



WESTFIELD SCHOOL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Safeguarding and Child-Protection

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Westfield School Child-Protection/Safeguarding Policy and Procedural guidance.

Westfield School places the safeguarding of children in its care as core to its priorities and responsibilities. We are committed to the safety and well-being of our pupils. Accordingly, we will: follow the Area Child Protection Committee's (ACPC) guidelines; refer to Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) when appropriate; work together with other agencies to protect the children of the school; attend and provide reports for Child Protection conferences and contribute, where appropriate, to any Child Protection Plan. We will follow the DfE statutory guidance set out in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', Government multi-agency statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', and Herefordshire's 'Inter Agency child Protection Procedures for Safeguarding Children' on-line document.

For the purpose of this policy, safeguarding is defined as

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

Responsibilities

The School

Westfield School recognises and accepts that teachers, along with other adults associated with the school, because of their unique position, are well placed to observe children and note any emotional, behavioural or physical signs which may be suggestive of child abuse. It recognises that the relationship between teachers and pupils, which fosters respect, confidence and trust, can lead to the disclosure of abuse.

All staff receive appropriate training on Safeguarding children that will enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in respect of child protection effectively. The school will provide this training and staff will attend refresher training every two years, and the designated person every three years.

Westfield School will always follow the procedures in the Area Child Protection Committee's handbook.

The school is supported in all matters relating to Child Protection by the HSCB who are available to give advice, support and guidance regarding child protection matters.

All newly appointed staff will be made aware of this policy and be familiarised with the LA and Area Child Protection Committee procedures on induction.

The school Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) dealing with Child Protection is the Headteacher (Nicki Gilbert). She will liaise with staff where appropriate in relation to Child Protection matters. Should Nicki Gilbert not be available, the deputy DSL is Val Jacks, the

Learning Mentor, with Zoe Williams taking the lead for Early Years. The nominated governor for Child Protection/ Safeguarding is Andrew James.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. School staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating. School staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children*. We will work with social care, the police, health services and other professional colleagues to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

In order to ensure accurate and timely reporting and tracking of all concerns within school, a computerised system called *MyConcern* has been introduced: this enables teachers and senior TAs to log-in to a secure, password protected, encrypted cloud based database, specific to our school, to report any concern instantly. The System then sends a notification e-mail to the DSL who can follow up in a number of ways depending upon the urgency and severity of the concern. The database can be interrogated according to any aspect or characteristic, and provides fast, up-to-date access when it really matters. Each user can only view information relating to the concern they have raised, and the DSL has complete control over individual access.

Partnership with parents and carers

We recognise the importance of good relationships with parents of children in our care and attempt to preserve these whenever possible; however, the school recognises that the protection of children must always be of paramount importance and consideration, and that the primary focus in child protection should always be the child's safety and welfare. Good child protection practice and outcome rely on a positive, open, honest working partnership with parents and carers. We will ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We will respect carers' right to privacy and confidentiality unless they give permission for information to be shared or it is necessary to infringe this in order to protect the child or children.

When a referral has been made without informing parents we will clearly explain that we have acted:

- following consultation and
- in line with our statutory responsibilities, this policy and Local Authority and Area Child Protection Committee procedures

We will make parents aware of this policy and guidance and state that we may on occasion, need to make referrals without consultation with them. However we will make every effort to maintain a positive working relationship with them whilst fulfilling our duties to protect the child or children.

Parents and Carers will be made aware that they can view this policy on request.

Supporting the child

The school will continue to support the child, and staff should not assume that because other services are involved they no longer have a role to play. The school will work together with other agencies involved with the family.

Children are entitled to an explanation (age appropriate) of what action is being taken on their behalf and why. We will provide a secure, caring, supportive and protective relationship for the child.

The Headteacher/designated person will need to decide which members of staff 'need to know' what has occurred and how much information is to be made available, in order to support and protect the child.

Child protection in the curriculum

Westfield School is committed to raising pupils awareness that they have a right to not be treated in a way that makes them uncomfortable, unhappy or hurt; that sometimes they may not feel able to stop an adult doing something that they do not like, but that there are people in and out of school who will listen to them and take steps to protect them from harm. We raise children's awareness of these issues by including PSHE in our curriculum, and discussing current national events that involve such issues, in a sensitive and appropriate way.

Recent international events have led to the introduction of an emphasis on British Values in the curriculum, and the importance of protecting children and young people from radicalisation. To this end, elements of citizenship, RE and PSHE, will include relevant and appropriate detail for those able to understand the difference between tolerance of multiculturalism, as opposed to radicalisation. These issues will be dealt with sensitively and in a non-threatening way to avoid any misunderstanding by our learners.

