

Nottingham Free School

WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY  
FOR CHILD PROTECTION  
AND  
TO SAFEGUARD AND  
PROMOTE THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN

Nottingham Free School recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children and protecting them from harm.

This Child Protection Policy will be reviewed by School Leadership and adopted by the Local Governing Body with approval from the TAG Trust Board.

Date of last review: September 2014

Date of next review: September 2016

Role	Name	Contact Details
Designated Governor for Child Protection	Mr Kul S Ghattaora	kayesjee@yahoo.co.uk
Designated Person for Child Protection	Mrs Kay Gray	kgray@nottinghamfreeschool.co.uk
Designated Person for Child Protection	Mrs Jenny Brown	jbrown@nottinghamfreeschool.co.uk
Designated Person for Child Protection	Mrs Jodie Harnan	jharnan@nottinghamfreeschool.co.uk
LA Child Protection Contact/LADO	Cheryl Stollery	01623 433169

### **School Commitment**

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. We have developed this policy in consultation with the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board.

All parents/carers are made aware of the school's responsibilities with regard to child protection procedures and how we will safeguard and promote the welfare of their children through the publication of the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.

The school has certain duties and responsibilities as set out within the Education Act 2002, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2014 and Working Together 2010 which are incorporated into this policy.

## Introduction

There are five main elements to our policy:

- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her child protection plan.
- Raising awareness of safeguarding children, child protection and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.

Included within the policy are a number of appendices:

- Appendix 1 Roles and Responsibilities
- Appendix 2 Types of Abuse
- Appendix 3 Concerns
- Appendix 4 Records and Monitoring
- Appendix 5 Regulated Activity
- Appendix 6 Making a Referral

## The Policy

**To provide a safe and learning environment the school will:**

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Ensure that every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.
- Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse:
  - availability of local and online advice
  - recognising and managing risks including online and running away
  - developing healthy relationships and awareness of domestic violence, bullying and abuse
  - recognising how pressure from others can affect their behaviour.
- Take all reasonable measures to ensure risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised.
- Take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child, working to local policies and procedures in full working partnership with agencies.
- Ensure robust child protection arrangements are in place and embedded in the daily life and practice of the school.
- Promote pupil health and safety.
- Promote safe practice and challenge unsafe practice.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to deal with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers (*Part 4: Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against*

*Teachers and Other Staff, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2014) and set out within the Local Inter-agency Procedures).*

- Put in place and promote robust anti-bullying (including cyber bullying) strategies.
- Provide first aid and meet the health needs of children with medical conditions in accordance with '**Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions', 2014.**
- Ensure school site security.
- Address drugs and substance misuse issues.
- Support and plan for young people in custody and their resettlement back into the community.
- Work with all agencies with regard to missing children, anti-social behaviour/gang activity and violence in the community/knife crime.
- Everyone having a duty to safeguard children inside/outside the school environment including school trips, extended schools, activities and vocational placements.

**We will follow the procedures set out by the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) and take account of guidance issued by the DfE to:**

- Ensure we have a designated senior and deputy person for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and the governing body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection. **Make all staff and volunteers aware that safeguarding incidents could happen anywhere and staff should be alert to possible concerns being raised at Nottingham Free School. All staff may raise concerns directly with Children's Social Services.**
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- Notify Children's Social Care if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at child protection conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately; documenting and collating information on individual children to support early identification, referral and actions to safeguard.
- Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.
- Apply confidentiality appropriately.

- Apply the escalation policy if there is any concern about the actions or inaction of social care staff or staff from other agencies.

### **Supporting children**

We recognise that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. 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.
- A school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Children's Social Care (in line with Pathway to Provision), education welfare service and education psychology service, use of Children's and Families Direct, Early Help Assessment and where appropriate the complex needs forum.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil leaves and is subject to a child protection plan or where there have been wider safeguarding concerns, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

### **Safe Staff and Supporting Staff**

- Safer recruitment processes will be followed in accordance with *'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2014'*.
- Checks and references are an essential part of this process.
- Staff will have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour. The Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People (DFCS 2009). This should assist in limiting complaints against staff of abuse of trust and/or allegations.
- In the event of any complaint or allegation against a member of staff, the headteacher (or the Senior/Deputy Designated Person) if the headteacher is not present, should be notified immediately. If it relates to the headteacher, the chair of governors should be informed.
- In the case of a serious allegation being made against a member of staff the advice of the LADO should be sought before any investigation is commenced.
- Staff may find some of the issues relating to child protection upsetting and may need support which will be provided.

