



# WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION

This policy is reviewed annually in **September**

Issue no	Author/Owner	Date Written	Approved by School Committee on	Comments
1	K. Penn	Sept 2014		Updated
2	C. Ferguson	June 2015	June 2015	Updated and revised following County Safeguarding review May 2105
3	C. Ferguson	Aug 2015	Aug 2015	Anti-radicalisation statement added
4	C. Ferguson	Sept 2015	Sept 2015	Updated in line with new KCSIE doc July 15
5	C. Ferguson	Sept 2016	Nov 2016	Updated in line with new KCSIE doc Sept 16
6	C. Ferguson	Dec 2016	Dec 2016	Updated in line with SCC advice
7	C. Ferguson	July 2017	Sep 2017	Updated in line with SCC advice
8	C. Ferguson	Sept 2018	Sep 2018	Updated in line with new KCSIE doc Sept 18
9	C. Ferguson	July 2019	Jul 2019	New DSL/Online safety leads added, ref made to KCSIE 19, MyConcern
10	C. Ferguson	Sept 2019	Oct 2019	Added Breast Flattening/Up-skirting/Gang Related Violence
11	C. Ferguson	Sept 2020	Oct 2020	Updated in line with new KCSIE doc Sept 20
12	A.McLellan	July 2021	Oct 2021	Updated in line with new KCSIE doc Sept 21

This policy has been reviewed and adoption approved by the School Committee.

Signed ..... Date: 20.09.2021

This policy has been reviewed and adoption approved by the Headteacher.

Signed ..... Date: 20.09.2021

## Introduction

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. This includes Information Sharing (July 2018), What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused (2015), Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges (2021) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018). Because of our close day to day contact with children, “education staff have a crucial role to play in helping identify welfare concerns and indicators of possible abuse and neglect at an early stage” (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018).

The School Committee and staff of Stowmarket High School take seriously our responsibility under Section 175 Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of our students, to minimise risk and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements are in place within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm. The School committee ensure that a whole school approach to safeguarding is maintained and upheld. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of the child.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Keeping Children Safe In Education (2021) as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children are growing 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 policy should thus be understood alongside school policies on related safeguarding issues as listed in Appendix 1.

All relevant policies will be reviewed on an annual basis by the School Committee which has responsibility for oversight of school safeguarding and child protection systems. The Designated Safeguarding Leads/ Head Teacher will ensure regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems in school to the School Committee. The School Committee will not receive details of individual pupil situations or identifying features of families as part of their oversight responsibility. Our school is a community and all those directly connected (staff, School Committee, supply teachers, parents, families and pupils) have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. We welcome suggestions and comments contributing to this process.

Stowmarket High School fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support students in school.

The school’s Safeguarding Policy is read by all staff, is available as a hard copy in the staffroom and can be accessed on Myconcern. It can also be read by school staff, parents and carers on the school website.

Our policy applies to all staff, School Committee, supply teachers and volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff, supply teachers and volunteers to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Creating a culture of vigilance where we develop and then implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting students who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Partnership and take account of guidance issued to:

- Ensure we have a lead strategic designated teacher for child protection and an operational designated member of staff who have received appropriate training and support for this role.
- Ensure we have a nominated School Committee member responsible for safeguarding/child protection.
- Ensure every member of staff, supply staff, volunteer and School Committee member knows the name of the designated staff responsible for safeguarding/child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated staff responsible for safeguarding/child protection.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for safeguarding/child protection.
- Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a student who is on the child protection register (CPR) or who has a Social Worker.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding/child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main student file, and in locked locations.
- Transfer of all safeguarding files is documented and a receipt of files is received from the receiving school.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

The **Designated Safeguarding Leads** are: Andy McLellan [a.mclellan@stowhigh.com](mailto:a.mclellan@stowhigh.com) For details of the role of the DSL – see appendix 2

The **named safeguarding Academy Member Panel member** is: Jon Brighton  
enquiries@stowhigh.com

The **Chair of Academy Panel** is: TBC

The **School Online Safety lead** is: Amy Cogan a.cogan@stowhigh.com

The designated teacher for 'Children in Care (CIC) is: Andy Mclellan a.mclellan@stowhigh.com

The Corporate Director for Children and Adults, have identified dedicated staff to undertake the role of Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO). LADOs can be contacted via email on rennie.everett@suffolk.gov.uk or by using the LADO telephone number: 01473 263495 for allegations against all staff and volunteers. The LADO for our school is Rennie Everett.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. Our school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. Our school will endeavour to support the student through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives students a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour for conduct policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable students in the school. The school will ensure that the student knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and will not always be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the student such as social services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a student on the CPR leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed. We will either deliver documents by hand or send by special delivery in the post.

