

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Rationale

It is a guiding principle of law (Children's Act 2004 and Education Act 2002) that the protection and welfare of the child are always paramount. The Cotham School Policy on Child Protection & Safeguarding fully supports this framework and seeks to encourage the development of young people in ways which will foster security, confidence and independence. Cotham School as a community feels that Child Protection and Safeguarding is so vital that the rationale, objectives and guidelines for implementation should be made explicit so that:

- Parents and carers, governors and support agencies have confidence that the school has been positive and proactive in implementing a coherent Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.
- All those involved with the day-to-day work of the school share a common philosophy which provides a firm and clear basis within which to work.

Policy Principles

"THE WELFARE OF THE STUDENT IS PARAMOUNT"

- All students have an equal right to a safe environment to learn in regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, socio-economic status, race, language, religion or sexual identity.
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion, concern or disclosure that may suggest a student is at risk of harm or in need of additional support.

What do we mean by Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child?

It is defined as protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health and development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. This includes everyone under the age of 18.

Where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action should be taken to protect the child. Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk.

Aims and Purposes

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection and safeguarding role / responsibilities.
- To provide open and effective communication between students, parents, agencies and adult members of the school community.
- To foster a school environment, in which every student feels valued and able to articulate wishes and feelings in their preferred method of communication and in an atmosphere of acceptance and trust.
- To keep all staff well informed about child protection and safeguarding issues in order to ensure consistently good practice.
- To encourage all students to maintain a positive self-image.
- To ensure we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with students.
- To include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for students to acquire skills and attitudes, to both resist abuse in their own lives and to prepare themselves for responsibilities, including parenthood, in their adult lives.
- To ensure we adhere to safe practices when working with all our communities, school, local and global.

Where there is a risk to a student of immediate harm, in most instances the DCPO would make a referral. However, any member of staff can make a referral. In the absence of DCPO, therefore, where a student is at risk of immediate, serious harm, **make the referral by contracting First Response immediately (Tel: 0117 903 6444). Record the details and pass on to DCPO.**

Furthermore, if the student's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for reconsideration through the DCPO or Head Teacher. Concern should always lead to help for the child at some point.

Procedures continued...

- In management of CP cases, the designated teacher will follow those procedures laid down by the South West Child Protection Procedures.
- The Governing Body understands and fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities.
- A student making a disclosure to a member of staff needs:
 - Reassurance that they have done the right thing
 - To be taken seriously
 - To find staff accessible
 - To know that staff will do their utmost to help
 - To be told that what they have said will be reported on/referred to the designated teacher
- During a disclosure, the member of staff must:
 - Avoid leading questions/jumping to conclusions.
 - Fully record what was said immediately, using the child's own words.
- All staff will make it clear to any child disclosing information that they cannot guarantee confidentiality, but they will only pass the information on to the people that can help them.
- Parents will be advised of the intention to refer to Social Care and their views and co-operation sought, unless we have good reason to believe that to do so would place a child at greater risk of harm.
When referring students to other external agencies, due regard will be taken of student confidentiality before the decision is made to contact parents.
- For children who are deemed to be 'at risk', their confidential records will be kept separately. The information shared about them will be discussed with the child in the first instance.
- All staff will be aware of students where there is a Safeguarding issue although details will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis. The Designated Person will make a judgement in each individual case about who needs and has a right to access particular information. (See Confidentiality Policy)
- Where a student with a Child Protection Plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and the child's social worker is informed.
- The Attendance Officer will notify Social Care or Education Welfare Service if there is an unexplained absence:-
 - of more than 2 days of a Child in Care or of a student who is on a Child Protection Plan or
 - a period of 10 days continuous unauthorised absence for all other students
- 'At Risk' and vulnerable students will be discussed at regular meetings as outlined in the School's Special Educational Needs Policy. Staff will be able to access limited information on vulnerable students in order to provide appropriate support
- Where there are concerns about a student, a teacher may be asked to keep a log of observations. This will be kept securely, separately from generally accessible pupil and class records.

