

Foxdale School  
Safeguarding Policy

## **Introduction**

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully

Child protection is defined as :

- the safeguarding of children from violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect

At Foxdale school we are aware that safeguarding and child protection must always be in line with local guidance and procedures.

Every member of our school community plays a crucial role in promoting the welfare of all pupils and to protect them from harm. All staff and volunteers are expected to share this commitment by demonstrating their understanding of how each individual adult working on behalf of the school has an active part to play in protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare.

- All staff must be clear about their own role, and that of others, in providing a caring and safe environment for all pupils and know how they should respond to any concerns about an individual child that may arise.
- Foxdale will ensure that all staff, whether permanent or temporary, and volunteers know who is the Senior designated person who has overall responsibility for child protection.
- The Designated Person for Child Protection details can be found in this policy.
- All staff will receive training regularly at a minimum of every 2 years in order that they are equipped with the skills needed to keep children safe.

## Responsibilities

The Designated Lead Teacher for Safeguarding is Anna Griffiths Head Teacher and the Deputy Designated Lead Teacher is Christopher Hill.

They are responsible for:

- co-ordinating action within the school and liaising with the Department of Social Care (DHSC) and other agencies over cases of abuse and suspected abuse.
- acting as a source of advice within the school
- ensuring the staff are familiar with the policies and procedures referral of individual cases and suspected abuse liaising with agencies about individual cases organising training on Child Protection within school

## Teaching staff and support staff

Any new staff to school will be informed of the main points of this policy and given a copy to read.

All staff require Level 1 training in Child Protection as soon as is possible.

Training will be delivered on a 2 year rolling programme.

Staff should report any concerns immediately, to the designated teachers.

Staff should apply the outlined procedures for responding to a suspected case remembering that:

- you cannot promise confidentiality
- information should only be shared with those that need to know
- it is important to stay calm and reassuring
- the needs and safety of the child must always come first
- when in doubt - ask

Non-teaching staff (including ancillaries, caretakers, cleaners and kitchen staff) may also be approached by children or have concerns. They should follow the same procedures as teaching staff in seeking referral at the earliest opportunity.

## **KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE**

### **Child Protection - Responding to concerns about individual children**

\* All children at Foxdale must be able to place their trust and confidence in any adult working in the school. They must feel sure that they can speak about any worries or concerns they may have and that they will be listened to, taken seriously and responded to appropriately. All staff must therefore know what to do if a child chooses to talk to them about any matter which raises child protection concerns.

All staff must:

Listen to what the child is saying without interruption and without asking leading questions.
Respect the child's right to privacy but not promise confidentiality
Reassure the child that h/she has done the right thing in telling.
Explain to the child that in order to keep him/her safe from harm the information that has been shared with must be passed on.
Report what has been disclosed to the Designated Person in the school.
Record, as soon as is practicable, what was said using the child's actual words.
Sign and date the record

The Designated Person/People for Child Protection will:

Assess any urgent medical needs of the child.
Consider whether the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm.
Check whether the child is currently subject to a Child Protection Plan or has been previously subject to a Plan.
Confirm whether any previous concerns have been raised by staff.
Consider whether the matter should be discussed with the child's parents or carers or whether to do so may put the child at further risk of harm because of delay or the parent's possible actions or reactions
Seek advice if unsure that a child protection referral should be made

The Designated Person will contact the Child Protection Advisor at the Department of Education and Children and either make a referral to Children and Families Services or, if a referral is not considered appropriate at that stage, make full written records of the information that they have received detailing the reasons for the judgement that the matter was not referred to the local authority.

## **Child Protection – Recognition and Response to Abuse**

\* Owing to the nature of the day-to-day relationship children at Foxdale have with staff, all working in the school are particularly well placed to notice any physical, emotional or behavioural signs that a child may be suffering significant harm. We understand that harm means the ill-treatment or impairment of a child's health and/or development, including that caused as a result of witnessing the ill-treatment of another person.

\* All staff must be alert to any possible indicators that a child is suffering harm and report any concerns to the Designated Person for Child Protection. All staff at Foxdale must recognise that it is a statutory duty to ensure that children are protected from harm. We recognise that there are four definitions of child abuse.

The four categories of child abuse are as follows:

1. Physical Abuse
2. Emotional Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse, and
4. Neglect

### **Physical Abuse**

May include: Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, and burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child including the deliberate fabrication or causation of illness in a child.

May be recognised by: Physical injury such as bruising, bite marks, burns and scalds, fractures but also by aggressive behaviour. It may also be an indicator of concern where a parent gives an explanation inconsistent with the injury or gives several different explanations for the injury.

### **Emotional Abuse**

May include: The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development, mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. This may be caused by conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved or unvalued or by developmentally inappropriate expectations being made or by causing children to frequently feel frightened or the exploitation or corruption of children.

May be recognised by: Developmental delay, attachment issues, aggressive behaviour, appealing behaviour, watchfulness or stillness, low self-esteem, withdrawn or a loner, or having difficulty in forming relationships. Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise as signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. Signs of emotional abuse may be associated or similar to other forms of abuse so presence of emotional abuse may indicate other abuse is prevalent as well. It is not appropriate for any member of staff to undress, photograph or body map any child in an attempt to see physical injury. This is the role of child protection and investigating agencies.