#### **A. Indications of Abuse**

Teachers and other school staff, because of their regular contact with children, are well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop. They are in a good position to assist those professionals in other agencies who are charged with the statutory responsibilities for investigating and dealing with individual cases by bringing cases of suspected or identified abuse to their attention. The more obvious signs such as bruises, cuts, burns, may be apparent especially when students change for physical education. Inadequate clothing, poor growth or apparently deficient nutrition may indicate physical neglect, while attention seeking or excessive dependence may point to emotional neglect. Sexual abuse may exhibit physical signs leading to a substantial behavioural change, including precocity or withdrawal. These signs and others can only cause suspicion and they are not, in themselves, proof that abuse has occurred. As part of their pastoral responsibilities, all staff should be alert to signs that might indicate that abuse is occurring. The designation of co-ordinating staff should not be seen to be diminishing the role of **ALL** staff in being alert to signs of abuse.

All staff are made aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual

sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.'

### **Suspected Abuse**

When all staff see any signs which cause them concern, they may have the opportunity to seek information, with tact and sympathy, from the child. If not, or the child's responses do not dispel suspicion, teachers should immediately report their concern to a designated member of staff. Other school staff should be asked to report any suspicions they may have.

### **Reporting Abuse**

In all cases where members of staff consider that they have cause to suspect abuse, including neglect and emotional ill-treatment, they should report their suspicions immediately to a designated member of staff with co-ordinating responsibilities. All suspicions should be recorded on Myconcern. They should then follow the procedures laid down by the LA for reporting such cases. The same procedures should be followed when information about abuse is volunteered to a member of staff by the child concerned.

### **B. Procedures within Stowmarket High School**

Andy McLellan is the named strategic lead designated teacher for safeguarding in the school, and Jon Brighton is the designated Academy Panel Member.

### **Coping with disclosure - Notes for Staff, Volunteers and Visitors**

Please note all staff should promptly share concerns and all verbal conversations should be promptly recorded on Myconcern.

It is important to recognise that a student who chooses to disclose to you has probably taken a great deal of time in reaching the point of disclosure. In disclosing, students may well be "disobeying" domestic instructions or giving away a secret. The stress will be considerable. Your reactions will be crucial and the following points can be used as a guide. All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

### **Check List**

1. When it appears that a disclosure may be made, try first of all to put the child at ease by your own reassurance and, most importantly, by finding a comfortable and reasonably private place in which to talk.
2. Be calm, and as matter-of-fact as possible.
3. Underline your support, but make no promises of confidentiality. Try to explain your duties to involve other people.
4. Listen. Try not to say things which express doubt, shock or horror. Do not ask leading questions. Be aware that a child abused by an adult relative may still retain strong feelings of affection for that adult. Accept the student's language and terminology.
5. A disclosing child may falter in their resolve. Remain supportive. Allow space and time. Do not press. If the disclosure breaks down, report immediately.
6. Allow the child to retain a sense of control of the situation. Explain carefully what you are going to do and be prepared to allow the student to discuss the procedure.
7. Decide early when you have heard enough. Remember we want to minimise the number of times the student has to repeat the details to others.
8. Make notes and explain to the student why you are doing this. Others may be able to use your notes to avoid the student repeating disclosures.

9. If the disclosure is of a sexual nature, be extra sensitive to the needs of the student. It is critical that you tell the student you believe them. Children rarely lie about sexual abuse. **REMEMBER** that a decision to confide in an adult takes great courage on the part of the student. To be disbelieved adds greatly to the existing trauma.
10. Finally, there are a number of key phrases that can be built into your conversation.
  - Take your time
  - I'm going to help you
  - I believe you
  - I'm glad you told me
  - I'm sorry this happened to you

### **Report**

In most cases it is hoped that a designated member of staff will be present at the disclosure, but in the event that they are not, the member of staff, volunteer or visitor involved must report the incident on the day that it occurred, to a designated member of staff.

