



South Wirral High School

Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy

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This Policy was revised in September 2016

**The Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding is:
Holly Cottrell, SENCo**

In his absence the role will be undertaken by:

Claire Holden or Jo Smith

In the rare event of these members of staff being absent concerns should be reported to any other designated teacher in charge.

Record of training

Date Completed

<p>Whole School Safeguarding Training <i>Due every 3 years</i></p>	<p>Completed: March 2015 Due: March 2018</p>
<p>Senior Designated Person Level 2 <i>Due every 2 years</i></p>	<p><i>H. Cottrell</i> Completed: February 2016 Refresher due: February 2018</p>
<p>Senior Designated Person Level 2 Deputising Person <i>Due every 2 years</i></p>	<p><i>J. Smith</i> Completed: June 2016 Refresher due: June 2018</p>
<p>Level 2 Safeguarding Training <i>Due every 2 years</i></p>	<p><i>C. Holden</i> Completed: March 2016 Refresher Due: March 2018</p>
<p>Safer Recruitment Training Simon Goodwin December 2015 Due every 5 years</p>	<p><i>S. Goodwin</i> Completed: December 2015 Due: December 2020</p>

Nominated School Governors for Child Protection:

Ray Parr and Chris Weatherston

This policy was ratified by the Governing Body On: March 2016

Review date: March 2017

Making referrals

Where a child is registered at school, consultation must take place with the school's designated person for Child Protection who will be the most appropriate person to initiate any referral. A written record of your concerns should be made using the schools internal recording system. This should then be given to the Designated Child Protection teacher who may decide to make a referral to Multi Agency Safeguarding

Hub (MASH) within social care. This was previously known as Central Advice and Duty Team (CADT).

For referral to **MASH** telephone **0151 606 2008**. (9am- 5pm) or **EDT 677 6557** (after 5pm) (see page 18) to speak to the Duty Social Worker. The telephone referral will need to be followed up with written confirmation on the Multi-agency referral form. (see Chapter 6 for the link)

Introduction

South Wirral High School recognises its legal duty under s175 Education Act 2002 and the 1989 Children Act and takes seriously its responsibilities to protect and safeguard the interests of all children. The school recognises that effective child protection work requires sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and a workforce that is competent and confident in responding to child protection situations

This procedure document provides the basis for good practice within the school for Child Protection work. It should be read in conjunction with the Wirral Local Safeguarding Board Child Protection Policies and Procedures. These are in keeping with relevant national procedures and reflect what the Board considers to be safe and professional practice in this context. Child Protection has to be considered within professionals' wider "safeguarding" responsibilities that include a duty to co-operate under the Children Act 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015, Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with Children and Young People in Education Settings 2015.. Within the context of Help Children Achieve More, this takes account of the need for children "being healthy and staying safe".

These procedures aim to provide a framework which ensures that all practice in the area of child protection is consistent with stated values and procedures that underpin all work with children and young people.

This document also seeks to make the professional responsibilities clear to all staff to ensure that statutory and other duties are met in accordance with Wirral Safeguarding Children Board requirements and procedures.

All procedures can be found on the WSCB website:

<http://wirrallscb.proceduresonline.com>

Underpinning values

Where there is a safeguarding issue, South Wirral High School will work in accordance with the principles outlined in the Wirral Safeguarding Children Board multi-agency procedures:

- A child's welfare is paramount. Each child has a right to be protected from harm and exploitation and to have their welfare safeguarded.

