

SOLWAY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Child Protection Policy

School Values

These values are shared by the staff, governors and students in the school and underpin the education we offer at Solway Community School.

We have the moral purpose and courage to do the right thing for our students, to allow and inspire everyone to be what they are meant to be; to reach their potential; to be happy, safe and hardworking.

We work together as a community to make learning exciting and inspirational.

We have high expectations of everyone - students, staff and governors.

We are creating an environment which is free from cynicism and does not put limits on what our children can achieve.

Our values:

- Courage and compassion
- Respect and tolerance
- Inclusion and equality
- Optimism and perseverance
- Courtesy and respect

These values inform our work. We share these values constantly through our day-to-day ethos and actions, through our assemblies, through our curriculum and through excellent teaching which provides rich opportunities for learning. We show our responsibility for others through our compassion, courage and determination to change things for the better.

Version No	Author/Owner	Date Written	Note of amendments made	Signature	Review Date
2009/01	S Shepherd	13/05/09			
2010/01	S Shepherd	05/05/10			
2011/01	L Baird	04/04/11			
2013/01	JR	Feb 2013	Updates re DBS		
2014-01	Governors	Nov 2013	Updated and approved 26/11/13		
2014-02	Governors	Mar 2014	Update and approved 25/03/2014		
2015-01	LA	Feb 2015	Updated LA version Presented to Governors 24/2/15		
2016-01	GW / JR	Nov 2015	Approved at Governors 1 st December 2015		
2017-01	GW/JR	Nov 2016	Approved at Governors 15/11/16		

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

Solway Community School believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to practice which protects them.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

The purpose of the policy:

- To provide protection for the children and young people who receive (organisations name's) services, including the children of adult members or users.
- To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

This policy applies to all pupils, staff, governors, volunteers, visiting and agency staff, or anyone working on behalf of Solway Community Technology College

We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them;
- implementing child protection procedures based on national guidance and codes of conduct for staff and volunteers;
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made;
- sharing with children, parents, staff and volunteers, information about good practice in child protection;
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately;
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through support and training.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR REFERRAL OR ADVICE

Local authority

Cumbria Safeguarding Hub
Skirsgill Depot
Penrith,
Cumbria
CA10 2BQ

Tel: 0333 2401727

Fax: 01228 221572

Email: safeguardinghub.fax@cumbria.gov.uk

The LADO (local authority designated officer for dealing with allegations against staff):

Contact Multi-Agency Business Support Team who will take your details and ensure a LADO returns your call:

- Phone 01768 812267
- Or you can email lado@cumbria.gov.uk
- Fax: 01768 812090
- LADO, Cumbria Safeguarding Hub, Skirsgill Depot, Penrith, Cumbria, CA10 2BQ

Complete an allegations notification form ([download from the LSCB website.](#))

LADO working hours are Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm and Friday 9am to 4.30pm.

School

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection is Graham Wigginton.

The deputy DSL is Judith Schafer.

Our Child Protection Governor is: Rosie de Mello

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introduction

- 1) The aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote our pupils' welfare, by fostering an honest, open, caring and supportive climate. Our pupils' welfare is of paramount importance.
- 2) The school has compiled this document with due regard to the statutory guidance, *Working Together To Safeguard Children* (DfE 2015) and *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE 2016)

School Commitment

- 3) We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult help all children, and especially those at risk of, or suffering from, abuse.
- 4) Our school will therefore:
 - a) Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to. We will be alert to our children's needs and learn to recognise when they might be distressed or concerned;
 - b) Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty. We will ensure that every child in our school has at least one member of staff who they might feel able to share concerns with;
 - c) Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities through PSHE/Citizenship, which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe and develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life;
 - d) Follow Cumbria's published local protocol for assessment to ensure the provision of early help as set out in statutory guidance, including using the Common Assessment Framework where appropriate.
 - e) Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies. We will seek parental consent unless we are concerned over physical or sexual abuse, fabricated or induced illness or child pornography.