Tell the student you cannot keep this information to yourself, that you want it to stop and that others must be told. Find out if they have told anyone else and let the student know what is likely to happen next. Follow the school procedures:

Student ⇒ Staff, Volunteer or Visitor ⇒ Designated Member of Staff ⇒ Other Agencies

but try to avoid leaving the student on their own immediately after a disclosure. This can feel like rejection.

Electronic forms on Myconcern should be submitted as soon as practically possible to a DSL. Once the disclosure is reported, the designated member of staff will be covered, if necessary, so that they can follow through the incident. After talking to the member of staff, volunteer or visitor present at the disclosure and possibly speaking to the student (if appropriate), the designated member of staff will then complete a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) and email it to Customer First. The designated member of staff will act in "loco parentis" when the legal disclosure is made to the Police Officer or Social Worker. The mutli-disciplinary agencies will contact the family when appropriate. The member of staff, volunteer or visitor present at disclosure could also remain during the legal disclosure and will be kept informed about the case. Should a DSL not be on the school premises staff should go to reception and call the DSL on their mobile phone with information and for further advice.

**If you have concerns about the safety or welfare of a child and feel they are not being acted upon by the designated safeguarding team, it is your responsibility to action by contacting Customer First on 0808 800 4005.**

### **C. Signs and Symptoms**

The education service is not an investigation or intervention agency for child protection, but it has an important role to play at the recognition and referral stages.

Any suspicions staff may have should be submitted as soon as possible onto Myconcern. These will be recorded and, should a pattern emerge, then the appropriate action will be taken.

Below are listed some of the ways children can, and do, show their distress:

- repeated minor physical injuries (e.g. bruises, cuts, etc)
- children who are dirty, smelly, poorly clothed or who appear underfed
- children who have lingering illnesses which are not attended to
- deterioration in school work or significant changes in behaviour without explanation

- aggressive behaviour, severe tantrums
- an air of "detachment" or "don't care" attitude
- overly compliant behaviour, "watchful" attitude
- sexually explicit behaviour (e.g. playing games and showing awareness which is inappropriate for the child's age)
- continual open masturbation, aggressive or inappropriate sex play
- the child who is reluctant to go home or is kept away from school by a parent for no apparent reason
- does not join in school social activities, has few school friends
- does not trust adults, particularly those who are close
- "tummy pains" with no medical reason
- eating problems, including over-eating, loss of appetite
- disturbed sleep, nightmares, bed-wetting
- running away from home, suicide attempts, self-inflicted wounds
- reverting to younger behaviour, depression, withdrawal
- relationships between the child and adults which are secretive and exclude others

Pregnancy - a student who discloses to any staff, volunteer or visitor that they might be pregnant must be told that their parents will need to be informed. They will be given 24 hours to do this themselves, after which time, their Head of Year will contact home to speak to their parents.

**The following categories form the criteria for registration:**

(Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) statutory guidance sets out full descriptions).

1. Physical abuse - is deliberately physically hurting a child. It can involve hitting, shaking, squeezing, drowning, suffocating, burning and biting. It also involves giving the student poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs and alcohol. Physical abuse can leave signs - bruises, burns, fractures and cuts without plausible explanation of cause.
2. Emotional abuse - is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child where a student consistently faces a lack of love and affection, or is continually threatened by verbal attacks, taunting and shouting (domestic violence). It may involve a parent deliberately telling their child that they are worthless, or unloved or inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say and how they communicate. They may well have a lack of confidence and low self-esteem. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse.
3. Sexual abuse - is any sexual activity with a child. Often victims of sexual abuse do not recognise themselves as such. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-active activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexual inappropriate ways or grooming a child for preparation of abuse (including via the internet).
4. Neglect - is a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter. It is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often suffer from other types of abuse.

### **Anti-Radicalisation Statement**

At Stowmarket High School all staff are expected to uphold and promote the fundamental principles of British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The main aims of this policy statement are to ensure that staff are fully engaged in being vigilant about radicalisation; that they overcome professional disbelief that such issues will not happen here and ensure that we work alongside other professional bodies and agencies to ensure that our students are safe from harm. The principle objectives are that:

- All of the School Committee, teachers, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff will have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism are and why we need to be vigilant in school.
- All of the School Committee, teachers, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on anti-radicalisation and extremism and will follow the policy when issues arise.
- All parents and students will know that the school has policies in place to keep pupils safe from harm and that the school regularly reviews its systems to ensure they are appropriate and effective.

