

Safeguarding Children Policy

Purpose of this policy

1.1 The purpose of this safeguarding children policy is to ensure that procedures are in place so that every registered pupil at The Free School Norwich is safe and protected. This policy encompasses the duties placed on schools with regard to the Prevent agenda and keeping students safe from radicalisation and extremism.

1.2 This policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers and regular visitors about how concerns are managed.

Introduction

2.1 The Free School Norwich fully recognises the contribution it can make in protecting children from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of registered pupils at our school. The key elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support.

2.2 The Children Acts 1989 and 2004 state that a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. Therefore when this policy uses the word 'child' or 'children' it is referring to 'children and young people'.

2.3 This policy applies to all staff, parents, governors, trustees, volunteers, visitors and pupils.

Our ethos

3.1 The Free School Norwich promotes an ethos where our pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.

3.2 Children who are abused or witness abuse may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world in a positive way. For such children, school may be one of the few stable, secure and predictable components in their life. Other children may be vulnerable because they have a disability or they are in care. We seek to provide all our children with the necessary support to keep them safe and build their self-esteem and self-confidence.

3.3 We want children at The Free School Norwich to feel able to talk freely to any member of staff or regular visitor if they are worried or concerned about something.

3.4 All staff and volunteers will, through induction and training, know how to recognise concerns about a child and know how to manage a disclosure made by a child.

3.5 We will not make promises to a child we cannot keep and we will not keep secrets. Every child will be told, by the adult they have chosen to talk to, what will happen next.

3.6 The Free School Norwich will endeavour to provide activities and opportunities in the PSHE curriculum and through SMSC in the wider curriculum that will equip our children with the necessary skills they need to stay safe. This will include material that will encourage our children to develop essential life skills.

3.7 At all times we will work to establish effective relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies such as Health or Social Care.

Induction

4.1 When staff join The Free School Norwich they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements. They will be given a copy of this policy and told who the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is and who acts in their absence.

4.2 There will be an initial induction programme which will include basic safeguarding information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, when and how to record a concern about the child's welfare. All staff should be made aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act (1989), especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected play in such assessments.

4.3 All regular visitors and volunteers will be told where our policy is kept and who the DSL is.

4.4 When new pupils join The Free School Norwich, all parents and carers will be informed that we have a safeguarding policy. This will be offered to parents should they request a copy. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in social care with child protection enquiries and what happens should we make a referral to another agency.

Safeguarding children training

5.1 *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2018) states that those "in regular contact with children and young people or with adults who are parents and carers" should have access to basic safeguarding children training.

5.2 All staff at The Free School Norwich who are in regular contact with children will need to attend basic safeguarding children training every year. This is referred to as Level 1 safeguarding children training and is provided, in school, by the local authority or by a member of the senior leadership team with at least Level 2 safeguarding qualifications along with Multi Agency training.

5.3 Those staff who have particular responsibilities for safeguarding children will attend more comprehensive Level 1 training and further training provided by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

Recording and reporting concerns about the safety and welfare of a child

6.1 All staff, volunteers and visitors have a responsibility to take prompt action if they are concerned about the safety and welfare of a child.

6.2 If a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm action must be taken immediately.

6.3 Any child may benefit from early help, but all school staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special education needs (whether or not they have a Education, Care, and Health Plan)
- is a young carer
- is frequently missing
- is misusing drugs or alcohol
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child
- has returned home to their family from care

6.4 All concerns about the safety and welfare of a child must be taken seriously.

6.5 All staff, volunteers and visitors should:

- Record the concern, using the school's safeguarding children recording system.
- Always speak to the DSL or the person who acts in their absence.
- Agree with this person what action should be taken, by whom and when it will be reviewed.
- All concerns about a child should initiate some form of action.
- All concerns will be recorded centrally using the school's safeguarding children recording system. Parents or carers should be informed of the concern, *unless* informing them would put the child at risk of harm.

Informing parents and carers

7.1 We ensure that parents and carers have an understanding of our responsibility to promote the safety and welfare of pupils by making our obligations clear in our school prospectus.

7.2 In most cases parents and carers should be informed when concerns have been raised about their child. It is important that parents and carers are given an opportunity to address concerns.

7.3 Parents and carers should generally be informed if a referral is to be made to the Children's Services or any other agency.

7.4 Parents *must not* be informed if it is believed those would put the child at risk, for example if the child has made a disclosure of sexual or physical abuse.

7.5 In this event immediate advice should be sought from the local authority Multi Agency Support Hub (MASH).

The role of the principal

8.1 The principal of The Free School Norwich will ensure that:

- The policies and procedures approved by the governing body are fully implemented, and followed by all staff.
- They adhere to the Local Guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)* or the most recent version thereof.
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the DSL and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other 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.