## **Links to other Local Authority policies**

This policy, together with the following, should be read alongside and in conjunction with other policies regarding the safety and welfare of children. These together make up the suite of policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this school

- *Physical intervention/positive handling*
- *Behaviour Management*
- *Attendance Policy*
- *Anti-Bullying*
- *Self-Harm Policy*
- *BME and Equality*
- *Health and Safety and Access Policy*
- *Disability Equality Action Plan*
- *Special Educational Needs*
- *Pathway to Provision (NCC)*
- *Escalation policy (NCC)*

## **Appendix 1**

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Senior Designated Person Role**

We have a senior designated person for safeguarding children and child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. This Senior Designated Person is a senior member of the school leadership team.

We also have a Deputy Designated Person who is a school leader and Deputy Designated members of staff who are trained and will provide additional support to ensure the responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding children are fully embedded within the school ethos and that specific duties are discharged. This entails supporting the Senior Designated Person in dealing with referrals, attending Child Protection Conferences and supporting the child/children.

We acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding pupils. Our Senior Designated Person will ensure there is a structured procedure within the school, which will be followed by all of the members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.

The Senior Designated Person is responsible for the following:

#### **Referrals, Tracking and Monitoring**

The Senior Designated Person will:

- Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the educational establishment when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Liaise with the headteacher/principal (where the Senior Designated Person role is not carried out by the headteacher) to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations. The Senior Designated Person will ensure there is always cover for this role.
- Maintain an overview of all children about whom there are concerns ie subject to a children protection plan, CiN plan, LAC, EHU assessment or there is a concerns file (*Appendix 9 may assist*).

#### **Training**

The Senior Designated Person will attend training in order to:

- Have a working knowledge of how the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board operates, the conduct of a child protection conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands this policy especially new or part-time staff who may work with different educational establishments.

- Ensure all staff receive induction training covering child protection and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately they arise.
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals/concerns.
- Be proactive in identifying suitable training courses that would develop and enhance their knowledge and attend any relevant or refresher training courses at least every two years.

### **Raising Awareness**

The Senior Designated Person will:

- Ensure the school's safeguarding and child protection policy is updated and reviewed annually, and work with the governing body/proprietor regarding this.
- Contribute to any development work within the school (*Appendix 10 may assist*).
- Ensure parents have access to copies of the safeguarding and child protection policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the establishment in this to avoid conflict later.
- Ensure when children leave the school, that their safeguarding/child protection file is discussed with the Senior Designated Person at the new school, as soon as possible and make sure that the concern file is transferred separately from the main pupil file. This file will document all concerns as well as child protection and safeguarding concerns.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the headteacher**

The headteacher of the school will ensure that:

- The policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented, and followed by all staff.
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Senior Designated Person and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children.
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of our governing body**

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the school's ethos and reflected in the school's day to day safeguarding practices by:

- Ensuring that the school has effective policies and procedures in place in accordance with this policy, and monitor the school's compliance with them.
- Ensuring there is an individual member of the governing body to champion child protection issues within the school, liaise with the headteacher about them, and provide information and reports to the governing body. However, it will not be appropriate for that person to take the lead in dealing with

allegations of abuse made against the headteacher. That is more properly the role of the chair of governors or, in the absence of a chair, the vice chair.

- Ensuring that the governing body is collectively responsible for the school's safeguarding arrangements. All members of the governing body will undertake training about child protection to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities.
- Ensuring that the headteacher, and all other staff who work with children, undertake training which is kept up-to-date by refresher training at three yearly intervals.
- Ensuring the temporary staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities.
- Exercising their disciplinary functions in respect of allegations against a member of staff or as a consequence of dealing with a complaint.