‘Radicalisation’ refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. ‘Extremism’ is the “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. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces. (As defined in the Government Prevent Strategy 2011). ‘Terrorism’ is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat **must** be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Although serious incidents involving radicalisation have not occurred at Stowmarket High School to date, it is important for us to be constantly vigilant and remain fully informed about the issues which affect the region in which we teach and to refer any concerns through the appropriate channels (DSLs). Concerns should be noted on Myconcern and the DSL will complete a VTR referral where necessary.

Our curriculum promotes respect, tolerance and diversity. Students are encouraged to share their views and recognise that they are entitled to have their own different beliefs which should not be used to influence others. Our PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education), Philosophy and Ethics and SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) provision is embedded across the curriculum, and underpins the ethos of the school. It is recognised that students with low aspirations are more vulnerable to radicalisation and therefore we strive to equip our students with confidence, self-belief, respect and tolerance as well as setting high standards and expectations for themselves. Students are regularly taught about how to stay safe when using the Internet and are encouraged to recognise that people are not always who they say they are online. They are taught to seek adult help if they are upset or concerned about anything they read or see on the Internet. We also look at other topics such as depression, self-harm and coping with stress.

Through CPD opportunities in school, we will ensure that our staff are fully aware of the threats, risks and vulnerabilities that are linked to radicalisation; are aware of the process of radicalisation and how this might be identified early on.

### **Children Missing Education (CME)**

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.



Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Parents should ensure that the school has at least two emergency contacts for their child. For more details, see *Appendix 4*.

### **County Lines**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas (within the UK), using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move (and store) drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations.

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).

**Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)** is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines) forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

### **Gang Related Violence**

Teenagers can be particularly vulnerable to recruitment into gangs and involvement in gang violence. This vulnerability may be exacerbated by risk factors in an individual's background, including violence in the family, involvement of siblings in gangs, poor educational attainment, or mental health problems. Young people who are involved in gangs are more likely to suffer harm themselves, through retaliatory violence, displaced retaliation, territorial violence with other gangs or other harm suffered whilst committing a crime. Young people involved in gangs are more likely to possess and use weapons, both knives and guns. Evidence shows that those carrying weapons are more likely to become victims of weapon attacks and the risk of being seriously injured increases in group situations.

### **Private Fostering**

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative'. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer, for 28 days or more. There is a mandatory duty to inform the local authority of children in such arrangements.

### **Upskirting**

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. Upskirting is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or non-therapeutic reasons. (World Health Organisation-1997). A person who's had FGM may:

- have difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

FGM affects girls particularly from north African countries, including Egypt, Sudan, Somalia and Sierra Leone. Although our school has no children from these backgrounds and consider girls in our school safe from FGM, we will continue to review our policy annually with the belief that 'it could happen here'. The Serious Crime Act 2015 came in to force in July 2015 and with it new legal powers to deal with FGM. From our school's perspective, there is a mandatory duty on teachers to report disclosures on FGM about a female under 18 personally to the police. It is important to note that teachers will become aware of FGM by disclosure, not through physical examination.

**Breast Flattening** - Breast flattening (often called breast ironing) is the pounding and massaging of a young girl's breasts, to prevent and stunt breast growth. It is usually carried out by pressing, massaging or pounding the breasts using hard or heated objects. Breast flattening is traditional practice in parts of West Africa. It is typically arranged or performed by the girl's mother, to make the girl less attractive to males by delaying the signs that the girl is maturing into a young woman. Reasons for this include, protecting the girl from sexual harassment and rape. It also carried out to discourage pre-marital sex, unwanted pregnancy and prevent early marriage. Often one of the drivers is that the mother will want her daughter to avoid pregnancy so that they receive an education. Staff will receive additional training regarding breast flattening and need to be aware that practice usually starts when a girl begins to develop breasts, generally affecting pubescent girls aged between 8 and 12 years of age. No one knows how widespread it is in the UK. It is a hidden crime, taking place in private and where the victim is unlikely to report their mother or family member. Whilst there are no official police or government figures, it is widely accepted that it has been brought to the UK and is practiced amongst those communities that have now settled here.