Safeguards for pupils and staff

Westfield School follows local and national guidance regarding the safe recruitment selection and employment of staff in order to ensure that every effort is made to deter and prevent any person who may pose a risk to children from working with them. In order to ensure that children are protected whilst at this school, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, trained and supervised.

We accept that it is our responsibility to follow the guidance set out in 'Keeping Children safe in Education in Education', in particular:

- Before appointing someone, references for the applicant's suitability to work with vulnerable children will be checked and validated
- All adults at this school will have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before starting work, and prior to confirmation of appointment
- All offers of employment will be **conditional** based upon satisfactory completion of a DBS check.
- At least one member of **every** appointment panel will have undergone accredited Safer Recruitment Training.
- All existing staff have satisfied the requirements of the confidential declaration form, as per the supplementary advice regarding Childcare disqualification requirements.

In addition, we will ensure that the following checks are satisfactorily completed before a person takes up a position in the school:

- verify a candidate's identity from current photographic ID, and proof of address except where, for exceptional reasons, none is available;
- obtain a certificate for an enhanced DBS check with a barred list information where the person will be engaging in regulated activity; (see appendix for current definition)

- check that a candidate to be employed as a teacher is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, using the Employer Access Online service;
- verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role.
- verify the person's right to work in the UK. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then prospective employers, or volunteer managers, will follow advice on the GOV.UK website;
- if the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school or college consider appropriate; and
- verify professional qualifications, as appropriate.

Previous employment history will be examined and we will expect that any gaps can be reasonably accounted for.

Staff volunteers who have not been checked in this manner will not be allowed to work alongside our young people.

(Please note: If an extended delay is likely for DBS clearance to occur, for instance if a birth certificate is lost, or an overseas national has to re-apply for key documents, or provide identification verification based on finger printing, which can be a lengthy process, then a risk assessment can be undertaken with strict conditions and monitoring procedures attached, to enable the individual to commence paid employment. However, these appointments remain temporary until satisfactory clearance is received. This decision is communicated to the Local Authority HR department, and the risk assessment justified.)

Volunteers and students

We understand that some people otherwise unsuitable for working with children may use volunteering to gain access to children; for this reason, any volunteers in the school, in whatever capacity, will be given the same consideration as paid staff.

Where a parent or other volunteer helps on a one-off basis, he/she will only work under the direct supervision of a member of staff, and at no time have one to one contact with children. However, if a parent or other volunteer is to be in school regularly or over a longer period then they will be checked to ensure their suitability to work with children.

F.E. Students on placement will have undergone a DBS check by their provider, and this will be asked for during a pre-placement visit.

Work experience students, usually in year 10, will not be put in a position that may leave them, or any other student, vulnerable to unsafe supervisory conditions. A separate guidance document exists for these students.

School staff will always act professionally and conduct any relationships with children in a professional manner.

Confidentiality

Westfield School and all members of staff at the school will ensure that all data about pupils is handled in accordance with the requirements of the law, and any national and local guidance. Annual permission forms are sent to parents regarding use of photographs, video etc; memory sticks and laptops containing pupil specific data are not permitted off-site; e-mails must be sent by secure means, and hard copies of pupil information must be kept in a locked office or cabinet.

Any member of staff who has access to sensitive information about a child or the child's family must take all reasonable steps to ensure that such information is only disclosed to those people who need to know.

Regardless of the duty of confidentiality, if any member of staff has reason to believe that a child may be suffering harm, or be at risk of harm, their duty is to forward this information without delay to the designated person for child protection.

Staff will not be put in a position which renders them particularly vulnerable to allegations of abuse. Any concerns that for whatever reason, a member of staff may be vulnerable will be shared with the designated person who will make appropriate arrangements to reduce/eradicate this risk. The decisions made will be recorded and include the reasons for them. If the risk relates to a particular child, a copy will be retained on that child's file (CP file where appropriate). Parents, where appropriate, will be informed.

At all times, members of staff are required to work in a professional way with children. All staff are made aware of the dangers inherent in:

- * working alone with a child
- * physical interventions
- * cultural and gender stereotyping
- * dealing with sensitive information
- * giving or receiving gifts from children and parents
- * contacting children or their parents through private telephones (including texting), email, or social networking websites
- * disclosing personal details inappropriately
- * meeting pupils outside school hours or school duties

Any member of staff who has concerns around the behaviour of another member of the school's staff will immediately inform the Headteacher. If these concerns relate to the Headteacher, the designated person and/or designated Governor will be informed.

