



PROMOTING STUDENT WELFARE POLICY



EPT Document Control

This policy applies to all Education Partnership Trust Schools.

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Policy status	Statutory
Owner	Governing Body/ Board of Directors
Lead Contact	Helen Morris

Foreword

This policy should be complementary to AND read in conjunction with The Heights Free School Child Protection and Training policy. Furthermore, the Blackburn with Darwen Local Authority Designated Officer's (LADO) name, details and role should be clearly understood by all THFS staff and he/she referred to if/where necessary. The current LADO details and role are contained in the Child Protection and Staff Training policy.

The Heights Free School is committed to ensuring that all learning activities provide a safe, enjoyable and positive experience for children and young people as participants and for the staff whose involvement is integral to the development of quality opportunities and services. Safeguarding children is a priority for our school and all staff are committed to ensuring that our procedures are continuously reviewed, improved and in line with development and government legislation.

This policy provides a generic statement about what parents, the community, young people and staff can expect from us as minimum standards in the area of safeguarding. The policy and procedures will be transparent and open to inspection by anyone, and details how concerns about the wellbeing of young people will be responded to. It provides a reference point for all in our quest for making young people's lives as safe as possible. We are aware that we cannot do this alone and, will expect staff to adhere to our practices. The term 'staff' is used to include all employees, full or part time, volunteers and anyone working on a paid or unpaid basis on behalf of The Heights Free School.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined by the DFE as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

This document makes a commitment to review and to adapt to change in a positive stance on all areas of safeguarding. This policy is mandatory for all staff working for or on behalf of The Heights Free School. The policy and procedures will be

reviewed whenever there is a significant change in Safeguarding and Child Protection legislation.

1 Introduction

1.1 It is the policy of The Heights Free School that all young people have a right to be safe and for their welfare to be paramount. The following Safeguarding Students procedures will be formally adopted and made known to all staff. By the nature of the organisation, it is inevitable that various degrees of contact with young people will occur and it is therefore our policy to have in place clear guidelines for safeguarding children and young people and promoting their welfare as well as protecting our employees and other adults in a position of responsibility from potential allegations of abuse.

1.2 We expect agencies and organisations and other stakeholders, with a remit for working with young people that we work with or who use our facilities, to adhere to our procedures as a minimum standard or operate their own effective Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies.

1.3 This policy relates to ‘children’ and young people under the age of 18 and to vulnerable people over the age of 18. We recognise the needs and vulnerability of children from minority ethnic groups and those who are disabled or who have a Special Educational Need. The policy and procedures apply to all children and young people regardless of gender ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or religion. The term ‘young people’ will be used to include those under 18 years old and vulnerable adults.

1.4 This document should be read in conjunction with the guidance in the publication *Keeping children safe in education 2014, Guidance for Safer Working Practice 2014*

2 Promoting Safeguarding

2.1 Student safety will, of course, be paramount and at The Heights Free School we aim to use a variety of strategies to achieve this.

2.2 Child Protection

2.2.1 The Heights Free School will have an agreed Child Protection policy, the aim of which will be to safeguard and promote our pupils’ welfare and safety by fostering an honest, caring and supportive environment (*Please see Child Protection and Training Policy for more specific details*)

2.3 There will be three main elements to our policy; prevention, protection and support.

2.4 Prevention

2.4.1 Positive staff/pupil relationships and a culture of mutual respect will allow pupils to ask for help and support without fear of judgment. Our robust pastoral support systems will support this.

We will also ensure that we include within the PSHCE curriculum activities to equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe including discrete lessons focusing on internet safety and exploitation.

2.5 Protection

2.5.1 Pupils will be protected:

- By following agreed procedures including safe recruitment policy
- As all staff will have undertaken 'Introduction to Safeguarding ' provided by the LSCB
- As all staff will be Team Teach trained. Team Teach is BILD accredited training in positive handling techniques actively committed to reducing restraint and risk. The main emphases of Team Teach are de-escalation and the empowerment of staff to enable them to feel more confident in their management of disruptive and challenging behaviour which should in turn improve learning outcomes. The Heights Free School will apply for the Team Teach license in order to provide Team Teach training for schools across the borough

2.5.2 The Family Support Coordinator will be trained as a child protection officer and the Assistant Head (Pastoral) will be trained to Senior Designated Person level