### **Staff training**

Staff in school will receive safeguarding updates on a weekly basis through the Pastoral Update. Further information will be received periodically during staff briefings and more bespoke training will be carried out during staff CPD sessions throughout the year on a Monday after school.

All staff at Stowmarket High School receive online safety training which is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school approach to safeguarding. At Stowmarket High School the CPD programme will be reviewed annually to ensure that all the knowledge staff need is included and most importantly, that they understand how it is to be implemented.

### **Early Help**

Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early help can also prevent further problems arising, for example, if it is provided as part of a support plan where a child has returned home to their family from care. Effective early help relies upon local agencies working together to:

- identify children and families who would benefit from early help;
- undertake an assessment of the need for early help; and
- provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to significantly improve the outcomes for the child.

All staff will be aware of early help process and understand their role in it which includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with DSLs, sharing information and in some cases acting as lead professional in early help assessments

<https://www.stowhigh.com/assets/Documents/Early-Help-PDF.pdf>

### **Children with SEN and Disabilities**

Stowmarket High School understands there are additional safeguarding challenges for children with SEND. Staff will be aware that behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just their SEN or disability. Students with SEND have a higher risk of peer group isolation, some may have difficulties with communication and this group can have a disproportionate impact of bullying. When necessary we will consider extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities.

Mental health conditions may cause barriers for reporting concerns. Additional pastoral support and attention along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place is required.

### **Case Conference Information**

The designated member of staff will involve Heads of Years and teaching staff of the student concerned when necessary, enabling them to be fully briefed with a record of the relevant facts.

- Academic ability (is the student working to their potential? If not, is there a reason?)
- Attendance - including reasons for absence - if known - any referrals to the EWO
- Relationships with peers
- Relationships with adults
- Behaviour/personality - patterns, problems, signs of distress, etc.
- Observations regarding physical care including hygiene, clothing, etc.
- Parents' relationships with school staff - their interest in the student's progress
- Any general or specific concerns and incidents
- Any other information

There are no perfect solutions when dealing with child abuse. It is important to remember that we all have responsibility to act in the best interests of children, even when this is difficult. The consequences of not reporting your suspicions if the child has been abused could be far more serious.

### **Allegations against staff**

- The school has a senior leader within the organisation to whom allegations or concerns that a member of staff, a supply teacher, volunteer or visitor may have abused a child should be reported. At Stowmarket High School this is to the Headteacher.
- Any allegation made against staff must be reported to the designated School Committee member.
- The School Committee have adopted the LA's procedures which will be followed in the event of an allegation being made.
- In the case of allegations against the Headteacher these should be referred to the Chair of the School Committee. All procedures make sure that all staff and volunteers know whom the person is. Procedures also include a named alternative person in the absence of the senior leader, or in cases where that person is the subject of the allegation or concern. The school's Deputy Headteacher would serve in that capacity.
- Reasons concerns may be raised about staff include:
  - behaving in a way that has harmed a child or could have harmed a child
  - possibly committing a criminal offence against or related to a child
  - behaving towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children
  - behaved or may behave in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (transferable risk i.e. out of school behaviours which are not linked to children e.g. domestic violence).

The term 'low-level' concern is important. It is made clear that the concern is not insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold of harm. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Low level concerns could include, but are not limited to:

Being over friendly with children, having favourites, taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, using inappropriate sexualised intimidating or offensive language.

At Stowmarket High School staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others. Staff should share any low-level safeguarding concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and any unprofessional behaviour will be dealt with at an early stage. All incidents will be dealt with sensitively.

Whilst we are not the employers of supply teachers, we will ensure allegations are dealt with properly. We will take the lead in any investigation because agencies do not have direct access to children or our other school staff, so they will not be able to collect the facts or liaise with the LADO.

### **Security**

All staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light. We operate within a whole school community ethos and welcome comments from students, parents and others about areas that may need improvement as well as what we are doing well. Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and

volunteers coming into school as outlined within guidance. Visitors will be expected to sign in and out via the office visitors' log and to display a visitor's badge whilst on school site. Any individual who is not known or identifiable should be challenged for clarification and reassurance. Our school will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens school security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the school site.

