

Safeguarding Children and Child Protection

Guidelines for School Staff and Visitors



St Helens
Safeguarding Children
Partnership

This leaflet contains important and sensitive information

Introduction

These guidelines for staff in schools have been produced by Willow Bank Schools Safeguarding Team to provide information about child protection and the procedures that must be observed. All staff will read, understand and have a copy of Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The protection of children is overseen by St Helens Safeguarding Children Partnership. You should be aware of and have reference to the Safeguarding Children Procedures. This guidance is consistent with the DfE guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'. The online procedures manual can be found on the Safeguarding Children Partnership website: <https://sthelenssafeguarding.org.uk/>

The full extent of child abuse is not easily quantified. Research indicates that children are reluctant to report abuse, particularly if it is happening within their family. Abusers come from all walks of life; they may be parents, a trusted adult, a professional or another child.

Everybody who works with children has a duty to help protect them from abuse. All staff must know how to recognise possible abuse both within the setting and externally. You should be familiar with the processes of recording information in your setting and making referrals to Early Help, Specialist Children's Services and the Police.

Every school is required to have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputy to ensure there is always someone available to discuss child protection concerns.

At Willow Bank School the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mr J McKune.

Types of Abuse

Physical abuse:

Can range from: over-chastisement, slapping with the hand, a belt, a stick or other object, to shaking, punching or throwing a child across the room. It can lead directly to neurological damage, physical injuries, disability or – at the extreme – death. Harm may be caused by the abuse itself and by abuse taking place in a wider family or institutional context of conflict and aggression. It also includes a parent/carer fabricating symptoms of or inducing illness in a child. Some physical abuse is reactive; some may be clearly premeditated with intent to cause harm.

Neglect:

Can range from: ignoring a child's developmental needs to not feeding or clothing her/him adequately and not properly supervising her/him. Persistent neglect can lead to serious impairment of health and development, and long-term difficulties with social functioning, relationships and educational progress. Neglect may occur by omission or commission – it is important that problems for a child's parent do not obscure neglect of a child in the family. Unborn babies may now be regarded as suffering neglect due to maternal substance misuse. Note: St. Helens use the Graded Care Profile 2 Assessment Tool to assess neglect

Sexual Abuse:

Is the involvement of a child or adolescent in sexual activities that s/he does not understand, cannot give consent to and which are not acceptable by in our society. This includes: inappropriate touching, taking of obscene photographs, producing/trading in indecent images of children (including via the Internet), as well as attempted or actual sexual intercourse; adverse effects may endure into adulthood. Sexual abuse can be carried out by women and other children as well as men.

Emotional Abuse:

Ranges from rejection, refusing to show a child love or affection, making a child unhappy by continually belittling her/him or verbally abusing her/him. It has an important impact on a developing child's mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. It may also include developmentally inappropriate expectations including overly high

expectations which the child cannot fulfil. Domestic abuse, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may be features in families where children are exposed to such abuse. Emotional abuse may occur by omission or commission and it is important the problems of or a child's parents do not obscure professional views of their child's emotional development. Serious bullying, causing a child to feel frightened or in danger may be regarded as emotional abuse.

Other Safeguarding Risks

Our staff are aware of a range of other safeguarding concerns, including: Child Sexual exploitation (CSE), Radicalisation and extremism (The Prevent Agenda) and Honour based violence (including Female Genital Mutilation). More information can be found at: <https://sthelenssafeguarding.org.uk/>

Online Safety:

The internet and related technologies provides wonderful opportunities for creativity, learning and communication; however, our setting recognises that there are also risks associated with this, including: sexual grooming, abuse and exploitation, cyberbullying and exposure to inappropriate material.

Online Safety is viewed as part of our schools safeguarding role and responsibility. Members of staff are made aware of the schools online safety policy and procedures, including our acceptable use of technology expectations regarding communication and use of social media.

Further advice regarding online safety can be found at: www.e-safety.org.uk.