- All adults, (including supply teachers, volunteers and temporary staff) will be given a copy of Cotham's 'Safeguarding statement' which outlines our Safeguarding procedures and highlights the name and contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- Parents may access the school's child protection procedures via the school prospectus/website.

Responsibilities to support implementation

- All staff must understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of child protection management in cases of suspected or disclosed abuse and their wider safeguarding responsibilities towards all students and vulnerable students in particular.
- The safety of the child overrides confidentiality. When in doubt, staff (including temporary or supply staff and volunteers) must share their concerns immediately with the designated teacher.

At Cotham, this is the Assistant Head teacher, KS4. (In his absence, the Assistant Head teacher KS3 or the Inclusion Co-ordinator should be contacted). Notes of any disclosure must be recorded.

- Referring a student if there are concerns about their welfare, possible abuse or neglect to Social Services. A First Response (Social Care) referral form will be completed, detailing the nature of the referral and held securely in school.
- The school recognises that it does not have the responsibility to investigate cases of suspected child abuse.
- Ensuring that detailed and accurate written records of concerns about a child are kept even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from student records, with a front sheet listing dates and brief entry to provide chronology.
- Ensuring that either they or another appropriately informed member of staff attends case conferences, family support meetings, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings and contributes to the CAF process.
- Providing, with the Head teacher, an annual report for the Governing body, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the DCPO, and by all staff and Governors; relevant curricular issues, number and types of incidents / cases, and number of students referred to Social Care and subject to Child Protection plans (anonymised).
- The school will co-operate with relevant external agencies in any enquiries regarding child protection matters, including representation at child protection conferences, core groups and multi-agency planning meetings.
- A named teacher is designated for Children in Care (CiC) and the list of students is regularly reviewed and updated. At Cotham, this is the Head of Inclusion.

Supporting Children

- We recognise that a child who is abused or neglected, who witnesses violence or who lives in a violent environment may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame him/herself and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.

- We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused and neglected or who are at risk of harm.
- Our school will support all students by:
 - Encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect of school life including through the curriculum.
 - Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
 - Providing continuing support to a student (about whom there have been concerns) who leaves the school by ensuring that such concerns and school medical records are forwarded under confidential cover to the Head Teacher at the student's new school as a matter of urgency, a photocopy of these records should be kept in a confidential file.

Confidentiality

- We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- The DCPO or Head Teacher will disclose personal information about a student to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis, in accordance with Cotham's Confidentiality policy and Information Sharing policy.
- However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard students.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a student to keep secrets which might compromise the student's safety or well-being or that of another.
- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a student to social care with their parents / carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we would consult with social care on this point.

Anti Bullying

- Our policy on the prevention and management of bullying is set out in the school's Anti-bullying policy.

Racist Incidents.

- Our policy on racist incidents is set out in Cotham's Equalities policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may be considered under child protection procedures. Bristol LEA will be informed of any racist incident through their Racist Incident procedures.

Educational provision - Off Site (Safeguarding Agreement with Alternative Education providers)

- Students attending off-site provision are aware of 'local Safeguarding procedures' which comply with recommendations in the Safeguarding children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007). All off-site providers will confirm their Safeguarding policy and procedures, a copy of which will be held by Cotham and up-dated each year. Cotham students will be aware of how to seek support if safeguarding issues arise. For further details, refer to E-Safety policy

E-safety & Social Networking policy – See separate policy

- Students will be taught about E-Safety and learn how to keep themselves safe whilst using online environments and using new technologies.
- As part of Safer Working practices, staff are expected to follow the guidelines set out in Cotham's Use of Social network policy.

Escalation policy – Disagreements with other professionals (See separate policy)

- Where there are concerns about decisions made by other professionals within school or between school and other agencies, Cotham's Escalation policy aims to provide a formal structure for resolving the disagreements. All Cotham staff are aware of this policy and are guided to use it in the above circumstances.