### **Online Safety**

At Stowmarket High School we have a clear policy in place regarding mobile and smart technology. Please refer to the behaviour for conduct 2021 policy for more information. Mobile phone access at school means some children sexually harass their peers via their mobile and smart technology, share consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups), and view and share pornography and other harmful content. At Stowmarket High School we have carefully considered how this is managed on our premises and this is reflected in our mobile phone policy.

### **Information Sharing**

As a school we have clear powers to share, hold and use information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the local authority children's social care.'

### **Use of school or college premises for non-school activities**

When services or activities are provided by the school committee or under the direct supervision or management of the school arrangements for child protection will apply. Where services or activities are provided by another body, the school committee should seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed). It is important to ensure that there are arrangements in place where appropriate. The safeguarding arrangements should be included in any lease or hire agreement as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

### **Elective Home Education**

Parents may decide to Educate their children at home commonly referred to as Elective Home Education (EHE). A number of students have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience'. However, it can also 'mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs'. At Stowmarket High School 'where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home we will work with other key professionals to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible. Ideally, this would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

### **External Visitors**

For people who visit Stowmarket High School in a professional capacity all ID will be checked making sure that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check. Self-employed professionals should show their DBS, as they have no employer to confirm that this has been done.

## APPENDIX 1

School Policies on related safeguarding issues (to be read and followed alongside this document)

- Online Safety Policy
- Behaviour for Conduct Policy (covers use of reasonable force)
- Health and Safety Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Safer Recruitment Guidelines
- Whistle-Blowing Policy
- Drug Policy
- Trips and visits
- Supporting Students with medical needs
- Staff Code of Conduct (within staff handbook)
- Allegations Policy
- Peer on Peer Abuse Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy

## APPENDIX 2

### **Role of the designated safeguarding lead**

The School Committee should ensure an appropriate **senior member** of staff, from the school **leadership team**, is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead should take **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description. This person should have the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post. They should be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or to support other staff to do so, and to contribute to the assessment of children.

### **Deputy designated safeguarding leads**

It is a matter for individual schools as to whether they choose to have one or more deputy designated safeguarding leads. Any deputies should be trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead and the role should be explicit in their job description. Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate **lead responsibility** for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead, this **lead responsibility** should not be delegated.

### **Manage referrals**

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required;
- support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care;
- refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
- support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
- refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.

### **Work with others**

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- liaise with the headteacher to inform him of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- as required, liaise with the "case manager" and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member;
- liaise with staff (especially pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, and SENCOs) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies; and
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- DSLs should help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced with teachers and school leadership staff.

### **Training**

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead should undertake Prevent awareness training. In

addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements.
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
- are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals; -understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school;
- can recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.

### **Raise Awareness**

The designated safeguarding lead should:

- ensure the school's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;
- ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this;
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or in this; and
- link with the LSCP to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.

### **Child protection file**

Where children leave the school ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required.

In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

### **Availability**

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally



speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools, working with the designated safeguarding lead, to define what “available” means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such media is acceptable.

It is a matter for individual schools and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

## APPENDIX 3

### **Children Missing Education (CME)**

All children are entitled to a full-time education, regardless of their circumstances. Unfortunately, children missing education (CME) risk underachieving, being victims of abuse, and not being in education, employment or training (NEET) in later life.

#### **Definition**

For the purpose of this policy, a CME is defined as a child or young person of compulsory school age who is not attending school, not placed in alternative provision by the Local Authority (LA), and who is not receiving a suitable education elsewhere. This definition also includes children who are receiving an education, but one that is not suitable; this could include children who are not receiving full-time education suitable to their needs, e.g. age, ability, aptitude, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

#### **Why children miss education**

The most common reasons for children missing education include the following:

- Failing to be registered at a school at the age of five
- Failing to make a successful transition
- Exclusion
- Mid-year transfer of education provision
- Families moving into a new area

#### **Roles and responsibilities**

Our school will enter pupils on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed by the school, or the day that the school has been notified that the pupil will attend the school. In the event that a pupil fails to attend the school on the agreed or notified date, the school will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the reason for this absence, and will consider notifying the LA at the earliest opportunity.

The school will agree with the LA what intervals are best to inform them of pupils who are regularly absent from school, or who have missed 10 school days or more without permission.