The role of the governing body

9.1 The governing body will ensure that:

- A named member of the governing body is responsible for championing safeguarding children issues. This person liaises with the principal and provides information to the governing body.
- A member of the governing body will carry out a review of the safeguarding policies and procedures and write a report to the chair of the governing body each year using the "Self-Evaluation Tool for Safeguarding".
- The named governor responsible for championing safeguarding in the school will receive an anonymised report from the DSL outlining any safeguarding issues occurring in the school and what has been done to follow up these issues termly through the principal's report to the governing body.
- A senior member of the school's leadership team is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with safeguarding children (DSL). This person must take appropriate training and attend refresher training every two years.
- The school follows local safeguarding procedures and the school's safeguarding policy is reviewed annually.
- The school operates safe recruitment practices, including appropriate use of references and checks on new staff and volunteers.
- There are procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers which are in line with local authority procedures.
- That any allegation concerning a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported immediately to the Principal. If an allegation is made about the Principal this information should be passed to the chair of the governing body.
- All staff and volunteers in regular contact with children undertake appropriate training which is kept up-to-date by refresher training at yearly intervals. Temporary staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the academy's safeguarding arrangements.
- Any deficiencies or weaknesses that are brought to the attention of the governing body are rectified.

The role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

10.1 The DSL has a specific responsibility for championing the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people registered at the school, including protecting students from radicalisation and extremism as per the Prevent duty (2015).

The role includes:

- Liaising with the governing body and local authority.
- Acting as the first point of contact with the local authority with regard to safeguarding children matters.
- Provision of information to the local authority on how the school discharges its duties with regard to safeguarding children.
- Liaison with the local governing body and local authority about any deficiencies of practice or procedure and how these may be rectified.
- Preparing an anonymised report to the named governor responsible for championing safeguarding in the school about safeguarding issues and how they are dealt with, on a termly basis.
- Referrals to the Children and Families Department and other agencies.
- Ensuring all actions are in line with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board's (LSCB) Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures.
- Supporting and enabling staff to make effective referrals to the Children's Services and other agencies where there are concerns about a child is being abused.
- Holding a copy of all referrals made to the Children's Services and referrals to other agencies related to safeguarding children matters.
- Liaison with the Principal to inform them of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for this role.
- Training.
- Ensuring that staff have received information on safeguarding children at induction, a copy of which should be sent to HR for filing and to the school's and safeguarding manager.
- Ensuring that staff receive information about Prevent and the academy's statutory duties related to this in line with the DfE Prevent Duty (2015).
- Making sure the school's staff receive LSCB approved safeguarding training annually and all staff receive training appropriate to their role. This training to be delivered by DSLs.
- To make use of online safeguarding training for staff joining between direct face-to-face training sessions.
- Ensuring all staff with specific responsibility for safeguarding children attend more in-depth training.
- Ensuring all staff understand internal reporting and recording systems and are clear about what to do if they are worried about a child.
- Raising awareness
- To ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of the school's safeguarding children policy and it is readily available and reviewed annually.
- To ensure that parents/carers of students in the school are fully briefed on current safeguarding issues and their role in supporting their children, especially on social media which although used at home has implications at school.
- Keep up-to-date with changes in local policy and procedure and take account of guidance issued by DfE.

- To ensure that all standard meetings in the school have a standing agenda item of “Safeguarding”.
- Recording concerns.
- Managing the school’s safeguarding children recording system.
- When children leave the establishment, ensuring their child protection or safeguarding file is copied for the new establishment as soon as possible, but *transferred separately* from the main pupil file.
- A termly to governors, which outlines each safeguarding issue which has arisen during the term and also monitors each case for a minimum of four weeks after the initial reporting.

Child protection conferences and core groups

11.1 Members of staff may be asked to attend a child protection conference and/or relevant core group meetings, on behalf of the school, in respect of individual children.

11.2 The person will often be the Principal or DSL, however another member of staff may be asked to attend depending on their role or involvement with the child. The person attending will need to have as much relevant up-to-date information about the child as possible.

11.3 A child protection conference will be convened if it is considered that a child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm. Review conferences and regular core group meetings will be held to monitor the child protection plan.

11.4 All reports for child protection conference will be prepared in advance of the meeting. The information contained in the report will be shared with parents at the conference and will include information relating to the child’s physical, emotional and intellectual development.

11.5 Child protection conferences can be upsetting for parents/carers and we recognise that school staff are likely to have more contact with parents than other professionals involved. We will work in an open and honest way with all parents and carers. Our responsibility is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and our aim is to achieve this in partnership with our parents.

Managing allegations and concerns against staff and volunteers

12.1 Any allegation made against a teacher or other member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child, and supports the person who is subject to the allegation.

12.2 This school follows the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2018).

Safe recruitment and selection of staff

13.1 The school’s recruitment processes conform to the guidance set out in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2018). Every appointment should be made with at least one member of the interview panel having had safer recruitment training.

Complaints or concerns expressed by pupils, staff or volunteers

14.1 The school recognises that listening to children is an important and essential part of safeguarding them against abuse and neglect. To this end any expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual child will be listened to and acted upon to safeguard his/her welfare.

14.2 The school will also seek to ensure that the child or adult who makes a complaint is informed not only about the action the school will take but also the time required to resolve the complaint. The school will also endeavour to keep the child or adult regularly informed as to the progress of his/her complaint.