Female Genital Mutilation – FGM (See separate policy)

- The UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women has stated that FGM is a traditional practice which should be construed as a definite form of violence that cannot be overlooked nor justified on the grounds of tradition, culture or social conformity, in accordance with Article 2 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- FGM is illegal in the UK under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
 - It is illegal for anyone to circumcise a woman or child for cultural or non-medical grounds
 - The act makes it an offence to take a UK national or resident overseas for the purpose of or to aid and abet, procure, carry out FGM.
 - FGM carries a maximum penalty of 14 years

Governor Responsibilities

The Governing Body will ensure the school:-

- Has an effective Child Protection policy together with a staff behaviour policy (Safer Working Practices) available to all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers on induction. The CP policy will be updated annually and it will be available publicly.
- Contributes to inter-agency working in line with Working together and Safeguarding children 2013 and that a co-ordinated offer of early help is available for those with additional needs.
- A member of the governing body, usually the chair is nominated to liaise with the local authority and partner agencies on CP relating to allegations of abuse against the head teacher.
- Appoints a member of Leadership team as Designated CP Officer who should be given appropriate resources and time to support other staff on Safeguarding and CP issues.
- Considers how students are taught about Safeguarding, including online, through Teaching and Learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum
- Adheres to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with students, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any check beyond what is required; and ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised.
- The school should have written recruitment and selection policies and procedures in place. Regulations require at least one person on any appointment panel to have undertaken safer recruitment training.
- Has put in place all procedures to handle allegations against members of staff and volunteers.
- Has put in place a procedure to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in a 'regulated activity' has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned. **This is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.**
- Has put in place procedures to handle allegations against other students.
- Ensures that students' wishes or feeling are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual students through ensuring there are systems in place for them to express their views and give feedback.
- Ensures staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keeping looked after children safe.
- In particular, appropriate staff should have the necessary information relating to:

- a) a student's looked after legal status (i.e. by voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order
 - b) Contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.
 - c) the student's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him / her.
 - d) Ensures the DCPO, through the designated teacher for Looked after children, should have details of the student's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child
- Has safeguarding responses to children who go missing from school, particularly repeat instances, to help identify any risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent its re-occurrence
 - Must act reasonably in making decision about the suitability of prospective employees based on checks and evidence including: Criminal record checks (DBS), barred list checks and prohibition checks together with reference and interview information.
 - Completes and submits to the LEA annually the monitoring form of child protection activity. The LEA monitoring form will be used as a basis for review.
 - Remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to Child Protection and Safeguarding arrangements that are brought to its attention without delay.
 - Follows safer recruitment procedures that includes the requirement for appropriate checks

Health & Safety, Security – see separate policy

- Our Health & Safety policy and Security Policy, set out in separate documents, considerations we give to the protection of our students, staff and visitors.

Home visits

- In line with Cotham's Health & Safety policy, home visits must be completed by two staff and during school hours. A separate guideline is provided that must be followed by staff.

Safe recruitment – see separate policy

- Our school endeavours to ensure that staff employed are 'safe' by following the guidance in 'Keeping Children Safe in Schools' (April 2014) together with the local authority and the school's individual procedures.
- Our school must act reasonably in making decision about the suitability of prospective employees based on checks and evidence including: Criminal record checks (DBS), barred list checks and prohibition checks together with reference and interview information.
- Has put in place a procedure to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in a 'regulated activity' has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned. **This is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.**
- The school should have written recruitment and selection policies and procedures in place. Regulations require at least one person on any appointment panel to have undertaken safer recruitment training.