## **Sexual Abuse**

May include: Involving or forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Such activities may involve sexual acts (penetrative or nonpenetrative) or may include involving children in watching or taking part in pornographic material or to encourage children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. May be recognised by: Inappropriate sexualised conduct, age in-appropriate sexualised play or conversation, sexually harmful behaviour – contact or non-contact, self-harm, eating disorders, continual, inappropriate or excessive masturbation, anxiousness or unwillingness to remove clothes – sports / PE etc, pain or itching in genital area, blood on underclothes, bruising in genital region and / or inner thighs etc.

## **Neglect**

Neglect may include: The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development (growth and intellect) such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter (including keeping children safe), clothing, or neglect of or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs. May be recognised by: Being constantly hungry; constantly tired; have a poor state of clothing; be emaciated; have untreated medical problems; be frequently late or have poor or non-attendance at school; have low self-esteem; display neurotic behaviour and/or have poor social relationships, have poor personal hygiene. A neglected child may also be apathetic, fail to thrive, or be left with or in the care of adults under the influence of alcohol or drug misuse.

## **Safeguarding – Providing a Safe Environment**

All parents and carers of pupils attending Foxdale must feel secure in the knowledge that they are entrusting their children to adults who will strive to keep them safe at school.

We will do this by:

- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school
- Ensuring that our staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding and child protection according to their role and responsibilities and keep a record of all training undertaken
- Encouraging the self-esteem and self-assertiveness of all pupils through the curriculum so that the children themselves become aware of danger and risk and what acceptable behaviour is and what is not.
- Working in partnership with all other services and agencies involved in the safeguarding of children
- Welcoming visitors in a safe and secure manner
- Undertaking risk assessments when planning out of school activities or trips
- Ensuring that any community groups which use our premises for the provision of services to children have child protection knowledge and understanding evidenced by a policy or are prepared to adopt our own policy.

## **Safeguarding & Child Protection in Specific Circumstances**

### **Attendance**

We are aware that a pupil's unexplained absence from school could mean that they are at risk from harm.

1. We will always report an unexplained absence of a child with a Child Protection Plan to the child's social worker within one day

2. We will always seek to clarify the reason for a child's absence from school with the child's parent or carer as soon as is practicable on the first day
3. We will always report a continued absence about which we have not been notified by the parent or carer to the Education Welfare Service
4. We will always report to the Education Welfare Service the continued absence of a child known or thought to have been taken overseas if the child does not return to school on the expected return date.

## **Pupil Behaviour**

We will always aim to maintain a safe and calm environment by expecting good behaviour from our pupils in line with our behaviour policy.

We are aware that any physical response from a member of staff to a pupil's poor behaviour could lead to a child protection concern being raised by the child or parent/ carer.

1. No member of staff will use force when dealing with a pupil's breach of our behaviour policy unless the potential consequences of not physically intervening are sufficiently serious to justify such action
2. We will always record any occasion when physical intervention has been necessary
3. We will always notify parents or carers of any such incident

## **Bullying**

We understand that bullying is harmful to children. We have an anti-bullying policy that sets out our aim of ensuring no child becomes a victim of bullying and the work that we carry out in school to foster an environment where bullying behaviour is known to be unacceptable. We will always take seriously any reports of bullying and respond appropriately.

We understand that bullying may take different forms and may include racist or homophobic behaviour. Any such reported or observed incident will be dealt with in accordance with our antibullying policy.

## **E-Safety**

We recognise that children's use of the Internet is an important part of their education but that there are risks of harm associated with its use. We have an e-safety policy and an Acceptable User Policy that addresses how we minimise those risks in school and teach children how to stay safe when using the internet in their lives out of school.

We also recognise that all members of staff and volunteer staff must always be mindful of the need to follow our policy of acceptable use of our ICT equipment.

## **Guidance on dealing with suspected abuse**

All staff should refer concerns to the designated teacher as soon as possible. In the meantime, they should:

\*listen to the pupil, keeping calm and offering reassurance

\*observe bruises but should not ask a child to remove or adjust their clothing to observe them

\*if a disclosure is made the child should lead the discussion. Do not press for details by asking questions

\*Listen - do not investigate. Use questions such as “is there anything else you would like to tell me?”

\*Accept what the pupil says without challenge - reassure them that they are doing the right thing and that you recognise how hard it is for them

\*Don't lay blame or criticise either the child or the perpetrator

\*Don't promise confidentiality - explain that they have done the right thing and who you will need to tell and why

## **Procedures for monitoring, recording and reporting**

### **At the time**

Keep brief notes at the time or immediately after. You should note

- Date and time of disclosure/incident observed
- Place and context of disclosure concerned
- Facts you need to report
- Inform the Designated Lead (or Senior Member of staff in their absence) immediately

and before leaving the building. If you can't find anyone in school to report it to and you feel it is urgent then, contact the Department of Education, Sport and Culture's Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer, Gráinne Burns (Tel 01624 686053 Mobile 07624 478332).