- Each child is unique. Action taken by child welfare organisations should be child-centred, taking account of a child’s cultural, ethnic and religious background, their gender, their sexual orientation, their individual ability and any special needs.
- Children, parents and other carers should be made aware of their responsibilities and their rights, together with advice about the power of professionals to intervene in their family circumstances.
- Each child has a right to be consulted about actions taken by others on his/her behalf. The concerns of children and their families should be listened to and due consideration given to their understanding, wishes and feelings.
- Individual family members must be involved in decisions affecting them. They must be treated with courtesy and respect and with due regard given to working with them in a spirit of partnership in safeguarding children’s welfare. The strengths of individual family members, as well as their needs, should be given due consideration.
- Explanations by professionals to children, their families and other carers should be plainly stated and jargon-free.
- Open-mindedness and honesty must guide each stage of assessment and of operational practice and each school should follow inter-agency protocols. Personal information is usually confidential. It should only be shared with the permission of the individual concerned, or unless the disclosure of confidential personal information is necessary in order to protect a child. In all circumstances, information must be confined to those people directly involved in the professional network of each individual child and on a strict “need to know” basis.
- Sound professional practice is based upon positive inter-agency collaboration, evidence-based research and effective supervision and evaluation.
- Early intervention in providing support services under the LA Targeted Services arrangements is an important principle of practice in inter-agency work for safeguarding the welfare of children.

The school will foster an ongoing culture of vigilance to maintain a safer environment for all pupils by:

- Ensuring that senior members of staff have undertaken an approved ‘Safer Recruitment’ course and are committed to working to the guidelines recommended.
- Checking the suitability of all prospective staff and volunteers during the recruitment process by checking the Independent Safeguarding Authority register of people cleared to work with children as well as carrying out a Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- Formulating an induction policy and programme for new staff, students and volunteers with the emphasis on Safeguarding Children.
- Ensuring that the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection has undergone suitable training for their role and that this training is refreshed every 2 years.
- Arranging whole school staff training in Child Protection every 3 years. This training to include all staff e.g. teachers, teaching assistants, administration

and caretaking staff; and anyone else who has regular contact with the pupils.

- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused by co-operating with other professionals (as recommended by 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015.') to carry out our responsibilities outlined in any Child protection Plan issued at a Child Protection Case Conference.
- Establishing a safer environment in which children can learn and develop.

Establishing a safer Environment.

The school will:

- 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 PSHCE, SRE and Computing curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise risks and stay safe from abuse.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary, supply staff and volunteers) and the governing body knows the name of the Senior Designated Person responsible for child protection and their role in helping staff to safeguard pupils.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- Notify Wirral Social Care department on the first day of an unexplained absence of a pupil who is the subject of a child protection plan.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences, strategy meetings and core group conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children to enable appropriate support to be targeted effectively e.g. 'Team Around the Family' meetings.
- Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer by contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer for allegations.

The school will endeavour to support pupils through:

- The content of the curriculum.

- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Wirral Social Care, Child and Adult Mental Health Services, Education Welfare Services, Special Educational Support Services and the Educational Psychology Service.
- Ensuring that, when a pupil who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school within 2 weeks and that the child's Social Worker is informed that the child has moved
- After 20 days absence if a child has moved and the new school is unknown the school will post details on the 'Pupil to Pupil' register.

Further information on a Child Missing from Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School and college staff should follow the school's or college's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Schools should put in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers.

All schools must inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- have been permanently excluded.

The local authority must be notified when a school is to delete a pupil from its register under the above circumstances. This should be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register. It is essential that schools comply with this duty, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education, follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a

continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority (or in default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State).

Further information on Child Sexual Exploitation

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.

Links to key CSE documents including the screening tool, referral form and practice guidance are provided in Chapter 6.

Further information on Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. 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.

Indicators

There is a range of potential indicators that a girl may be at risk of FGM. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 16-17 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines, and Chapter 9 of those Guidelines (pp42-44) focuses on the role of schools and colleges.

Section 5C of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 75 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) gives the Government powers to issue statutory guidance on FGM to relevant persons. Once the government issues any statutory multi-agency guidance this will apply to schools and colleges.

Actions

If staff have a concern they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. When mandatory reporting commences in October 2015 these procedures will remain when dealing with concerns regarding the potential for FGM to take place. Where a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, there will be a statutory duty upon that individual to report it to the police.

Mandatory Reporting Duty

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) will place a statutory duty upon **teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police** where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

The Mandatory reporting duty will commence in October 2015. Once introduced, teachers must report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate.