Safe Site - see separate Health & Safety policy

- All staff who use Cotham site facilities, including Visitors and Volunteers are expected to follow Cotham's Security policy procedures as recommended in Safeguarding children and Safer recruitment in Education (2007)

- ❑ Extended schools' activities will seek to ensure safeguarding of students through compliance with Cotham's Extended schools Safeguarding policy, based on recommendations in the Safeguarding children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007). Professionals working within these settings are expected to know how to recognise and respond to the possible abuse or neglect of a student.
- ❑ Supervision of Students during non-contact times. As part of a member of staff's duty of care to students, all are expected to support a Daily Duty rota. A team of staff are deployed each day, Monday – Friday, across the school site which seeks to ensure the safety and well-being of students.

Self Injury / Self Harm – see separate policy

- ❑ 'Every child has a right to feel safe'. Cotham school seeks to support this by fostering a student's positive self-image, security, confidence, independence and a sense of worth. To support students involved in self harm, the school has introduced a policy outlining the procedures, roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders.

Supporting Staff

- ❑ We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a student who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- ❑ We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DCPO and to seek further support. This could be provided for all staff by, for example, the Head teacher, by Occupational Health, and / or a teacher / trade union representative as appropriate.

Safer Working practices guidelines – see separate policy

- ❑ Staff have access to Cotham's 'Safer Working practices guidelines' which aims to provide guidelines on how staff should behave in order to minimise the risk of allegations against themselves by a student. A copy of this is available on the staff resource area and provided to all new staff as part of their induction training.
- ❑ We recognise that designated staff should have access to support / training courses, workshops or meetings as organised by CYPS and / or South West Child Protection Training Board.
- ❑ All staff have received basic Child Protection training as part of their Induction, with refresher training every 3 years, but it is recognised that there remains an ongoing need to update this and the wider Safeguarding areas, particularly for new staff.
- ❑ Additional training will be offered to staff (where required) on specific issues in relation to all vulnerable students and child protection.

Allegations against Staff – see separate policy

- ❑ All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. Staff may wish to follow the Whistle-blowing policy as outlined by the Local Area Safeguarding Board.
- ❑ If a student makes an allegation against a member of staff, the Headteacher should be informed immediately.
- ❑ If the allegation concerns the behaviour of the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors should be informed immediately.

- The school will follow its 'Allegations against staff policy' procedures as outlined in Section 4 – Keeping children Safe in Schools – April 2014

Prevention

- e) We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our students by providing them with effective lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection within their duty of care.

The school community will therefore:

- f) Establish and maintain an ethos, which is understood by all staff, which enables students to feel secure and encourages them to talk knowing they will be listened to.
- g) Ensure that all students know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- h) Communicate to all students that a range of external agencies are available to support them on occasion.
- i) Provide across the curriculum, opportunities which equip students with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

Transfer of CP records.

- In order to promote a child's welfare and thus their educational needs, Cotham has a duty of care to request Safeguarding files from the feeder school when the student starts at Cotham and to transfer sensitively any Safeguarding concerns around the child when the child moves to a new setting. To achieve this, Cotham will follow the BSCB guidelines on Transfer of Child Protection to and from another setting.

'Use of force' – see separate policy

- Cotham's 'Guidelines on Use of force' (as outlined by the 'Education and Inspections Act 2006 and DfE guidance on Use of Force) states that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, e.g. when a student is endangering him/herself or others and that, at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person, reasonable and proportionate.
- Such events will be recorded

Whistleblowing – see separate policy

- We recognise that students cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they should speak to their Line Manager or the head teacher in confidence and follow Cotham's Whistleblowing policy (adopted Bristol LEA policy)

Designated Child Protection Staff

Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO)
Deputy Designated Person

John Heayberd
Annette Rothwell

Nominated Governor
Designated Person - Children in Care
Other Staff supporting Child Protection

Claire Grocott; Lesley Spring
Geoffrey Warnock
Malcolm Willis, Headteacher
Angharad Davies / Debbie Price,
Inclusion Co-ordinator

