



Child Protection Policy

1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE:

Safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all students is of prime concern to the school. The intention of this policy is to set out the arrangements for safeguarding students and promoting students' well-being.

In this document, wherever the word "parent" is used it applies to "carers" as well.

2 AIMS

This policy aims to ensure that adequate arrangements are in place to identify, assess, refer and support those students who are, or are at risk of, suffering harm. In order to achieve this the school will work together with other agencies in the promotion of student safeguarding and well-being and establish an environment where students feel safe, are able to grow and achieve, and are secure. Specifically, the school aims to:

- provide a clear model for the management of cases of suspected or disclosed abuse in line with the Local Area Safeguarding Board Children in Need and Child Protection Policy and Procedures;
- provide and maintain an environment where our students feel safe and supported; confident and able to express themselves on matters of personal health and welfare, know that there are adults in school whom they can approach with concerns and that they will be listened to;
- ensure that parents are aware of the school's responsibilities with regard to safeguarding and protecting students and are kept informed and involved in supporting their children, in line with child protection procedures;
- help students to acquire skills both to resist abuse in their own lives and to prepare them for parental responsibilities in their adult lives;
- encourage all students towards a positive self-image; support students to be able to make informed choices and decisions;
- keep all members of staff and governors informed about safeguarding and child protection issues and undertake relevant training, learning and development.

3 OBJECTIVES

3.1 Supporting Students

To ensure that all members of staff recognise that:

- a student who has been abused, who witnesses abuse or lives with domestic violence or family breakdown or who otherwise receives inadequate parental care may feel helpless,

humiliated, blame her/himself and find it difficult to develop and maintain a feeling of self-worth;

- the behaviour of a student in these circumstances may be unpredictable, challenging or defiant or significantly withdrawn;
- school may provide the only stability and security in the lives of students who have been abused or are at risk of harm.

To ensure that members of staff will support all students by:

- communicating to all students and parents the statutory responsibilities held by the school and what children, young people and others should do if they have a concern about a student;
- encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in all aspects of school life and every day life away from school, including through the curriculum;
- providing students with a Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum that includes discussion of child protection issues and staying safe in all areas of their lives;
- promoting a safe, caring and positive ethos and environment within the school that gives students a sense of being valued;
- providing opportunities for students to talk about themselves, be listened to and to feel confident about approaching adults if they have any concerns and/or are in difficulties;
- developing and implementing relevant policies, procedures and good practice for supporting vulnerable students in school;
- developing effective links and liaising with other children's support agencies such as Social Care Services, Children Missing Education Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, in accordance with local procedures;
- following Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures for notifying the Social Care Services as soon as there is a significant concern about a student's safety or well-being;
- contributing to multi-agency assessments of need, child protection plans and reviews;
- working in partnership with parents, as appropriate, and in accordance with LSCB child protection procedures and guidance; ensuring that, when a student with a Child Protection Plan in place leaves the school, their school file and confidential child protection file are transferred to the new school immediately, and that the student's social worker is informed.

3.2 Managing Allegations, Disclosures or Concerns

To ensure that:

- the school procedures for dealing with cases reflect the procedures set out in the South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Shared Procedures website <https://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/>;
- all members of staff and governors understand their responsibilities for being alert to signs and symptoms of abuse; are familiar with the school's procedures for managing allegations, disclosures or concerns; and understand their responsibility for referring any child protection or safeguarding concerns to the school's designated teacher for child protection (see Appendix 1: School Procedures);
- all members of staff and governors understand that an allegation of abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation. It is therefore imperative that nothing is done that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking a student leading questions or attempting to investigate allegations (see Appendix 1: School Procedures).

3.3 Confidentiality

To ensure that all members of staff are aware that matters relating to child protection are confidential but that:

- they must not promise to keep secrets which might compromise a student's safety or well-being, or that of another student;
- they have a professional and statutory responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard and protect students, in accordance with LSCB Information Sharing protocols;
- the Designated Member of Staff for Child Protection will disclose personal information about a student to other members of staff only on a need-to-know basis when child protection and/or safeguarding concerns exist;
- they must respect students' and their families' rights to privacy and ensure that their personal matters are dealt with and communicated professionally and with due regard to Human Rights and Data Protection legislation;
- the Designated Teacher for Child Protection will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to the Social Care Services with the child's parent(s), unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, he/she will seek advice in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) guidance.

