

# Aylesford School

and Sixth Form College



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## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Written: June 2020  
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Lead: Designated Safeguarding Lead  
Via: Standards, Personnel and Curriculum

**'from potential to reality'**

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**Headteacher: Tim Hodgson**

# **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

## **1 Introduction**

The Childrens' Act 2004 and HM Government documentation 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018); and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2019) places a duty on all academy schools.

- 1.1 The governors and staff of Aylesford School fully recognise the contribution we make to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers have a full and active part to play in protecting our students from harm.
- 1.2 All staff and governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.
- 1.3 The aims of this policy are:
  - 1.3.1 To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
  - 1.3.2 To raise the awareness of both teaching and support staff of child protection issues and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
  - 1.3.3 To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
  - 1.3.4 To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
  - 1.3.5 To develop a structured procedure within the school, which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
  - 1.3.6 To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Services
  - 1.3.7 To ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability and that details of all staff are held in a Single Central Register (SCR).

## **2 Procedures**

- 2.1 Our school procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with Warwickshire Safeguarding procedure as detailed in the 'Inter Agency child Protection Procedures' on-line documentation. We will ensure that:
  - 2.1.1 We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who undertakes regular training.
  - 2.1.2 We have several deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads who will also undertake regular training will support the DSL.
  - 2.1.3 All members of staff develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse.
  - 2.1.4 All members of staff know how to respond to a student who discloses abuse.
  - 2.1.5 All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures.
- 2.2 Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and up-dated. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will also meet those school governors with responsibility for Child Protection issues on a termly basis.
- 2.3 All new members of staff will be given training on our child protection procedures as part of their induction into the school.

### **3 Responsibilities**

- 3.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:
  - 3.1.1 Adhering to the Warwickshire Safeguarding procedures with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse.
  - 3.1.2 Keeping written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
  - 3.1.3 Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from student records.
  - 3.1.4 Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the student records.
  - 3.1.5 Ensuring that any student currently on the child protection register who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to Social Services

### **4 Supporting Children**

- 4.1 We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth. We recognise that a child in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated. We recognise that a child may feel self-blame.
- 4.2 We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- 4.3 We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.
- 4.4 Our school will support all students by:
  - 4.4.1 Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
  - 4.4.2 Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
  - 4.4.3 Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
  - 4.4.4 Notifying Social Services as soon as there is a significant concern.
  - 4.4.5 Providing continuing support to a student about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the student's new school.
  - 4.4.6 The school employs various strategies to support learning – one of which is 1:1 support/intervention. Where this strategy is employed, staff are advised to adhere to a protocol that protects both them and the student.

### **5.0 Confidentiality**

- 5.1 We recognise that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential.
- 5.2 The Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose any information about a student to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

- 5.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 5.4 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

## **6 Supporting Staff**

- 6.1 We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- 6.2 We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the designated teacher and to seek further support as appropriate.
- 6.3 The school employs various strategies to support learning – one of which is 1:1 support/intervention. Where this strategy is employed, staff are advised to adhere to a protocol that protects both them and the student.

## **7 Allegations against staff**

- 7.1 We understand that a student may make an allegation against a member of staff.
- 7.2 If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher.
- 7.3 The Headteacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Manager and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- 7.4 If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the designated teacher will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult with the Warwickshire Safeguarding or LADO.
- 7.5 The school has adopted the LA Policy for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which will be readily available in the school.

## **8 Whistleblowing**

- 8.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- 8.2 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

## **9 Physical Intervention**

- 9.1 We have adopted the LA Policy on Physical Intervention and understand that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.
- 9.2 We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

## **10 Bullying**

- 10.1 Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## **11 Racist Incidents**

- 11.1 Our policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## **12 Substance Abuse**

- 12.1 Our policy on Substance Abuse is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that incidents involving drug or alcohol abuse may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## **13 Prevention**

- 13.1 We recognise that our school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our students by providing students with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.
- 13.2 The school community will therefore:
- 13.2.1 Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- 13.2.2 Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- 13.2.3 Include in the curriculum opportunities for RE/PSHE+C which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

## **14 Health and Safety**

- 14.1 Our Health and Safety Policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

## **15 Staff Checks**

- 15.1 List 99 and CRB checks are made following staff interviews and appointments for the protection of all children. All details will be held in a single central register.

## **16 Report of Suspected Abuse**

- 16.1 In all cases where member of staff considers that they have good cause to suspect abuse they should report their suspicions to the designated teachers, or in their absence to the Headteacher who will deal with the matter. They will follow the procedures laid down by Warwickshire Safeguarding. These procedures entail contacting a member of the local Child Protection Team for advice in the first instance.
- 16.2 The same procedures should be followed when information about abuse is volunteered to a member of staff by the child concerned. Information may arrive via another student/friend of the child. This may sometimes be done obliquely rather than directly.