Any member of staff who feels that, for whatever reason, they may behave in a manner which is abusive or neglectful to pupils has a responsibility to report this to the Headteacher who will make arrangements to secure the safety and protection of pupils. Advice, where necessary, may be sought from Local Authority officers.

The school's policy on physical intervention relates to this policy, where a 'restraint' appears to have been conducted in a manner which could constitute abuse. (ref: policy on Behaviour and Ensuring student safety)

Where abuse by children is either suspected or becomes known, the designated person will consult with HSCB colleagues in order to secure appropriate arrangements for the safety and protection of all and make child protection referrals where appropriate.

School have made appropriate arrangements for ensuring the safe use of the Internet by using a filtered service provided by the LA. The Local Authority's policy on e-safety is adopted by all LA schools.

Allegations of abuse made against a member of staff

All children will be listened to and taken seriously whenever making a disclosure, irrespective of the person about whom they are making the allegation. We acknowledge that this is particularly difficult when the subject of the allegation is a colleague and/or friend. On no account, however, will the person listening to the allegation offer an alternative explanation or blame the child. LA procedures in the ACPC handbook, will always be followed. It is acknowledged that such allegations may be:

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive;
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.
- **Unfounded:** there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made. It might also indicate that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively they may not have been aware of the circumstances;
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;

We acknowledge that education staff may on occasion be abusive to children. It is essential for both the children and the member of staff that allegations are investigated properly in order that the children are protected and that any member of staff who has been falsely accused can be proven innocent. In the event that an allegation is made against the Headteacher the matter should be reported to the nominated Governor, whose role it is to ensure that the agreed procedure is followed. They will proceed as the 'head teacher' as follows:

The person who has received an allegation or witnessed an event will immediately inform the head teacher, who will take steps to secure the immediate safety needs of the child or children and seek any urgent medical attention required. The member of staff will not be approached at this stage unless necessary to address the immediate safety of children.

The head teacher will consult with the lead Local Authority Designated Officer for Child Protection (LADO) in order to decide how to proceed. This decision will be made with regard to DfE guidance and LA procedures designed to secure the rights and well-being of children and staff.

Consideration will be given throughout to the support and information needs of pupils, parents and staff.

Children who go missing

When a child who is on the Child Protection register 'goes missing' or is significantly absent, the designated person will immediately inform Social Services, and/or the police. When other children go missing, or change school and information is not available regarding the receiving school, Westfield School will immediately inform Social Care and the relevant Local Authority, who will take appropriate action to trace the child.

Support for staff

Child Protection work can be difficult, distressing and extremely stressful. School staff who become involved in this area of work will therefore often need support and a 'listening ear'. Staff will be supported by the Head Teacher, who will be supported by the senior management team. Please note that additional support is always available from the LA; the role of Safeguarding Education Officer exists to support education based staff in all matters related to safeguarding.

Role of Governors

The Governing Body fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to child protection, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It will:

- Designate a governor for child protection who will oversee the school's Child Protection Policy, and champion child protection issues.
- Ensure an annual report is made to the governing body, on child protection matters, to include changes affecting CP policy and procedures, child protection training received, the number of incidents/cases (no names) and child protection in the curriculum.

Additionally, governors will undertake their responsibilities in relation to allegations against staff and any disciplinary procedures.

Before and after school activities

Where the Governing Body transfers control of use of school premises to bodies (such as sports clubs) to provide out of school hours activities, we will ensure that these bodies have appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to link with the school on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the bodies.

Contracted services

Where the Governing Bodies contracts its services to outside providers, we will ensure that these providers have appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to link with the school on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the provider.

Personnel Changes

Any change to personnel undertaking the roles of designated child protection person or nominated governor will be reported to the Safeguarding Board in order that LA records can be updated and training offered.

Ofsted Inspections

If an OFSTED Inspection comment suggests that Westfield School should address any matters regarding child protection, this will be communicated to the Safeguarding Board who will offer any necessary advice, guidance or training. Our school will also report any positive comments or practise in order that this can be shared to promote good practice in all schools.

Summing Up

- each individual has statutory responsibility in Child Protection
- every case is different
- immediate action is essential
- children's safety and well-being come first
- never hesitate to seek the advice of the designated person
- everyone has a right to make a referral to the Social Services Department

- the child may need to continue at the school and must feel safe
- the Safeguarding Board is there to support you and will make a referral on your behalf if necessary/appropriate
- dealing with child protection issues can be upsetting, distressing and extremely stressful. It is important to offer support and a listening ear to colleagues.