Working together with other agencies

- 5) The school will work closely with the LA in ensuring that concerns are recorded and reported, referring formally where appropriate so that support can be provided in a proportionate timely way to the child/young person and the family.
- 6) The school recognises that the responsibilities of the LA in protecting children and young people include:
 - a) supporting and advising schools on safeguarding and child protection issues;
 - b) evaluating referrals of concern for children, using the multi-agency 'wedge' threshold guidance on the LSCB website and,
 - c) in partnership with other agencies, providing or ensuring the provision of services to children and their families at the following levels:

- i) early help or early intervention
- ii) targeted intervention for children in need where there are more complex needs and where statutory Children Services assessment and help is provided under section 17 of the Children Act 1989
- iii) Child protection intervention following section 47 statutory Children Services assessment of risks of significant harm.

Roles and Responsibilities

- 7) All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. There are, however, key people within schools and the LA who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those carrying these responsibilities for the current year are listed earlier.
- 8) The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection is Graham Wigginton. He will coordinate child protection activity, ensuring procedures are followed, that information is shared or kept confidential as appropriate, and that the child remains the central focus. In his absence the deputy who will undertake this role is Judith Schafer.
- 9) The DSL also takes responsibility for reporting children missing from education to the local authority's Children's Services.
- 10) The Governing Body ensures that
 - a) procedures are in place that are in accordance with local authority and locally agreed inter-agency guidance;
 - b) their implementation is monitored for their effectiveness and that they are reviewed at least annually.
 - c) The procedures include the management of allegations against people who work with children, safe recruitment practice and reporting children missing from education.

Training and Support

- 11) Our school will ensure that all staff will have access to training, which is relevant and appropriate to their role. This will include training in procedures to follow, signs to note and appropriate record keeping. Refresher training will be available every year for all Level 1 staff.
 - a) All staff in our school will be trained to recognise and respond to situations where a child may be considered to be at risk.
 - b) At any time a member of staff may consult with the DSL, the Head Teacher, or in her absence, other trained members of staff on any child protection issue.
 - c) We will ensure our staff are kept informed about child protection procedures via our briefings and training sessions.
 - d) We will ensure by signposting in our school that other adults in school know what to do if there are child protection concerns.
 - e) We will inform parents of the school's duties and responsibilities for child protection by incorporating a statement into our school prospectus and on our website.

12) We have access to the Cumbria LSCB Safeguarding Procedures electronically and we retain copies of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE 2015) and *What to Do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused* in our school office.

13) We have a supporting Acceptable Use Policy, also available in our school office.

Consent, confidentiality and information sharing

14) Our policy on maintaining confidentiality and sharing information is as follows:

- a) Any sharing of information will be justifiable, accountable, proportionate, accurate, up to date and necessary.
- b) Only those members of our staff who "need to know" so as to contribute to the protection of a child will be advised of concerns and action taken.
- c) Parents, governors and every adult working in, or associated with, the school will be advised of our approach to confidentiality and information sharing.
- d) Staff (including volunteers) must never guarantee confidentiality to a child: it might be necessary to tell someone else in order to safeguard the child. A child who asks the adult to keep a secret should be advised that the information may need to be shared with others.
- e) Normally, personal information will 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 will be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties.
- f) In some circumstances, obtaining consent may not be possible or in the best interest of the child. **The safety and welfare of that child might necessitate that the information should be shared without informing or obtaining the consent of a parent. The law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children.** Disclosure should be justifiable in each case, according to the particular facts of the case, and advice should be sought if in doubt.
- g) If parents and/or the child do not consent to an early help assessment, then the DSL should make a judgement as to whether, without help, the needs of the child will escalate. If so, a referral into local authority children's social care may be necessary

Records and Monitoring

- 1) Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Concerns about welfare or behaviour must be recorded.
- 2) All such notes, minutes, referrals, and records are kept separate to the child's main school file in a locked cupboard.
- 3) If a child transfers or leaves, the notes should be passed from our DSL direct to the receiving school's DSL.

Attendance at Child Protection Conferences

- 4) A Child Protection Conference is a multi-agency meeting called to consider the child's need for a Child Protection Plan.

- 5) The Chair of the Conference extends an invitation to the school rather than a named person. The person who best knows the child and can contribute to the Conference will normally attend from our school.
- 6) We will include training and support to staff who attend conferences and prepare reports in our regular training events.