3.4 Supporting Staff

To ensure that:

- all members of staff recognise that students may disclose issues at any time and to anyone they feel comfortable telling. Members of staff who receive or deal with allegations or disclosures of child abuse and those who become involved in supporting a child who has suffered harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting and will be supported;
- members of staff are provided with opportunities to talk through their anxieties or concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another appropriate member of staff. Further support will be offered or signposted as necessary, for example Bath and North East Somerset's Employee Assistance Line;
- the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has access to advice, support, guidance, training, supervision and time to enable her/him to fulfil the role effectively;
- the LSCB's Safeguarding Code of Practice is followed to reduce the risk of staff being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct;
- all members of staff receive specific training on child protection when they Join Ralph Allen and that every year staff receive some 'refresher' training in relation to safeguarding young people. Staff are made aware of the DfE's statutory guidance for all those working in schools, contained within the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) document (September 2016).
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and the Deputy DSL, will have access to LSCB training in inter-agency working and 'refresher' training at two-yearly intervals or regular attendance at LSCB Child Protection Forums to keep her/his knowledge up to date;
- the nominated Governor and the Governing Body should have access to child protection awareness training to enable them to understand their responsibilities and perform their functions (see Appendix 1: School Procedures).

3.5 Allegations Against Staff

To ensure recognition of the fact that because of their daily contact with students in a variety

of situations teachers, the Headteacher and other staff working in the school are vulnerable to accusations of abuse.

To ensure that:

- any member of staff facing an allegation of abuse is able to feel confident that appropriate, considered action will be taken in accordance with robust and agreed procedures. Accordingly, the school will follow the 'Procedures for Managing Allegations of Abuse by a Teacher, Principal or other Member of School Staff' set out in the South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Group website; <https://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/> and contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO);
- all allegations of abuse by a member of staff are taken seriously and not dismissed as trivial, defamatory or not to be believed. All allegations will be reported in accordance with school procedures (see Appendix 4), examined objectively and investigated professionally and in accordance with South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Group website <https://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/> and the LADO will be informed;
- early action to establish the nature of an allegation is undertaken in such a way that it does not prejudice any subsequent investigation or disciplinary action that may need to be carried out;
- members of staff against whom an allegation is made are not automatically suspended. In the case of an immediate referral to a child protection agency, immediate suspension is more likely to be appropriate. In a case where immediate referral is accompanied by consideration of disciplinary proceedings, suspension may or may not be appropriate. In the case of unfounded allegations, suspension is unlikely;
- on the conclusion of any investigation of an allegation against a member of staff other than in the event of dismissal, appropriate advice, guidance, support reassurance and help to rebuild confidence is given to the member of staff concerned.

3.6 Whistleblowing

To ensure recognition that students cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where members of staff fail to do so.

To ensure that:

- all members of staff are aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude, actions or behaviour of colleagues where these may be breaching the safeguarding code of practice and consequently placing students at risk of harm.

Note: This policy links to the Whistleblowing Policy. Whistleblowing is when students, parents, staff or other people tell someone in authority about a dangerous, illegal or unethical activity that they are aware of. These activities include health and safety risks, environmental issues, fraud, poor standards of care and other problems. The school is committed to the highest possible standards of service and to being open, fair and honest. It recognises that all staff and others associated with the school are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong. Whistleblowing, enabled by the Whistleblowing Policy, provides a structured way for this important information to come to light.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of this policy is the responsibility of:

- all members of staff (see appendix for definition of staff) who have duties working in a service for young people;
- the Designated Members of Staff who are:
 - the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who is the first point of contact in dealing with child protection incidents and in charge of liaison with external agencies (see Appendix 1);
 - the Deputy DSL who will cover for the DSL if necessary
 - the Headteacher, who has overall responsibility for safeguarding and in particular for managing an allegation of abuse by a member of staff (see Appendix 2).

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that this Policy is fit for purpose and monitoring its implementation

The nominated Governor for Child Protection Issues has a responsibility to bring child protection issues to the attention of the Governing Body in consultation with the DSL.

5. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy is published on the school website, www.ralphallenschool.com. It is implemented in conjunction with the following school policies, and safeguarding is necessarily referred to in other policies:

- Anti-Bullying
- Attendance
- Behaviour
- Complaints – Model Complaints Procedure
- Curriculum
- Data Protection and Freedom of Information
- Equality and Diversities Policies Disability Equality Scheme Community Cohesion Policy Race Equality Policy Racist Abuse Policy Gender Equality Policy
- Equal opportunities
- Online safety Policy
- Lettings
- Professional Boundaries
- Safer Recruitment
- School Trips
- AEN/SEN
- Sex and Relationship Education
- Staff induction
- Use of Photographic Images

Also see Appendix – The School Child Protection Procedures.

Any group or body leasing the school premises will be required to have a child protection policy and procedures in place and be responsible for the safety and wellbeing of children taking part in their activities.