## Appendix 2

### Types of abuse

**Abuse:** a form 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:** a form of abuse which 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.

### **Further information on Child Sexual Exploitation and Female Genital Mutilation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practice FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 11-12 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines referred to previously. Staff should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

## **Extremism and Radicalism**

Nottingham Free School has a statutory duty under The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and the statutory Prevent Guidance 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Extremism is defined as vocal or active opposition to fundamental values of our society, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Radicalisation is defined as the act or process of encouraging extremist views or actions in others, including forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

There are a number of behaviours which may indicate a child is at risk of being radicalised or exposed to extremist views which could include becoming distant or showing loss of interest in friends and activities or possession of materials or symbols associated with an extremist cause. Staff are expected to be vigilant in protecting pupils from the threat of radicalisation and refer any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Staff will receive appropriate training to ensure they have the knowledge and confidence to identify pupils at risk, challenge extremist ideas and know where and how to refer concerns.

## Appendix 3

### Identifying Concerns

All members of staff, volunteers and governors will know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse, and will be familiar with procedures to be followed.

If a child chooses to tell a member of staff about alleged abuse, there are a number of actions that staff will undertake to support the child:

- The key facts will be established in language that the child understands and the child's words will be used in clarifying/expanding what has been said.
- No promises will be made to the child eg to keep secrets.
- Staff will stay calm and be available to listen.
- Staff will actively listen with the utmost care to what the child is saying.
- Question normally without pressurising and only using open questions.  
**Leading questions should be avoided as much as possible.**
- Staff will not put words in the child's mouth but note the main points carefully.
- A full written record will be kept by the staff and all duly signed, dated including the time the conversation with the child took place, outline what was said, the child's body language, etc.
- It is not appropriate for staff to make children write statements about abuse that may have happened to them.
- Staff will reassure the child and let them know that they were right to inform them and inform the child that this information will now have to be passed on.
- The Senior Designated Person will be immediately informed, unless the disclosure has been made to them.
- If a student discloses that they have self-harmed, please refer to designated person as soon as possible.

### Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential, however, a member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a pupil.

Where there is a child protection concern it will be passed immediately to the Designated Senior Person and/or to Children's Social Care.

The headteacher or Designated Senior Person will disclose personal information, including the level of involvement of other agencies, about a pupil to other members of staff only on a 'need to know' basis.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

## Appendix 4

### Records and Monitoring

Any concerns about a child will be recorded in writing within 24 hours. All records will provide a factual and evidence based account and there will be accurate recording of any actions. Records will be signed, dated and, where appropriate, witnessed.

It is advised that a chronology is kept in the main school file prior to the commencement of a concern file. Staff, particularly pastoral staff, will record any minor concerns on the chronology and will take responsibility for alerting the designated person should the number of concerns rise or, in their professional judgement, become significant.

At the point at which a concern file (see below) is commenced then the chronology can be transferred to the concern file.

Safeguarding, child protection and welfare concerns will be recorded and kept in a separate secure file known as a 'concern' file (formerly referred to as a child protection file), this will be securely stored and away from the main pupil file. The main pupil file should have a **red C** in the top right hand corner to denote a separate file exists (or a similar and consistent coding).

The establishment of a 'concern' file, which is separate from the child's main school file, is an important principle in terms of storing and collating information about children which relates to either a child protection or safeguarding concern or an accumulation of concerns about a child's welfare which are outside of the usual range of concerns which relate to ordinary life events. It needs to be borne in mind that what constitutes a 'concern' for one child may not be a 'concern' for another and the particular child's circumstances and needs will differ ie a child subject to a child protection plan, looked after, CIN may be looked at differently to a child recently bereaved, parental health issues etc. Professional judgement therefore will be an important factor when making this decision and will need clear links between pastoral staff and designated safeguarding leads in school (named designated person)

Please note that whilst the particular 'name' given to the file (i.e. concern or child protection) is a matter for the school, using the term child protection may give the impression that this file just relates to child protection issues when this should not be the case if we consider broader safeguarding concerns. Research indicates that it is invariably children who are not necessarily formally considered to be 'at risk' through the provision of a child protection plan, who are killed or seriously harmed and therefore to rely on child protection processes is not a sufficient safeguard.