Supporting Pupils at Risk

- 7) Our school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at school, their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant and there may even be moves to consider exclusion from school.
- 8) It is also recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support'
- 9) This school will endeavour to support such pupils through:
 - a) the curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation
 - b) the school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued
 - c) the consistent implementation of our behaviour management policies
 - d) regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families
 - e) a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents
 - f) the development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff team, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations
- 10) This policy should be read in conjunction with other related policies in school. These include
 - Dealing with allegations of abuse against staff
 - Behaviour and Discipline Policy (including Bullying)
 - Restraint
 - Special Educational Needs
 - Health and Safety
 - Sex Education
 - Administration of Medicine
 - Attendance
 - E-Safety
 - Recruitment and Appointment Procedure for School Staff
 - Staff capability, grievance and discipline
 - Whistleblowing
 - Equalities

Safe Schools, Safe Staff

- 11) As a school we recognise that organisational, personal or professional difficulties can get in the way of protecting children (for example fear that we might compromise relationships with parents). We know however that children's needs are paramount.
- 12) We recognise that physical contact with pupils is sometimes part of our role "in loco parentis" but will avoid contact that might be misinterpreted.
- 13) If our staff are working in a one-to-one situation with a pupil, they should be careful to ensure another adult is close by.
- 14) Teachers are not counsellors. School staff should not be counselling and/or giving advice to children/young people about sexual matters, except where this is part of the school's agreed Sex and Relationships Education policy.
- 15) We follow the LA's recommended best practice in order to recruit and select safe staff.
- 16) We follow current procedures when staff are faced with allegations of abuse.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

We will follow the procedures set out below where it is believed that a child is either:

- a) suffering from, or is at risk of, significant harm or
- b) has needs that cannot be met and we believe co-ordinated intervention is required

The prime concern at all stages must be the interests and safety of the child. Where there is a conflict of interests between the child and parent, or the child and other adults, the interests of the child must be paramount.

These procedures should be read in conjunction with the flow chart (Annex 2).

Dealing with emerging concerns

- 1) If any member of staff is concerned about a child, he or she must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- 2) All staff and volunteers should be concerned about a child if he/she presents with indicators of possible significant harm. Generally, in an abusive relationship the child may:
 - Appear frightened of the parent/s or other household members e.g. siblings or others outside of the home
 - Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups)
 - Display insufficient sense of 'boundaries', lack stranger awareness
 - Appear wary of adults and display 'frozen watchfulness'

Dealing with a disclosure

- 3) If a child discloses any kind of abuse, the teacher/member of staff, should only seek initial clarification from the child – tact and sympathy is vital. Under no circumstances should any member of staff attempt to obtain further information or to investigate what the child is saying. (see Annex 3 for further guidance).
- 4) The member of staff must refer the concerns, together with copies of any notes or records made, to the DSL. It is the duty of the DSL to inform the local Children's Services of concerns about a child.
- 5) If the senior designated person does not do this and the teacher who had made the initial referral remains concerned, then they need to exercise their own judgement and make the referral themselves.
- 6) When making a referral the DSL will complete the Cumbria Safeguarding Hub Single Contact Form, stored in the school office. The member of staff who first referred the concerns to the DSL must keep a log of the incident, to include:-
 - Child's full name
 - Address
 - Sex and date of birth
 - Parent(s) and guardian(s) name(s)
 - Known aliases
 - Contact addresses and telephone numbers during school hours

- Name of teacher making the referral/making the comment
 - Nature of injury (if any)
 - Grounds for suspicion
 - Action taken, including dates and times
- 7) The request for co-ordinated support services for a family should always be discussed with parents **unless to do so would place the child or others at risk of harm.**
- 8) Where, following an early help assessment by the school staff or other involved agencies of a situation, it is considered immediate protective action is required, the DSL will make a referral. This referral will be by telephone to the Cumbria Safeguarding Hub. The DSL should then complete and forward the Single Contact form to the Safeguarding Hub.
- 9) Blank forms for recording concerns, logging incidents and making formal referrals can be found in the school office and completed records must be stored in the CP drawer in the school office.