2.5.3 We will also ensure that a member of the Trust is identified as having responsibility for Child Protection

2.5.4 All Child Protection records will be kept in a locked cupboard within a locked room in accordance with our policy

2.6 Support

2.6.1 We will offer support to pupils who may have been abused via referrals to our in-house counsellor and ELCAS (formerly CAMHS)

2.7 Safety outside the classroom

2.7.1 At The Heights Free School (THFS) there is a strong emphasis on learning outside the classroom and therefore safety on excursions is of paramount importance. The EVC Coordinator will have responsibility for identifying danger, risk, control measures and supervision needs to ensure that all students remain safe during offsite visits. We will use the **EVOLVE** system provided by Edufocus to provide a thorough approach to educational visit, planning, notification, monitoring and reporting as we believe this supports best practice.

2.7.2 "Evolve" is an online educational visits notification, approval and database system that has completed rigorous trials in the London Borough of Redbridge,

London Borough of Waltham Forest, Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough. The Heights SLT have experience in operating this system and will officially adopt it once the school opens.

3 Responsibilities

3.1 The Heights Free School Governing Body will:

- Accept the responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for young people to safeguard their well-being and protect them from abuse
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of young people
- Recruit, train and supervise its staff to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect young people from abuse and to reduce the likelihood of allegations made against them
- Require staff to adopt and abide by The Heights Free School Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Make people feel confident in reporting any issues relating to safeguarding and child protection
- Respond to any allegations appropriately and implement the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures if required

3.2 Designated Staff with Responsibility for Safeguarding - The Headteacher has the overall responsibility for Safeguarding children and young people. The school will also have a Designated Person with day to day responsibility in this area.

3.3 The Designated Person will be responsible for:

- Ensuring s/he assess the information disclosed promptly and take appropriate action
- The promotion of positive Safeguarding procedures and practice within the school
- Ensuring that staff receive training in Safeguarding in-line with the Policy Statement including volunteers and co-ordinate the training
- Keeping staff informed of good practice and new legislation and guidance
- Liaising with primary and secondary schools which send pupils to The Heights Free School to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made
- contacting and establishing links with the Local Authority and Local Safeguarding Children's Boards and the relevant people within the children's, adult services or Police
- Ensuring safe recruitment practices are in operation
- Monitoring and maintaining confidential records of any Safeguarding/ Child Protection concerns, referrals, or complaints (even where that concern does not lead to a referral) and feedback to the school on the quality of their Safeguarding work
- Providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to Safeguarding
- Overseeing the referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies as agreed with LSCB
- Reviewing the school's Safeguarding policies and procedures
- Ensuring the Safeguarding is promoted to all pupils and staff through inductions and education

3.4 Allegations Against Staff - All staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with students of any age. It is always advisable for work with individual students to be conducted in view of other adults.

3.5 Safeguarding Procedure: Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse and Procedure for Reporting Concerns - All those whose work brings them into contact with young people and their families should be aware of the procedures they must follow. If staff are concerned that a child, young person or vulnerable adult has been mistreated, either physically, emotionally, sexually, financially or by neglect, or if a child, young person or tells a member of staff about possible abuse, all staff must listen carefully and stay calm and follow the guidelines in the staff handbook.

3.6 The Heights Free School's *'Anti-bullying' Policy* covers more detailed information about the school's approach to bullying and should be referred to if bullying is suspected.

4 Principles

4.1 The guidance given in the procedures is based on the following principles;

- The welfare of young people is the primary concern
- All young people, whatever their age, gender, racial origin, religious belief, disability and sexual orientation have the right to protection from abuse
- It is everyone's responsibility to report concerns, but it is the responsibility of Children's Services and/or the Police to determine whether or not abuse has taken place
- All incidents or allegations of suspicious poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately
- Confidentiality will be upheld at all times and in line with the Data Protection Act
- There is a consistent understanding of acceptable behaviour of young people towards other young people and staff within any organised activity, service or programme
- Discrimination, prejudice and oppressive behaviour or language are unacceptable within all activities, programmes or services

5 Definitions and Types of Abuse

5.1 It is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. The Heights Free School staff have a responsibility to act if they have any concerns about the behaviour of an individual towards a young person. We will discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a young person immediately with the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator (DCPC) - *See Child Protection and Associated Training' policy for more detail.*

5.2 THFS recognises the following as definitions of abuse.

Significant Harm

There are no actual criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the degree and extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, the extent of premeditation, the presence of degree of threat, coercion, sadism and bizarre or unusual elements. More often, significant harm is a compilation of significant events, both acute and long-standing, which interrupt, change or damage physical and psychological development.