Having too low a threshold for a concern file may be as problematic as having too a high a threshold.

It is also important to recognise that their files will be subject to external scrutiny for example through the serious case review process or through audit. Equally, it is important to understand why recording is important and appreciate that messages from research into serious case reviews identified that there were often significant concerns about the quality of records in schools and educational establishments and also the failure to pass on information when children and young people left.

A 'concern' file should be commenced in the event of:

- A referral to Children's and Families Direct
- A number of minor concerns on the child's main school file.
- Any child open to social care.

It is suggested that within a child's 'concern' file that there is a:

- Front sheet.

- Chronology.
- A record of concern in more detail and body map where appropriate.
- A record of concerns and issues shared by others.

The school will keep written records of concerns about children even where there is no need to refer the matter to Children's Social Care through Children's and Families Direct (see appendix 6) immediately but these records will be kept within the separate concerns file.

It is essential that accurate records are kept up to date and reviewed regularly by the Senior Designated Person to evidence and support actions taken by staff in discharging their safeguarding arrangements. Original notes will be retained (but clearly identified as such) as this is a contemporaneous account and are important if there are any criminal proceedings arising from current or historical allegations of abuse or neglect.

It is important to appreciate that files may be taken for the purpose of external scrutiny for example for a serious case review or for audit.

Timely and accurate recording will take place when there are any issues regarding a child. A recording of each and every episode/incident/concern/activity regarding that child, including telephone calls to other professionals, needs to be recorded on a chronology kept within the confidential file for that child. This will include any contact from other agencies who may wish to discuss concerns relating to a child. Actions will be agreed and roles and responsibility of each agency will be clarified and outcomes recorded. The chronology will be brief and log activity, the full recording will be on a record of concern. ***There are templates attached as guidance which include a file front sheet, chronology, record of concern and a body map.***

More detailed recording on the record of concern will be signed and dated and include an analysis, taking account of the holistic needs of the child, and any historical information held on the child's file. Support and advice will be sought from social care, whenever necessary. In this way a picture can emerge and this will assist in promoting an evidence based assessment and any action that needs to be taken. Discussion with all relevant parties can lead to a decision being made. This may include no further action, whether a EHU should be undertaken, or whether a referral should be made to Children's Social Care in line with the NCC Pathway to Provision document, March 2013.

Such robust practice across child protection and in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children will assist the school to identify early any concerns and this may prevent future harm.

The Senior Designated Person will ensure a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm (through the concern file and through an ongoing dialogue with pastoral staff), and will ensure that we contribute to assessments of need and support multi-agency plans for those children. The concern file can be active or non-active in terms of monitoring i.e. a child is no longer LAC, subject to a child protection plan or EHU and this level of activity can be recorded on the front sheet as a start and end date. If future concerns then arise it can become active again and indicated as such on the front sheet and through the use of the chronology to review this as new information arises.

If the child moves to another school, the concern file must be sent or taken, as part of the admission/transition arrangements, to the Senior Designated Person at the new

establishment/school. There will be a timely liaison between the two Senior Designated Persons in order to ensure a smooth and safe transition for the child.

## Appendix 5

### Regulated Activity

This involves contact with children and is:

Of a specified nature; or	Frequently, intensity and/or overnight (period condition)
In a specified setting	

Schools are defined as 'specified settings' in the Act – all activity within those settings is Regulated Activity (as long as the blue box applies)

### Period condition

More than 3 times in a 30 day period = frequent or intensive

At any time between 2am and 6am with opportunity for face to face contact = overnight.

### There are three types of DBS checks:

1. **Standard:** PNC check for records of convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings.
2. **Enhanced:** PNC check for above, plus other information held by police that they consider relevant.
3. **Enhanced with barred list information:** for those engaged in Regulated Activity. Includes a check of the Children's Barred list.

## Appendix 6:

### Children and Families referrals:

Contact number for any concern:

(Monday-Friday 8.30am-5pm)

**0115 8764800**

**0115 8761000 (out of hours)**

