 999)
- Take care to preserve any evidence e.g. clothing, bedding, weapons, text messages, letters etc.
- Record the allegation or your suspicion of abuse as accurately as possible.

Do Not:

- Question the child or young person as this may affect any police action.
- Discuss the allegation / abuse with the alleged perpetrator.
- Discuss the allegation / abuse with other staff members, other than School Director or Deputy Director
- Take any other action without first discussing this with the School Director or Deputy Director
- Promise to maintain confidentiality.
- Delay reporting the incident / allegation.

Raising Concerns

All staff, trustees, volunteers and members have a clear professional and moral duty to report any allegations or suspicions of abuse or potential abuse of a child to School Director or Deputy Director. Any worker within the Organisation who is involved directly or indirectly with children has the responsibility to be aware of the possibility of abuse. They have a responsibility to take appropriate action whenever there is concern that abuse may have taken place or may occur, unless someone does something to stop it.

It is important that any allegation of abuse is taken seriously, however insignificant it may seem on first appearance to the person receiving the information.

Who to Tell

If you have a concern about actual or possible abuse to a child or young person, generally, you should talk urgently to the School Director or Deputy Director making clear what you know or suspect. The only exception to this course of action is if the School Director may be implicated in your concerns. In these circumstances you should talk directly to the Deputy Director or School Secretary.

When a suspected incident of child abuse is reported, the School Director or Deputy Director or School Secretary, must take it seriously and decide whether the allegation needs further

investigation. If it appears that there are grounds to believe that child abuse is or may be happening, the School Director or the Deputy Director or School Secretary, must ensure that the information is acted upon at the earliest possible opportunity and no later than at the end of the working day in question.

If the School Director is uncertain that abuse has occurred or is indicated, then advice should be sought from the Deputy Director or School Secretary, who will make an enquiry to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Tel: 519000 email: Enquiries-MASH@gov.je

An enquiry form is available here:

<http://www.gov.je/Caring/IndependentMonitoring/SPB/Pages/MultiAgencyChildProtectionProcedures.aspx>

Parents/carers should be informed if a MASH enquiry is being made unless to do so would put the child at risk of harm. However, inability to inform parents for any reason should not prevent an enquiry being made. MASH should be contacted and the case discussed.

The details required should include the following:

- your name, position / relationship and contact details as the referrer
- when the incident happened
- where the incident happened
- who was involved (names and relationships)
- details of the concern or alleged abuse
- what action was taken and other organisations involved e.g. police, ambulance
- whether there is an immediate or future risk.

Ensuring immediate safety

If the child or young person is in immediate danger or in need of urgent medical attention, action must be taken to ensure their immediate safety and well-being. This may include contacting the appropriate emergency services by calling (dial 112 or 999) or taking a child to the Emergency Department at the General Hospital, St Helier.

Important things to consider when abuse is known or suspected

In all cases where a child is in **immediate** danger, urgent action must be taken at once, by calling the relevant emergency services.

If there is reason to believe a crime has been committed, the Police should be contacted promptly so that they are able to gather forensic evidence immediately.

It should be noted that the Police, as well as taking a lead in any criminal investigation, are also available for advice and consultation.

Allegations against staff [see p.11 Safe Recruitment Policy]

Where an allegation concerns the actions of a member of staff (who may also be a colleague), it is the clear duty of all those concerned to report the matter as set out above. When it comes to raising

child abuse concerns, no distinction should be made between staff and other persons. The child or young person's wellbeing is paramount.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, the **School Director**, or **Deputy Director or School Secretary**, will need to clarify with the investigating team what action he or she intends to take under the Disciplinary Policy, which should involve suspending the individual whilst the allegations are investigated.

It is important to ensure that the action taken:

- protects the rights and wishes of the child;
- protects the rights of the member of staff concerned;
- enables the School Director or Deputy school Director or School Secretary, to take appropriate action either on behalf of the child or against the staff member where appropriate; and
- does not compromise any criminal investigation.

To achieve these outcomes it will be necessary for the School Director or Deputy Director or School Secretary, to coordinate his/her responsibilities for pursuing disciplinary matters in relation to the member of staff with those of the 'investigating team', who will be working within these Safeguarding Children's procedures.

Anyone who works, or has contact, with a child or young person thought to be at risk has a responsibility to report actual or suspected abuse. This includes family members, volunteers, health workers, manager and staff.

Doing nothing is not an option.

Important links

1. Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures

In Jersey, agencies have agreed to work together to the Safeguarding Partnership Board Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures and internal agency procedures should dovetail with these; they can be found at:

<http://jerseyscb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>

2. Multi agency training

The Safeguarding Partnership Board provides information about available training and courses which can be accessed at:

<http://www.gov.je/Caring/IndependentMonitoring/SPB/Pages/SafeguardingTraining.aspx>