Further information on Preventing Radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. School staff should use their professional judgement in identifying

children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel programme.

Prevent

From 1 July 2015 specified authorities, including all schools as defined in the summary of this guidance, are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (“the CTSA 2015”), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the CTSA 2015 (“the Prevent guidance”). Paragraphs 57-76 of the Prevent guidance are concerned specifically with schools (but also cover childcare). It is anticipated that the duty will come into force for sixth form colleges and FE colleges early in the autumn. This duty is known as the Prevent duty. It applies to a wide range of public-facing bodies.

The statutory Prevent guidance summarises the requirements on schools in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies.

- Schools are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them. Schools and colleges should have clear procedures in place for protecting children at risk of radicalisation. These procedures may be set out in existing safeguarding policies. It is not necessary for schools and colleges to have distinct policies on implementing the Prevent duty.
- The Prevent duty builds on existing local partnership arrangements. For example, governing bodies and proprietors of all schools should ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs).
- The Prevent guidance refers to the importance of Prevent awareness training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Individual schools are best placed to assess the training needs of staff in the light of their assessment of the risk to pupils at the school of being drawn into terrorism. As a minimum, however, schools should ensure that the designated safeguarding lead undertakes Prevent awareness training and is able to provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.
- Schools must ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools. Schools should ensure that suitable filtering is in place. It is also important that schools teach pupils about online safety more generally.

The Department for Education has also published advice for schools on the Prevent duty. The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts other sources of advice and support.

Channel

School staff should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

Section 36 of the CTSA 2015 places a duty on local authorities to ensure Channel panels are in place. The panel must be chaired by the local authority and include the police for the relevant local authority area. Following a referral the panel will assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, and, where considered appropriate and necessary consent is obtained, arrange for support to be provided to those individuals. Section 38 of the CTSA 2015 requires partners of Channel panels to co-operate with the panel in the carrying out of its functions and with the police in providing information about a referred individual. Schools and colleges which are required to have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education are listed in the CTSA 2015 as partners required to cooperate with local Channel panels.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the nominated Governor for Child Protection and the Senior Designated Person for Child Protection.

Chapter 2 Types of 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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional abuse:

Is the persistent emotional maltreatment 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. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, 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 maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Sexual abuse:

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

There are three thresholds for and types of referral that need to be considered:

Is this a child with additional needs where their health, development or achievement may be adversely affected? Wirral Children and Young People's Framework says practitioners should complete a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) when:

- Age appropriate progress is not being made and the causes are unclear or
- The support of more than one agency is needed to meet the child or young person's needs.

If this is a child with additional needs discuss the issues with the CAF trained practitioner in your school, the child and parents. You will need to obtain parental consent for a CAF to be completed.

Is this child in need? s17 of the Children Act 1989 says:

- they are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development, without the provision of services by a local authority.
- their health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired without the provision of such services.
- they are disabled.

Is this a child protection matter? s47 of the Children Act 1989 says:

- children at risk or who are suffering significant harm.
- children suffering the effects of significant harm
- serious health problems.

If this is a child in need, discuss the issues with the designated child protection teacher and parents. Obtain their consent for referral to First Response (see below) or any other agency.

If this is a child protection matter, this should be discussed with the designated teacher and will need to be referred to MASH by the school as soon as possible.

It is the 'significant harm' threshold that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A professional making a child protection referral under S.47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

It is not possible to rely on one absolute criterion when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the extent of the harm suffered, the context within which it occurred and its duration.

Significant harm may also arise from a combination of significant events which are both acute and long standing and which may impair the child's physical, psychological and social development.

In order to both understand and establish significant harm, it is necessary to consider the family context, together with the child's development within their wider social and

cultural environment. It is also necessary to consider any special needs, e.g. medical condition, communication difficulties or disability that may affect the child's development and care within the family. The nature of harm, in terms of ill-treatment or failure to provide adequate care also needs consideration alongside the impact on the child's health and development and the adequacy of care provided.