To this end, this policy must be seen in light of the school's policies on:

- Personal, Social and Health Education and Sex and Relationships Education; child protection issues will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate.
- Bullying; the school will pay particular attention to sexualized behaviour, bullying that is homophobic in nature, or where there could be links to domestic abuse in the family home.
- Safer recruitment and code of conduct for staff
- Safeguarding procedural information for staff and checklist (attached)
- Racist incidents
- Confidentiality
- Behaviour including the use of physical intervention
- Health & Safety
- Physical Intervention
- Allegations against members of staff

A person will be considered to be in '**regulated activity**' if as a result of their work they:

- will be responsible, on a regular basis, in any setting for the care or supervision of children; or
- will regularly work in a school or college at times when children are on school or college premises (where the person's work requires interaction with children, whether or not the work is paid (unless they are a supervised volunteer), or whether the person is directly employed or employed by a contractor); or
- in a college, will regularly come into contact with children under 18 years of age

Documents referenced in this policy :

HM Government Statutory Guidance:

Working Together to Safeguard Children. March 2015

DfE Statutory Guidance for schools and colleges:

Keeping Children Safe in Education. March 2015

HM Government advice for practitioners:

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused. March 2015

DfE Statutory Guidance:

Dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff 2012

DfE Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers

The Prevent Duty. June 2015

This policy was recommended for approval by the Children, Families and Community Committee on 15.10.15, and subsequently approved by the Full Governing Body

Signed _____

Date: _____

WESTFIELD SCHOOL
Safeguarding and Child Protection: Quick Prompt Card
(for everyday use but also remember to read all safeguarding policies)

DO always try to avoid working alone with a pupil, but when this is necessary always inform a member of staff where you are working and remember to leave the door ajar, whilst also protecting a pupil's dignity when necessary

DO observe pupils on a daily basis and remember you have a duty to report any and all concerns to the Headteacher

DO request support from a first aider and Headteacher when there are signs of serious injury/illness so emergency intervention can be summoned

DO be alert to any unexplained pupil changes in behaviour and/or emotion and report these to the Headteacher

DO report any and all disclosures of possible abuse immediately to the Headteacher both in writing and verbally

DO respond immediately if you detect any unexplained injuries by reporting the incident on the Headteacher or Deputy designated person, who will support the recording of the marks on a body chart

DO give a pupil time to share what they wish to say and remember some pupils may prefer to communicate via sign, symbol or augmentative device.

DO remain passive and listen carefully to what is being communicated. When the pupil has shared what s/he wished to communicate, arrange to be excused from the class and report what has been disclosed to the Headteacher both in writing and verbally

DO reassure a pupil that s/he has done the right thing by sharing the disclosure and react calmly by giving gentle, simple and re-assuring responses, but promising nothing

DO NOT stop a pupil from sharing a disclosure but allow him/her to talk freely

DO NOT question a pupil or ask for more information

DO NOT tell a pupil you will keep a disclosure secret

DO NOT share information about an incident or disclosure with any other person other than the Headteacher, or in her absence, the deputy designated person and remember that all information is absolutely confidential

DO NOT communicate with pupils out of school hours for social reasons via mobile phones, social networking sites, email etc.

Please familiarise yourself with the school's social networking policy and adhere to it at all times.

Definitions

Neglect

Neglect is 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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as fictitious/induced/fabricated illness by proxy or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or sodomy) or non-penetrative acts. These may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Specific safeguarding issues

Recent guidance from the government document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' refers to the following specific safeguarding issues: broad government guidance on the issues listed can be found via the GOV.UK website:

- child sexual exploitation (CSE) – see also below
- bullying including cyberbullying
- domestic violence
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM) – see also below
- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- mental health

- private fostering
- radicalisation
- sexting
- teenage relationship abuse
- trafficking

Further information on Child Sexual Exploitation and Female Genital Mutilation

- **Child sexual exploitation (CSE):** involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly ‘consensual’ relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is **an imbalance of power in the relationship**. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 11-12 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines referred to previously. Staff should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children’s social care.
- **Radicalisation**
As a school, we are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This should be based on an understanding, shared with partners, of the potential risk in the local area. Specified authorities will need to demonstrate that they are protecting children and young people from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies in place to identify children at risk, and intervening as appropriate. Institutions will need to consider the level of risk to identify the most appropriate referral, which could include Channel or Children’s Social Care, for example. These policies should set out clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers – whether invited by staff or by children themselves – are suitable and appropriately supervised.