## **17 Disclosure : Guidance for staff**

17.1 All staff may find themselves in a position where a child discloses information of a sensitive nature:-

### **Do:-**

- Reassure.
- Find a quiet place to talk where you will not be interrupted.
- Take all concerns/allegations seriously.
- Tell the child you will need to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead and why.
- Listen but not pressurise.
- Ask only open questions. (In circumstances where a child has an injury but no explanation is volunteered, it is acceptable to enquire how the injury was sustained).
- Let the child know you are pleased to have been told.
- Offer on-going support and that you will do your best to protect the child.
- Follow the school's internal policy regarding referral in relation to Child Protection (see Appendix 1).

### **Do Not:-**

- Promise confidentiality that you cannot keep.
- Make false promises of reassurances about what will happen.
- Interrupt the child to inform others.
- Make judgements of any kind about the alleged abuser.
- Ask lots of detailed questions or press for answers a child is unwilling to give.

## **18 Child Protection Conferences and Core Group Meetings**

18.1 Child Protection Conferences and Core Group Meetings will be called, when appropriate. A Designated Safeguarding Lead will be required to attend to share information about circumstances that have emerged or are known about in school. Written reports will need to be presented focusing on the child's educational progress, achievements, attendance, behaviour, participation, relationships and interactions with other children and, where appropriate, the child's appearance.

## **19 Monitoring and supporting students**

19.1 Students will be monitored as required. This may require the involvement of individual members of staff (e.g. Head of Student Progress, Tutor, Office Staff) in the process.

19.2 In accordance with paragraph 65 and page 95 ('Availability') of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019, we understand the importance of making safeguarding arrangements to monitor and ensure the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable students during periods when the school is closed or partially closed due to critical incidents (such as, for example, the Covid 19 pandemic in 2020). (see appendix 2)

19.3 The Governors Personnel Committee will liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead on a regular basis to ensure that matters relating to child protection issues are consistent with Warwickshire Safeguarding procedures.