Physical Harm

Physical abuse causes harm to a person. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may be done deliberately or recklessly, or be the result of a failure to prevent injury occurring. It can also occur when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent or severe failure to meet a young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of health or development. It may involve a failure to provide adequate food clothing or shelter, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also involve neglect of, or inadequate response to, basic emotional needs.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves a young person being allowed, forced or coerced into participating in or watching sexual activity. It is not necessary for the young person to be aware that the activity is sexual and the apparent consent of the child is irrelevant.

Emotional Harm

Emotional Harm occurs where there is persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the young person's behaviour and emotional development, resulting in low self-worth. It may involve conveying to young people that they are worthless or unloved, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed. It may involve causing young people frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of young people. Some level of emotional harm is present in all forms of abuse.

Financial Abuse

This is when a child, young person or vulnerable adult is exploited for financial gain. Often valuables go missing in the home or there may be a change in the financial circumstances of the adult which cannot be explained.

Domestic Violence and Bullying

Domestic Violence and Bullying are recognised as additional types of abuse as they can cause immense emotional harm. However, they are not currently included in the official definitions of abuse.

6 Prevention of Abuse and Recruitment Issues

6.0.1 Recruitment and training of employees who will have direct or indirect contact with young people needs careful planning to be complementary to safeguarding procedures outlined above.

6.0.2 The term 'direct' contact with young people refers to a member of staff who has responsibility for young people in a supervisory role. It is usual in this situation for parents/guardians not to be present. The term 'indirect' contact with young people refers to an employee that may come into contact with young people during the course of their work

6.1 Procedures for Recruitment

6.1.1 The Heights Free School will follow the guidelines below:

- Vacancy advertised (where appropriate)
- Advertisement includes reference to safeguarding policy, i.e. statement of commitment to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children, and need for successful applicant to be CRB checked
- Applications on receipt scrutinised - any discrepancies/anomalies/gaps in employment noted to explore if candidate considered for short listing
- Shortlist prepared
- References - Sought directly from referee on short listed candidates, ask recommended specific questions, include statement about liability for accuracy. On receipt checked against information on application; scrutinised. Any discrepancy / issue of concern noted to take up with applicant (at interview if possible)

6.2 The Recruitment and Selection Checklist

6.2.1 The Heights Free School will follow the guidelines below:

- Invitation to interview -Includes all relevant information and instructions
- Interview arrangements -There must be at least 2 interviewers: panel members must have authority to appoint and have met and agreed issues and questions/assessments criteria/standards. The School Headteacher and one governor must have passed the Safer Recruitment course
- Interview - Explores applicants' suitability for work with children as well as for the post
- N.B. Identity and qualifications of successful applicant verified on day of interview by scrutiny of appropriate **original** documents: copies of

documents taken and placed on file; where appropriate applicant completed application for Enhanced CRB Disclosure

- Conditional offer of appointment - pre appointment checklist - Offer of appointment is made conditional on satisfactory completion of the following pre-appointment checks and for non-teaching posts a probationary period
- References (if not obtained and scrutinised previously)
- Identity (if that could not be verified straight after the interview)
- Qualifications (if not verified on the day of interview)
- Permission to work in UK if required
- CRB - Where appropriate satisfactory Enhanced CRB Disclosure received
- LIST 99 - person is not prohibited from taking up the post
- Health - the candidate is medically fit
- QTS - (for teaching posts in maintained schools the teacher has obtained QTS or is exempt from the requirement to hold QTS)
- Statutory Induction (For teachers who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999)

6.3 Training

6.3.1 In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help employees to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and ensure their practice reduces the likelihood of allegations against them
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse
- Respond appropriately to concerns expressed by a young person
- Work safely and effectively with young people

6.3.2 The Heights Free School:

- Will nominate a person as a Designated Child Protection Lead (*see Appendix 1 for name of DCPL, their role and responsibilities*)
- All Staff working with young people will attend recognised Child Protection awareness training as soon as this can be arranged following their appointment
- Training levels will be appropriate to staff contact with young people and their responsibilities for child welfare within The Heights Free School
- Appropriate training will be provided for staff who may have indirect contact with young people during the course of their work
- The DCPL will receive specific training to support their more enhanced role

6.3.3 Records will be kept of all staff training, naming individuals and detailing what training they have received and when. These will be kept with the central CRB register. (*See below*) A Schedule of Training will be kept and included as part of the induction process for new staff.