6. MONITORING

The Governing Body has responsibility for monitoring the school's policy and associated procedures. It should expect to receive evidence through its meetings that:

- there is a document available to all staff explaining the procedures to be implemented when child protection cases arise (see Appendix 1);
- all members of staff (see footnote) and governors are aware of the full and active part they need to play in protecting our students from harm and in promoting the well-being of students, and know who is the designated safeguarding lead;
- there are accurate records kept of when staff receive safeguarding training;
- the designated safeguarding lead is keeping separate confidential records in accordance with the Local Area Safeguarding Board Guidelines on Record Keeping and Management of Child Protection Information (refer to South West Safeguarding and Child Protection website: <https://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/>);
- students know that there are adults they can approach if they have any concerns and that they have access to information and professional advice through the school curriculum, pastoral system, the visiting NHS School Nurse Advisor and Careers Advisors/Connexions;
- the school evaluates its provision regularly.

The evidence will inform an annual review of the policy and procedures.

7. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The Governing Body has responsibility for reviewing this policy annually. It is next due for revision in Spring/Summer 2019.

Signed:

Andy Greenhough

Headteacher

Date: April 2018

Signed:

Russell Franks

Chair of Governors

Date: April 2018

APPENDIX

In the policy "staff" refers to all members of staff and therefore includes senior leadership team, teachers, temporary and peripatetic staff and associate staff including teaching assistants, cover supervisors, the school nurse, school meals supervisors, administration staff, kitchen staff, technicians, premises and catering staff, and cleaners.

The School Child Protection Procedures

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mr John Chantry (Deputy Headteacher); Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Sarah Todd, (Head of Inclusion and Learning Support). Nominated Governor for Child Protection: Dr Julia Garratt.

Child Protection issues involve a child being at risk from neglect or actual abuse which may be physical, emotional or sexual. The following should also be reported: self-harm; sexual activity of students under 16; alcohol and/or drug abuse; radicalisation; female genital mutilation (FGM); online safety or child sexual exploitation (CSE) and anything that you feel is odd or concerns you.

All adults have a responsibility to protect each child from abuse. This responsibility means that if any staff member has a concern they must immediately talk to the designated teacher for child protection. In this school, the first person to go to is Mr John Chantry, Designated Safeguarding Lead. If he is unavailable, go to Mrs Sarah Todd the Deputy DSL. If Ms Todd and Mr Chantry are both unavailable, consult another member of the Leadership Team. Members of staff who have a concern should send a 'note of concern' email or form, if possible electronically (available in the safeguarding folder on the Administration Drive).

All governors should be aware of the policy. Any governor who has a concern about a child, or who hears an allegation about a member of staff's behaviour towards a child or students must report this (via a written report) to the Headteacher or the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or the nominated Governor. The governor should redirect concerns brought to them outside of school to the DSL or Principal. The Governor should also inform the Principal or DSL that this has occurred.

1. WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD DISCLOSES ABUSE

- Listen to what he/she is saying. Accept what you are told whether or not you believe what he/she is saying. Try not to look shocked or disbelieving. Our role is not to assess the information we have been told or to assess the level of risk.
- Never promise confidentiality: Remain calm and reassure him/her that he/she is not to blame.
- Do not interrogate the child or ask leading questions. Clarify if necessary what has been said to you so that you are clear. Use her/his words. (Give an option to write if appropriate).
- Explain to the student that any concerns to do with their well-being and safety have to be passed on but will be dealt with the utmost sensitivity and only those with a "need to know" will be informed. The student will also be kept informed as to actions to be taken wherever possible.
- Where possible, the student should be brought to a member of the pastoral team. If this is not possible, the information must be told to Mr Chantry or Ms Todd as soon as possible.
- Make notes and then write them up keeping them concise and factual. Include date and time. Describe any observable behaviour. Where you include any observations, judgments, thoughts or comments, clearly indicate them as such.

- The Head of House will be informed and will be told as much as possible (how much will be dependent on the case – see earlier section 4.3, Confidentiality).

2. WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE SUSPICIONS ABOUT A CHILD BEING AT RISK

- Write brief notes and pass to one of the Student Services Team (Mrs Bessell, Ms Brownell or Miss Ely). These details will be logged and if appropriate, referred to Social Services.
- If you have suspicions about a child being at risk, for example, bruising, extreme tiredness, unexplained injuries, inappropriate clothing for the weather, being very hungry, and/or looking undernourished, notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead,
- The Head of House will be informed.

You will be kept informed as much as possible but must accept that this will be on a “need to know” basis. The following should be reported:

- self-harm
- sexual activity of students under 16
- alcohol and/or drug abuse
- radicalisation female genital mutilation (FGM)
- online safety
- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- anything that you feel is odd or concerns you.

Once you pass the information on:

- you may not be told how the situation has progressed
- you may ask the member of staff who you passed the information on to but they may not be able to tell you what has happened depending on the outcome

3. DISCLOSURE WHEN AWAY FROM SCHOOL

If there is a disclosure whilst on a residential/weekend trip the following should happen.