Dealing with a disagreement over referral outcomes

- 10) Where the school believes that insufficient action has been taken with regard to a concern raised about a child, the DSL will follow the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) conflict resolution protocol.
- 11) Briefly, this means that there should initially be a discussion between the DSL and the relevant social worker.
- 12) If the point of disagreement cannot be resolved at the practitioner level, then the issue is to be discussed and resolved between the Head Teacher and the relevant Children's Social Care Team Manager.
- 13) Should the issue remain unresolved, the Head Teacher should refer the matter to the relevant Service Manager, Social Care whose role is to ensure county wide standards are being applied.
- 14) The formal stage of the conflict resolution protocol can only occur after the early stages have been exhausted. The full procedures can be accessed via at www.cumbrialscb.com

Procedures to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

- 15) An allegation against a member of staff is potentially extremely serious – for the child, staff member and school. The school has adopted a separate procedure for dealing with such allegations. Briefly, the Head Teacher (or Chair of Governors if the allegation is against the Head Teacher) will immediately contact the LA Designated Officer (LADO) who will advise on actions to be taken. (See front page for LADO contact details.)

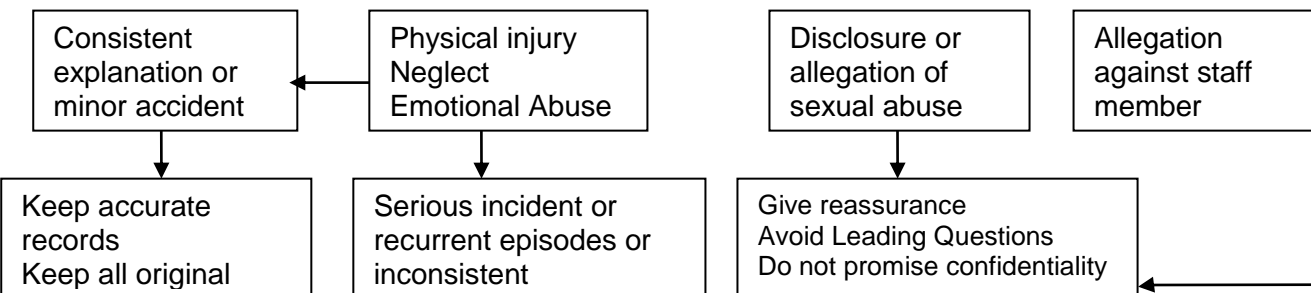
Support

- 16) Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and safeguarding issues can be stressful. The member of staff/volunteer should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

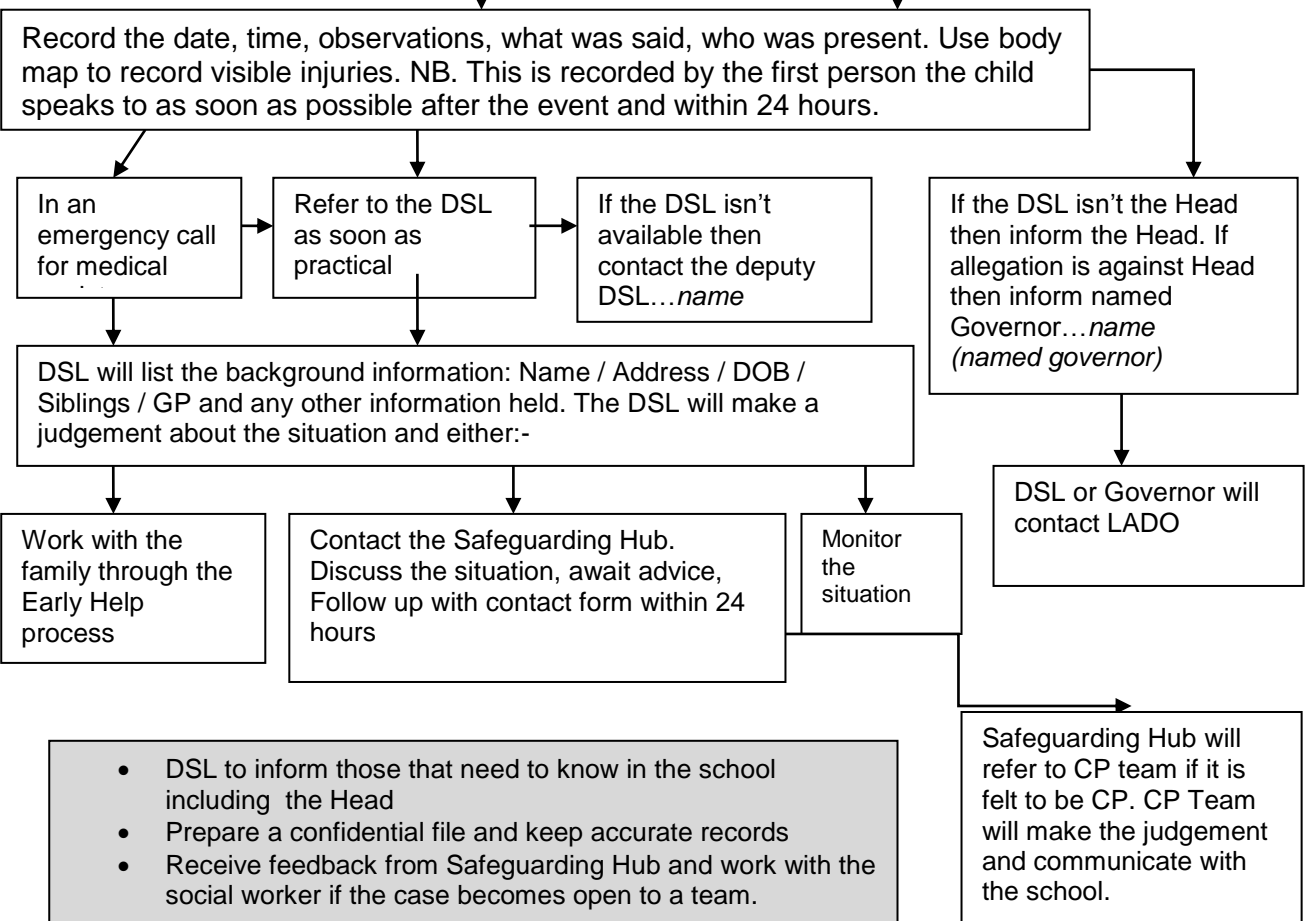
DSL – Designated Safeguarding Lead
 CP – Child Protection