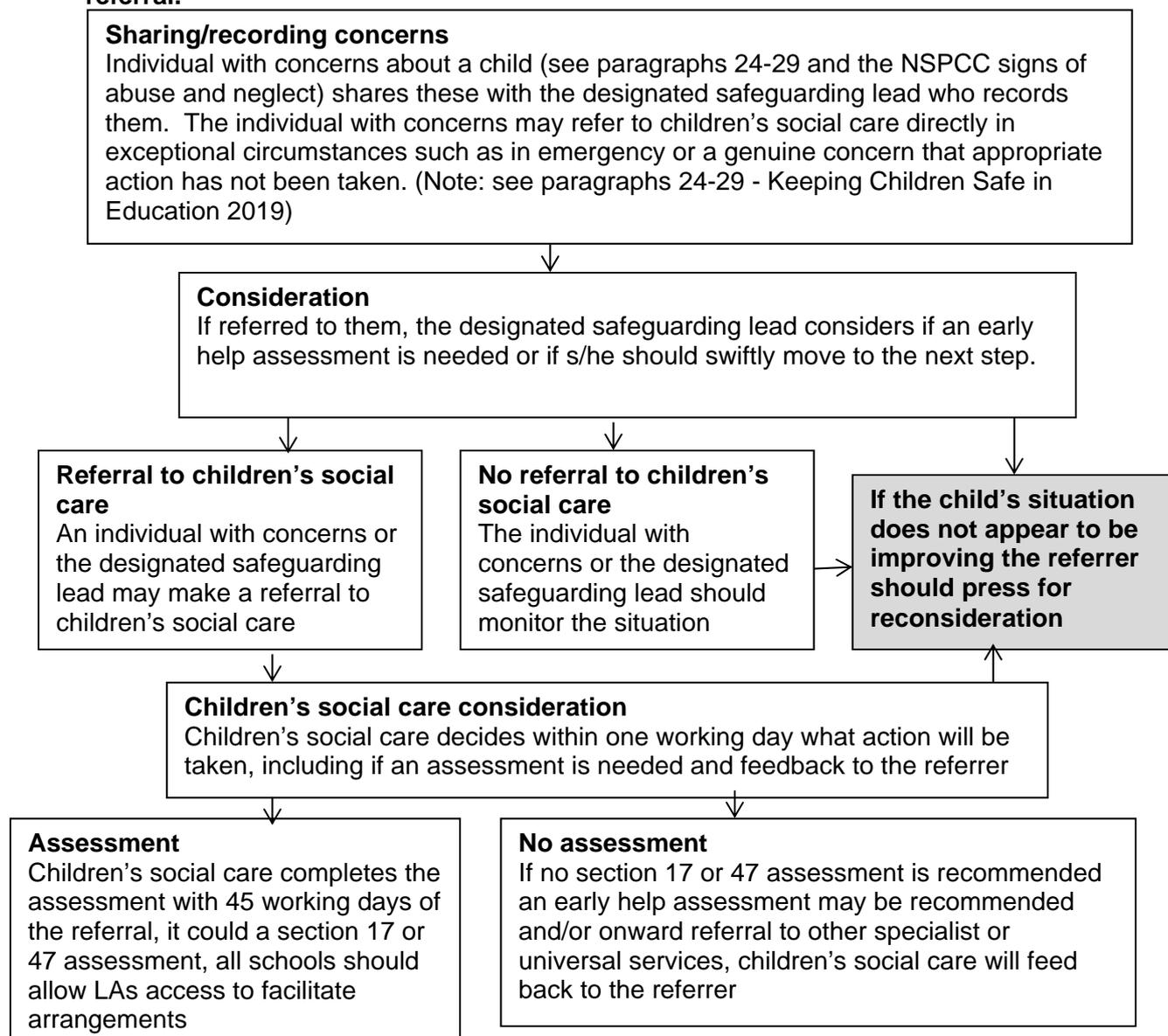
## **20 Parental Involvement**

- 20.1 Parents will be informed in the Parent and Carers Handbook that the school's responsibility to ensure the well-being of all students necessitates a Child Protection policy and in some cases a referral to the Social Services Childrens' Team and/or Warwickshire Safeguarding.

# CHILD PROTECTION FLOW CHART

## Action when a child has suffered or is likely to suffer harm

This diagram illustrates what action should be taken and who should take it where there are concerns about a child. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. **Anybody can make a referral.**



In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against the staff member, see part 4 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2019 which explains action the school should take in respect of the staff member.

Where a child and family would benefit from co-ordinated support from more than one agency (e.g. education, health, housing, police) there should be an inter-agency assessment. These assessments should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989. The early help assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who could be a teacher, special needs co-ordinator, General Practitioner (GP), family support work and/or health visitor.

Where there are more complex needs, help may be provided under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (children in need). Where there are child protection concerns local authority services must make enquiries and decide if any action must be taken under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, see Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 for more information.

## Safeguarding arrangements during school closures due to critical incidents

In accordance with paragraph 65 and page 95 ('Availability') of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019*, we understand the importance of making safeguarding arrangements to monitor and ensure the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable students during periods when the school is closed or partially closed due to critical incidents (such as, for example, the Covid 19 pandemic in 2020).

Consequently, in the event of a known and planned school closure or partial school closure, specific guidance from the DfE and Warwickshire Safeguarding will be sought and adhered to.

The exact actions to be taken will be dependent on the specific circumstances – but will comprise of the following core procedures:

1	<p>A register will be created of all vulnerable children to include those who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• subject of a Child Protection plan *</li> <li>• looked after by the local authority *</li> <li>• subject of an EHCP *</li> <li>• subject of a Child in Need plan *</li> <li>• young carers</li> <li>• disabled</li> <li>• facing other social difficulties or welfare needs and require early help/additional support that the school would want to provide</li> </ul>
2	<p>The register will contain the names and contact details of parents/carers; social workers, and other key professionals.</p>
3	<p>The register will be accessible to all designated safeguarding leads (DSLs). Each student on the vulnerable children register will be allocated to a named DSL who will be responsible for ensuring that the identified level of support.</p>
4	<p>The register will be RAG rated to identify those students that should be in school where possible (ie all those marked * above), and those that should be supported by regular contact from a DSL.</p> <p>Red - most at risk of harm or neglect and fewest protective factors (would include all children subject of a child protection plan)</p> <p>Amber - a moderate risk of harm, but with some protective factors (would include those with a Child in Need plan)</p> <p>Green - some concerns or unmet needs; or have been red or amber and need monitoring.</p>

5	For any child marked * above who does not attend school (where attendance is possible), or for whom contact cannot be made, liaison with Children's Social Care will be made. The social worker will be informed about the absence of any child subject of a child protection plan, child in need plan or who is looked-after on the first and each subsequent day of absence.
6	For each child identified as vulnerable but who we consider can be safely cared for at home we shall identify the nature and frequency of contact required to ascertain their safety and wellbeing. This might include phone calls, text contact, Skype or home visits.
7	All school safeguarding policies including the child protection, staff behaviour and ICT acceptable use policies must be followed at all times both in face to face and electronic communication with students. No staff member should use their own ICT or telephone equipment; or private message children; or video conference with a child directly other than via school-owned equipment subject to parental agreement as above.
9	Where concerns for a child at home reach the threshold for significant harm, a referral will be made to Children's Social Care/Police as per normal safeguarding procedures.
10	The DSL team should be in contact on a regular basis to discuss the welfare and status of each student and must liaise with MASH, Social Care, family support workers and other key partners. When working from home, DSLs must be accessible via regular access to their school email account.