- If the disclosure is during normal school hours, the school should be called and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be informed by phone immediately. The DSL will then take over the case as normal. If, however, a disclosure happens during school holidays or at a weekend the school contact person for the trip/visit should be informed, who will then contact the DSL.

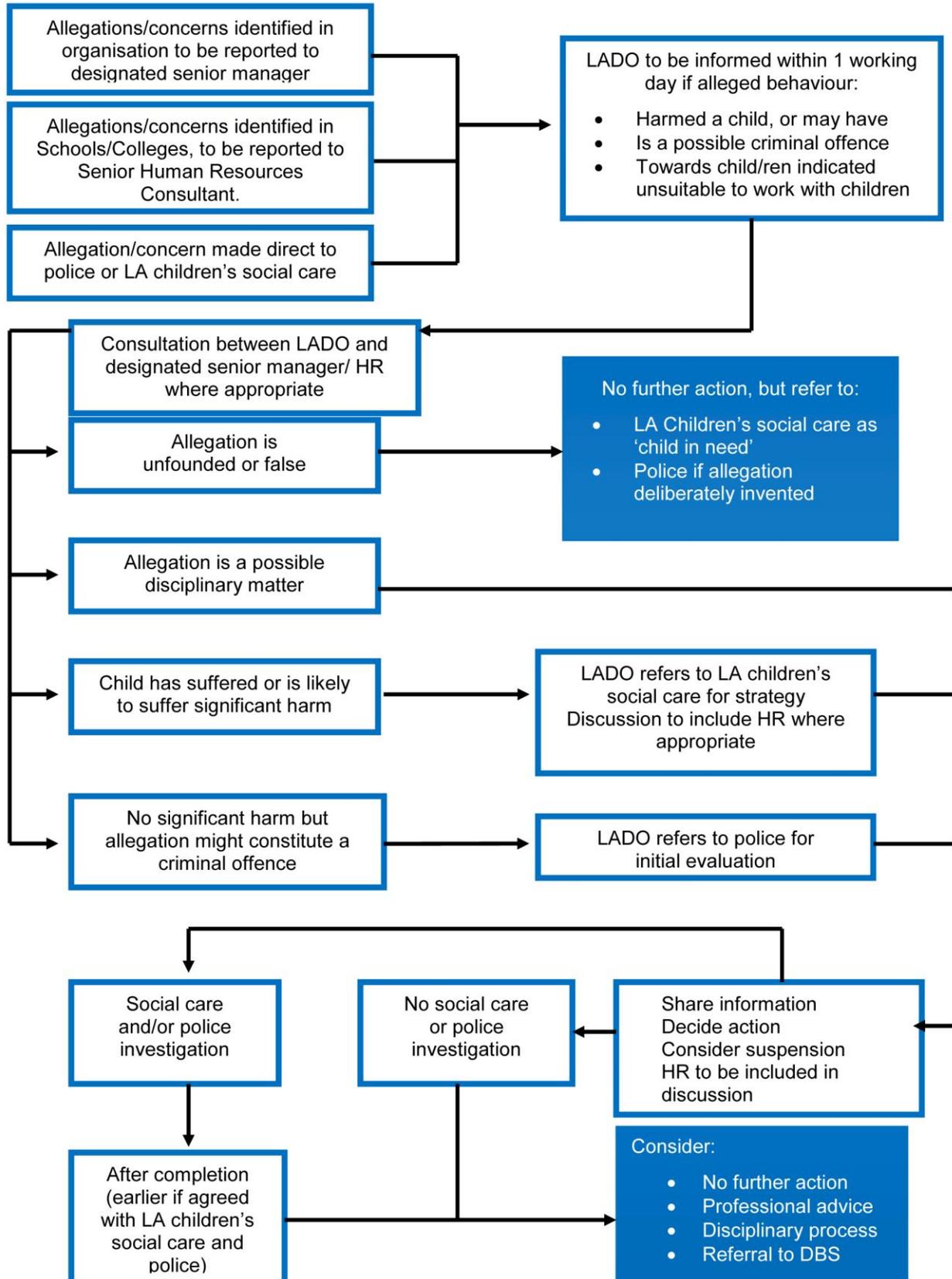
Recording of the disclosure should be carried out as normal and the information should be passed to the designated person at the very earliest opportunity.

STAFF BEHAVIOUR

Any member of staff hearing an allegation or complaint about another member of staff's behaviour towards a student or students must report this (with a signed and dated written report) to the Headteacher or, if the allegation refers to the Headteacher, to the Designated Teacher, or the nominated governor.

Allegations / concerns process flowcharts

Allegations / Concerns Against Staff Child Protection Process



Allegations / Concerns Against Staff Disciplinary / Suitability Process