If Gráinne is unavailable then contact Ian Postlethwaite (Tel. 686905 Mobile 07624 246417).

- Log actions taken and who information has been shared with

### **As soon as practically possible**

Complete a Logging a Concern sheet - stored in Head Teacher's office and staffroom). This should be passed to the designated person. In the case of there being bruises or injuries a written description of the location should be made and kept with the Logging a Concern form.

Remember to keep the information factual.

Use the child's own language to quote rather than translating into your own terms. Be aware that these sheets may be used at a later date to support a referral to an external agency.

### **The Designated Teacher will:**

Follow-up the referral using the **Logging a Concern** sheet as a basis for consideration before action

Make additional records of discussions and any investigation that take place

Make a decision whether to continue to monitor the situation or take the referral further and communicate this to the individual making the initial referral

Where a child is referred to DHSC the MAR form should be completed asap

### **Children with individual files**

Children who have been referred to Social Care have their own file which is stored in a secure cabinet in the HT's office. Recorded information from care meetings and other reports are stored in their individual file.

Please note that Logging a Concern sheets NEED to be completed for any incidents/ observations regarding children who have individual files.

### **Working Together with Parents/Carers**

## **Pupil Information**

We recognise the importance of keeping up-to-date and accurate information about pupils. We will regularly ask all parents/carers to provide us with the following information and to notify us of any changes that occur.

- names and contact details of persons with whom the child normally lives
- names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility
- emergency contact details
- details of any persons authorised to collect the child from school (if different from above)
- any relevant court orders in place including those which affect any person's access to the child (e.g. Residence Order, Contact Order, Care Order, Injunctions etc.)
- name and contact detail of G.P.
- any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child

## **Outcomes of referral to Social Care**

On receiving a referral Social Care will decide what happens next. There are a range of possible outcomes:

1. No further action needs to be taken.
2. Social Care may identify the child has 'Additional Needs' but that these do not require Social Services Support. Social Care will then refer the case on to another service to support in meeting the child's needs. This may take the form of Early Help and Support / Child With Additional Needs Plan.
3. Social Care may identify that the child/family has 'Complex Needs' which are unmet. The child will be allocated a Social Worker to co-ordinate the provision of appropriate services through a Child In Need (CIN) Plan.
4. It may be identified that there are 'Safeguarding/Protection Needs' i.e . it is felt that emergency action may be necessary to safeguard the child as they are at risk of significant harm and require protection. A strategy meeting may be called to identify immediate safeguarding action and the information to be given, especially to parents. If, following this meeting it is agreed that no emergency action is required, the child may be identified as a Child In Need (see point 3). If following this meeting it is agreed that emergency action is required Section 46 enquires will be initiated. This may result in the child being put onto a Child Protection (CP) Plan.

**If the referrer / DSL is not in agreement with the decision taken by Social Care a Multi Agency Reflection Discussion takes place.**

## **Confidentiality**

Information about pupils given to us by the children themselves, their parents or carers, or by other agencies will remain confidential. Staff will be given relevant information only a "need to know" basis in order to support the child if that is necessary and appropriate.

We are, however, under a duty to share any information which is of a child protection nature. We understand that this is in the best interests of the child and overrides any other duties we have regarding confidentiality and information sharing.

We have a duty to keep any records which relate to child protection work undertaken by us or our partner agencies and to ensure that these are kept apart from the main pupil record, stored

securely and only accessible to key members of staff. We also have a duty to send copies of these records to any school to which the pupil transfers.

## **Referrals to partner agencies**

If we have a reason to be concerned about the welfare of a child we will always seek to discuss this with the child's parents or carers in the first instance. On occasion, according to the nature of our concern, it may be necessary for us to make an immediate referral to Children's Services when to do otherwise may put the child at risk of further harm either because of delay, or because of the actions of the parents or carers.

## **Support for Staff**

The school will seek to support any staff member working with a child who has suffered, or may be at risk of suffering, harm. This support will initially take the form of informal opportunities to talk but may involve formal supervision from DESC staff or the involvement of external agencies such as Staff Welfare depending on the staff member's need.

## **ADULTS WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

### **Allegations against staff**

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable that your work with individual children or meetings with parents are conducted in view of other adults.

We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Head/Deputy or the most senior teacher if they are not present.

The Head/TICs on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Department of Education and Children Child Protection Officer.

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff will therefore be made aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

If an allegation is made to a member of staff concerning the behaviour of the Head the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Link Advisor who will consult the Legal Team.

### **Further guidance on Safeguarding Issues**

If necessary further guidance can be sought by ringing Gráinne Burns (Tel 01624 686053 Mobile 07624 478332). If Gráinne is unavailable then contact Ian Postlethwaite (Tel. 686905 Mobile 07624 246417).

If you decide a referral to Social Services is needed, inform Gráinne Burns. Email a copy of the referral to them at Grainne.Burns@sch.im.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEWING OUR POLICY AND PRACTICE**



Our Designated Person for Child Protection will continually monitor our child protection and safeguarding practices and bring to the notice of the Senior Managers any weaknesses or deficiencies.