Related Safeguarding Policies

Allegations against Staff Policy	John Heayberd
Agreement with Alternative Education Providers	John Heayberd
Anti Bullying Policy	Caroline Francis
Anti drugs and substance abuse policy	Malcolm Willis
Behaviour Policy	Caroline Francis
Attendance Policy	Tracy Reed
Complaints procedures	Malcolm Willis
Confidentiality Policy	Malcolm Willis
Children in Care Policy	Geoffrey Warnock
Education visits policy	Robert Helliwell
Equalities Policy	Geoffrey Warnock
E-Safety Policy	Katherine Clune
Extended School Safeguarding Policy	John Heayberd / A. N other
FGM	John Heayberd
First Aid, including administration of medicines	Katie Hughes
Health and Safety Policy	Nathan Allen
Home Visits guidelines	John Heayberd
Information Sharing Policy (Case by case)	John Heayberd
PSCHE Policy	Ben Saunders
Safeguarding Statement	John Heayberd
Safe Recruitment	Yvonne Harding
Safe Site – volunteer and visit procedures	Yvonne Harding
Safe Site – school security policy	Nathan Allan
Safer Working Practices	John Heayberd
Self Injury / Harm Policy	John Heayberd
SEND policy	Geoffrey Warnock
Sex & Relationship Education Policy	Ben Saunders
Use of Reasonable force	Malcolm Willis

Relevant Documents

Keeping children safe in Education – Statutory guidance for schools and colleges – April 2014
Working together to Safeguard Children – 2013 (pdf)
Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People. Nov 2009
South West Child Protection Procedures www.swcpp.org.uk
Protection of freedoms Act 2012
What to do if you're worried a Child is being Abused HM govt 2006d
Dealing with allegations of abuse against Teacher and other Staff DfE July 2011

There is a detailed description of the different types of abuse that can occur and the signs to look for on the next page Working Together 2010, p 37-39

Child Abuse – Signs and Symptoms

How do you know?

- Although the signs listed below may not indicate that a child has been abused, they may help you to recognise something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms. Note that a child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse. It is also possible that a child may show no outward signs, and may hide what is happening from everyone.
- If you have concerns it is important to **act** to avoid further harm.

Sexual abuse

- Being knowledgeable in a sexual way which is inappropriate to the child's age;
- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases;
- Other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- Personality changes;
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating;
- Being isolated or withdrawn;
- Inability to concentrate;
- Lack of trust of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or childminder;
- Starting to wet again, day or night, nightmares;
- Become worried about clothing being removed;
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures;
- Talking about having a secret.

Physical abuse

- Unexplained recurrent injuries;
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries;
- Wearing clothes to cover injuries even in hot weather;
- Refusal to undress for PE;
- Bald patches;
- Chronic running away;
- Delay in seeking medical help or examination;
- Self-destructive tendencies;
- Aggression towards others;
- Fear of physical contact –shrinking back if touched;
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to 'make him study');
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted.

Emotional abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags.
- Sudden speech disorder
- Continual self-deprecation (I'm stupid, ugly, worthless);
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Inappropriate responses to pain (I deserve this);
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation);
- Extremes of passivity or aggression.

Neglect

- Constant hunger;
- Poor personal hygiene;
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Very thin
- Untreated medical problems
- No social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging
- Destructive tendencies

Reasons why some people may not report abuse

- Child asks you to keep silent – keep a secret;
- Fear of breaking up the family;
- Fear of exposing the child to further abuse;
- Fear of breaking a trusting relationship with child/family;
- Fear of presenting evidence in court;
- Afraid of misrepresenting or overreacting to the situation;
- Assuming another agency is dealing with the problem;
- The 'rule of optimism' – everything will work out OK;
- Assuming one parent/carer will protect;
- Believing the child is fantasising/lying;
- Being persuaded by the child's retraction;
- Allowing a temporary improvement in the child's situation to distract you from the reality of continuing abuse;
- Being unable to comprehend the unbelievable nature of the disclosure;
- Not understanding procedures