Indicators of Abuse

Child Abuse can present in many different ways; there may be physical evidence, such as: marks, bruises or weight loss. Or there may be behavioural evidence, such as: reluctance to change for P.E, becoming aggressive or withdrawn, or a change in normal behaviour.

You may also notice changes in a child's presentation, friendships or ability to concentrate etc. A child may choose to disclose abuse; this may be directly, by telling

you what happened or indirectly, by telling friends or by asking for advice about a situation involving another person.

Staff may also notice concerns and behaviour changes in adults within the setting, including, staff or parents/carers. We ask that you be curious, record and report anything which may worry you to the DSL.

What to do if you are concerned for a child:

Sometimes we may have unconfirmed worries about a child, but have little concrete evidence that abuse is taking place; this can leave us feeling unsure about how to proceed. There have been many cases where unconfirmed worries have turned out to be the tip of the iceberg. It is vital therefore, that even vague "worries" are recorded and passed on to the DSL at the earliest opportunity. The DSL will then be in a position to collate all known information, involve other agencies, and decide whether a further referral is required.

Staff should record incidents or concerns in accordance with our policy i.e. via **CPOMS** (Child Protection Online Management System)

Immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the school

The DSL will decide on what action is most appropriate and whether the child should be referred to Early Help or Specialist Children's Services. To help him/her decide this, they may consult with the Safeguarding Children Partnership or Duty Team.

Although we would encourage staff to follow their normal child protection procedures, in certain cases, it may be appropriate for a member of staff to contact the Education Safeguarding Team or Specialist Children's Services directly, regarding a safeguarding concern, for example if the concern relates to the DSL.

Disclosures

What to do if a child starts to disclose abuse

- **Reassure** the child that s/he is right to tell and is not to blame
- **DO NOT** promise not to tell anyone else; explain that you have to make sure the child is safe and may need to ask other adults to help you to do this
- **DO NOT** question the child; let her/him tell you what s/he wants to tell you and no more; s/he may need to have to disclose to a specialist later, and too much detail now may interfere with later investigations.
- When the child is finished, make sure they feel secure and explain what you are going to do next.
- **Write down notes**, including the date and time of the disclosure and sign them; record as much as you can remember, using the child's own words.

Referring to Early Help and Specialist Children's Services

If a child or family needs to be referred to Early Help or Children's Social Services, the DSL will ensure that a Front Door referral (Online Service Request Form) is completed via <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/concern>

Allegations of abuse made against a member of Staff

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, the Headteacher/Chair of Governors must consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who will help to determine how the matter is to be investigated. The LADO is responsible for ensuring that allegations are managed in a proper way. To make a referral call the LADO Secretary on 01744 671809 or complete a LADO referral form. This can be found on <https://sthelenssafeguarding.org.uk/>

St Helens LADO email: StHelensLADO@sthelens.gov.uk

Preventative work in the classroom

Our pupils need to learn how to keep themselves safe and how to report concerns.

There are many training and resource packs available to help teachers design a curriculum which empowers children who may be being abused. Various elements can be incorporated into everyday teaching, including issues around safe use of the internet, touch, secrets, positive and healthy relationships, British Values, self-esteem, assertiveness and feelings and emotions.

Details of our Child Protection and other policies are available view at:

<https://willowbank.st-helens.sch.uk/>

Useful names and contacts:

Willow Bank School Safeguarding Team:



Mr. McKune
Safeguarding &
Engagement
Leader (DSL)



Mr. Francis
Deputy Head



Mrs. Savage
Business
Manager



Mrs. Duffy
Mental Health
Lead & Pastoral
Coordinator

Central Safeguarding Unit

Email: safeguardingunit@sthelens.gov.uk

Telephone: 01744 671809

Central Safeguarding Children Partnership

Email: safeguardingchildrenboard@sthelens.gov.uk

Telephone: 01744 671809

If you suspect a child is at risk of harm, please call **The Contact Centre on 01744676767**