All staff will have training on all the above issues on induction to school and every 3 years via a Wirral Safeguarding Children Board approved level 1 basic 'Safeguarding Children' course.

Chapter 3 Talking to and listening to children

Disclosures and Record Keeping

If a child chooses to disclose, you SHOULD:

- be accessible and receptive;
- listen carefully and uncritically at the child's pace;
- take what is said seriously;
- reassure the child that they are right to tell;
- tell the child that you must pass this information on;
- make a careful record of exactly what was said by the child and the member of staff
- only get a child to recount events once
- sign and date the record.

You should NEVER:

- take photographs or examine an injury;
- investigate or probe aiming to prove or disprove possible abuse – never ask leading questions;
- make promises to children about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets';
- assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- jump to conclusions or react with shock, anger or horror;
- speculate or accuse anybody;
- confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved;
- offer opinions about what is being said or about the persons allegedly involved;
- forget to record what you have been told;
- fail to pass the information on to the correct person;
- ask a child to sign a written copy of the disclosure.

For children with communication difficulties or who use alternative/augmented communication systems, you may need to take extra care to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are identified and interpreted correctly, but concerns should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children.

Record keeping

Well kept records are essential in situations where it is suspected or believed that a child may be at risk from harm.

Records should:

- state who was present, time, date and place;
- use the child's words wherever possible;
- be factual/state exactly what was said;
- differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation;

- be written in ink and signed by the recorder;

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue that needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. This is a complex area and involves consideration of a number of pieces of legislation.

You can never guarantee confidentiality to a child as some kinds of information may need to be shared with others. A suggested form of words that may help when talking to children is as follows:

“There are some secrets I can’t keep; but I promise that if someone is hurting or frightening you I will help keep you safe. I cannot do that on my own and will need to talk to about it”

Professionals can only work together to safeguard children if there is an exchange of relevant information between them. This has been recognised in principle by the courts. However, any disclosure of personal information to others, included social service departments, must always have regard to both common and statute law.

Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (Data Protection Act 1998 European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8). Wherever possible consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, however, consent may not be possible or desirable but the safety and welfare of the child dictate that the information should be shared.

The law requires the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 statutory agencies have a duty to co-operate. Therefore, if the Police or Social Care/Services are conducting a Section 47 investigation under the 1989 Children Act, staff must share requested information relevant to the investigation. Legal advice should be sought if in doubt from the Legal Services Department.

Attendance at Child Protection Conferences and Core Groups

The Senior Designated Person for Child Protection or their deputy will be expected to attend the initial Child Protection Conference.

If a child is made subject to a Child Protection Plan it may be more relevant for the class teacher or head of year to attend the subsequent core group meetings.

Chapter 4 Useful Contacts

It may be useful to laminate the next few pages and display them in an appropriate location.



Making a referral to Children's Social Care

- **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (Previously known as Central Advice and Duty Team) Telephone: 606 2008**
- **Fax: 606 2022**
- **E-mail: cadtsocialcare@wirral.gcsx.gov.uk**
- **Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) Telephone: 677 6557**
- **Webpage:**

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/childrens-social-care/report-child-risk>



- **Family Crime Investigation Unit: Telephone: 777 2685**
- **Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations:
Suzanne Cottrell**
- **Telephone 666 4582 Fax 666 4580
Mobile 07780508919**
- **Email: suzannecottrell@wirral.gov.uk**
- **Webpage:**

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children/wirral-safeguarding-childrens-board/allegations-against-adults>



Other useful telephone numbers

Simon Garner - Corporate Safeguarding Manager LA Prevent Officer	- 666 5775
Julia Hassall – Director of Children’s Services	- 606 2000
David Robbins – Manager WSCB	- 666 4314

Julie Merry - EQ Safeguarding Training Officer - 666 5276

Paul Storey – Prevent Team Merseyside Police – 777 8328/07739822286

Chapter 5

Managing Allegations against Staff and Safe Working Guidance

You should seek to keep your personal contact with children under review and seek to minimise the risk of any situation arising in which misunderstandings can occur. The following sensible precautions can be taken when working alone with children:

- work in a room where there is a glass panel in the door or leave the door open
- make sure that other adults visit the room occasionally.
- avoid working in isolation with children unless thought has been given to safeguards.
- must not give out personal mobile phone numbers or private e-mail addresses
- must not give pupils lifts home in your cars
- must not arrange to meet them outside of school hours
- must not chat to pupils on the social websites

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is a criminal offence for anyone working in an education setting to have a sexual relationship with a pupil even when the pupil is over the age of consent.

Any use of physical force or restraint against pupils will be carried out and documented in accordance with the relevant physical restraint policy. If it is necessary to use physical action to prevent a child from injury to themselves or others parents will be informed.

Children will not be punished by any form of hitting, slapping, shaking or other degrading treatment.

Allegations of abuse against a professional

Children can be the victims of abuse by those who work with them in any setting. All allegations of abuse of children carried out by any staff member or volunteer must therefore be taken seriously.

If an allegation is received by the Headteacher or Chair of Governors the following must be considered – Has the member of staff:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

Allegations of abuse made against staff, whether historical or contemporary, must be dealt with by the Headteacher; not the designated child protection person in cases where this role is not undertaken by the Head (if the allegation is against the Head then it must be dealt with by the Chair of Governors). The Head / Chair must contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Suzanne Cottrell - 666 4582 **within 24 hours** to discuss the allegation. The Headteacher must also contact Ofsted if the allegation is against member of staff in EYFS.

This initial conversation will establish the validity of any allegation and if a referral is needed to MASH. If this is the case a strategy meeting will be called that the Head / Chair should attend.

The decision of the strategy meeting could be:

- investigation by children's social care
- police investigation if there is a criminal element to the allegation
- single agency investigation completed by the school which should involve the Schools Senior HR advisor

The fact that a member of staff offers to resign should not prevent the allegation procedure reaching a conclusion.

The process for managing an allegation against staff employed in schools/educational settings

Step 1 Allegation received from member of staff/volunteer/ or other source

- Log action and information
- **DO NOT** tell anyone, not even staff involved
- **DO NOT** investigate or interview

Step 2 Headteacher/Chair of Governors receive allegation and consult with LADO/HR Consultancy Team

Incident definitely did not happen
Allegation without foundation ** i.e.

- Review :**
- why the allegation was made and his/her future management
 - should an inter-agency referral be made?
 - support for the adult

Action does not meet criminal threshold
School disciplinary investigation and or Children's Services **

Informal action

Disciplinary investigation undertaken

Action may be abusive

1. Consider suspension
2. Refer to Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
3. Safeguarding Multi Agency Strategy Meeting convened

Investigation by Social Care and/or Police **

• No Further Action by Police/ Social Care

Criminal Investigation may put internal disciplinary investigation on hold

** Member of staff may be offered counselling through an Occupational Health Provider and encouraged to contact their union

Reviewed by Governors March 2016.
Reviewed / updated by HLC, Sept 2016.
Reviewed by Governors Oct 2016

Chapter 6 Links to Key Multi-agency Safeguarding Documents

1. Wirral Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) multi-agency procedures website (includes ALL key multi-agency safeguarding procedures):

<http://wirrallscb.proceduresonline.com/>

2. Multi-agency Request for Services form. This referral form to be used if you require either a statutory Level 4 service or a Level 3 Team around the Family service:

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/childrens-social-care/wirral-safeguarding-childrens-board/family-common>

3. Child Sexual Exploitation documents including the protocol, screening tool, referral form and practice guidance:

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children/wirral-safeguarding-childrens-board/safeguarding-children-policies>

4. Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO) referral form:

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children/wirral-safeguarding-childrens-board/allegations-against-adults>

5. Multi-agency Safeguarding Training Courses from the WSCB (free to all staff members)

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children/wirral-safeguarding-childrens-board/safeguarding-children-training>