Operation Encompass

15.1 The Free School Norwich works in partnership with Norfolk Constabulary and Norfolk Children's Services to identify and provide appropriate support to pupils who have experienced domestic violence in their household; this scheme is called Operation Encompass.

15.2 In order to achieve this, Norfolk Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub will share police information of all domestic incidents where one of our pupils has been present with the DSL. On receipt of any information, the DSL will decide on the appropriate support the child requires. This could be silent or overt.

15.3 All information sharing and resulting actions will be undertaken in accordance with the '*Norfolk Joint Agency Protocol for Domestic Abuse – Notifications to Schools*'. We will record this information and store this information in accordance with the record keeping procedures outlined in this policy.

The Prevent Duty

16.1 The DfE Prevent Duty department advice for schools (2015) states, "that in order for schools and childcare providers to fulfil the Prevent duty, it is essential that staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' and childcare providers' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences".

16.2 Safeguarding measures:

- Provide a curriculum that promotes spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils to protect them from the risk of radicalisation.
- Promote British values and the opportunity to challenge extremist views through assemblies, class discussion, citizenship and SMSC.
- Ensure there is a single point of contact (the designated safeguarding lead) and staff in place for their absence.
- Ensure that the designated safeguarding lead has completed Prevent training.
- Provide appropriate training to academy staff to recognise radicalisation, extremism and pupils who are vulnerable to radicalisation and ensure they are fully aware of the school protocols when concerned about a student.

- Work with the LSCB to assess students of concern and refer vulnerable people to Channel if advised.
- Prohibit extremist speakers and events.
- Manage access to extremist materials online through an appropriate filtering system.
- Equip students to stay safe online, both in school and outside through assemblies and class time programme.

16.3 We recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability in today's society. We will ensure that:

- Through training, staff, volunteers and governors have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism is, why we need to be vigilant in school and how to respond when concerns arise.
- There are systems in place for keeping pupils safe from extremist material when accessing the internet in our school by using effective filtering and usage policies.
- The DSL has received Prevent training and will act as the point of contact within the school for any concerns relating to radicalisation and extremism.
- The DSL will make referrals in accordance with local Channel procedures and will represent the school at Channel meetings as required.
- Through our curriculum, we will promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

Peer on peer abuse

17.1 Abuse is abuse, even amongst peers, and will not be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'part of growing up' or 'just having a laugh'. All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and any cases will be thoroughly investigated.

17.2 All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to, bullying (including cyber bullying), sexual violence, sexual harassment and sexting.

17.3 All staff should be clear that peer on peer abuse should be reported as with any other safeguarding concern.

Child criminal exploitation (County Lines)

18.1 Given our rural location staff must be aware of the increased risk of child criminal exploitation, in particular the 'County Lines' practice where children are used to carry drugs or money from urban to rural areas.

18.2 Drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children to carry drugs and money from urban to rural areas, market and seaside towns. Issues such as missing episodes are key to identifying children at risk of exploitation. Like other forms of abuse, County Lines exploitation can:

- Affect any child under the age of 18.
- Affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18.
- Still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual.

- Involve force or enticement-based methods of compliance.
- Be perpetrated by individuals or groups.
- Is typified by a power imbalance in favour of those perpetuating the exploitation.

18.3 Concerns should be reporting to the DSL who will take appropriate action in line with LSCB guidance.

Female genital mutilation and 'honour-based' violence

19.1 We recognise that our staff are well placed to identify concerns and take action to prevent children from becoming victims of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Forced Marriages and other forms of so-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) and provide guidance on these issues through our safeguarding training.

19.2 If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV they should inform the DSL who will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi agency liaison with police and children's social care.

19.3 Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. We will provide guidance and support to our teachers on this requirement and further information on when and how to make a report can be found in the following Home Office guidance: 'Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - procedural information ' (October 2015).

Other relevant policies

20.1 The governing body's legal responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of children goes beyond basic child protection procedures.

20.2 The duty is to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activity and functions. This policy complements and supports a range of other policies, for instance:

- Behaviour management
- Anti-bullying
- Physical interventions/restraint
- Special educational needs
- Educational visits policy
- Work experience and extended work placements
- First aid and the administration of medicines
- Health and safety
- PSHE and sex education
- Equal opportunities
- ICT and access to the internet

The above list is not exhaustive but when undertaking development or planning of any kind the school will to consider safeguarding matters.

External contacts

Norfolk Children's Services Customer Services Helpline (Duty Team): 0344 800 8020

Norfolk Local Area Designated Officer (LADO): 01603 223473

DfE extremism concerns telephone 0207 340 7264

DfE extremism concerns email counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Appendix A: Definitions

Significant harm

The threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life and gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces an illness in a child.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. The activities may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

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 abuse for example. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food and clothing, 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-takers).
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as over protection and the limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing a child in participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.

It may involve serious bullying causing children to frequently 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, though it may occur alone.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

Radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

The Prevent Duty 2015

Extremism

Extremism refers to vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

The Prevent Duty 2015

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