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Child Volunteering Information

If a child volunteers information about abuse to a member of staff, it may be done obliquely, rather than directly, e.g. through play, drawings etc. Children will talk about their concerns and problems to people they feel they can trust. The person a child talks to will not necessarily be a senior member of staff. The role of the member of staff or volunteer hearing this is to listen but not undertake an investigation of the potential abuse. That is the role of the child protection agencies. Legal action against a perpetrator can be seriously damaged by any suggestion that the child's words have been influenced in any way by the person they told.

When a child confides in you:

Things you should do:

- Give the child undivided attention
- Show concern, support and warmth but don't show emotions, distress or negative reaction. Be re-assuring – (you can say 'that must have been sad/hard for you'; 'it's right to tell someone because you need help'.) Ask if the child has told his/her parents if the alleged abuse is outside the home or the other parent if one parent is implicated
- Rather than directly questioning the child, just listen and be supportive
- It may be appropriate to check that the child is indicating abuse or neglect
- Check if the child is hurt or might be in need of medical attention
- Deal with the allegation in such a way that the child does not have to repeat the information to different people within the school; It is important to know if an incident has happened recently and whom the child is saying has hurt her/him
- Make careful records of what was said, put the date and time when the child spoke to you, put the location and names of the people who were present, as well as what was said, using child's own language and colloquialisms. Then sign it, and hand your record to the CPLO straight away
- Keep a copy of your notes
- Look after yourself by seeking some support

Things you should not do:

- You must not promise a child complete confidentiality – you should explain that you may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep them or other children safe
- Malign the character of the alleged perpetrator
- Jump to conclusions
- Ask leading questions
- Ask for lots of details about the alleged event(s)
- Speculate or accuse anybody yourself
- Make promises you can't keep
- Pre-empt or prejudice an investigation by leading the child with *closed* questions.

Questioning Skills

To avoid leading questions when clarifying what a child has said, you should use open questions with a child rather than closed questions.

The following table gives some examples of both.

<u>Closed Questions</u>	<u>Open Questions</u>
Do	Tell me
Did	Explain to me
Can	Describe to me
Would	Who
Could	What
Are etc.	When
	Where
	How

Avoid using 'Why'? This can confuse a child and leads to feelings of guilt.

Initial Responses to child

When a child has made a disclosure, it can be a relief for them, however they are likely to feel vulnerable and confused. Here are some examples of what can be said to a child;

Do say:

'Thank you for telling me'

'I am sorry it has happened to you'

'I am going to help you, and will tell you what I am going to do'

'It should not have happened'

'You are not to blame'

Do not say:

'It will be all right soon'

Anything which you will not be able to fulfil

It is anybody's fault