6.4 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checking

N.B. The Disclosure and Barring Service came into operation in December 2012 as a merger of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB).

6.4.1 All personnel who come into contact with children, whatever their status will be subject to the relevant DBS check, including Governors. The Headteacher will have responsibility for rigorously maintaining the Single Central Register (SCR).

6.4.2 DBS checking will be rigorous and records will be kept of references obtained in the appointment process detailing when they were obtained and who checked them.

6.4.3 The SCR will be complete and kept securely in one place. There will be limited access to the register and the people who have access will be named and advised.

7 Code of Behaviour for Staff

7.1 In order to ensure adherence and understanding, all individuals working for or on behalf of THFS will behave in an appropriate manner towards all students. Young people taking part in school activities will be expected to treat each other with mutual respect and dignity. School staff will ensure that acceptable standards of behaviour are communicated to students.

Further details of our expectations with regards to behaviour, including rewards and sanctions, can be found in our 'Behaviour Policy'.

7.2 In the course of preventing abuse to young people The Heights Free School has established guidance and procedures related to activities and services.

7.2.1 Use of photography, video recording, image recording and mobile phone cameras

There is national evidence that some people have used events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young people.

7.2.2 When using professional photographers or inviting the press to a school activity, THFS will:

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour
- Not allow unsupervised access to young people or one to one photo sessions at events

7.2.3 Parents and spectators intending to photograph or video at an event will be required to register with the event organiser if they wish to use professional photographic equipment

- Individuals registered to use professional photographic equipment will be issued with identification

- Young people and their parents will be informed to report any concerns to the event organiser
- Concerns raised over inappropriate or intrusive photography will be reported to the event organiser and recorded as a child protection concern

7.3 Organised photographic opportunities - The majority of promotional and press releases are organised through the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT). These are generally agreed by both parties in advance. We undertake not to use the young person's images unless we have written consent for both the taking and publication of films or photographs from the parent. Specific permission will be sought if the images are to be used on the school website.

7.4 When a media photographer arrives at our venue he/she will be required to have formal ID and have it to hand at all times. If there is any doubt about the ID, the Headteacher should be contacted. We will ensure that the young person's names are not mentioned in publications if requested by the parents/guardians.

7.5 Internet - The Heights Free School operates secure access to the internet through the Internet provider, preventing access to inappropriate web sites and chat rooms. There are systems in place for monitoring usage of the internet and all employees have log in passwords, which will be monitored. Any employees discovered to have accessed or placed inappropriate material on the Internet will be subject to the ICT Policy and Procedures.

7.6 We will follow the DfE guidance on safe internet use and ensure all students are taught how to protect themselves when using the internet.

8 Responding to Disclosures, Suspicions and Allegations

8.1 The appropriate responses and full details are contained in the *Child Protection and Training Policy*. Staff will refer to guidance in this policy and to the role of the LADO if/when any allegations occur.

9 Links to Other Policies

9.1 The following policies should be read in conjunction with this policy.

- Child Protection and Training policy
- Behaviour policy
- Recruitment and Procedures Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- ICT Policy and Procedures
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policy
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice
- Attendance Policy

- Data Protection Policy

10 Review

10.1 This policy will be reviewed as determined by the Governing Body and/or as soon as possible after any changes in the most recent advice or guidance.

Appendix 1

ROLE OF DESIGNATED PERSON FOR SAFEGUARDING & STUDENT WELFARE

Name of Designated Child Protection Lead (DCPL): Rob Kershaw

The role of the DCPL:

We recognise the vital importance of the designated senior person for child protection within school to:

- Receive all concerns from staff and volunteers in relation to child welfare
- He/she as part of their role will keep abreast of current 'best practice' and any local developments and practice of LSCB.
- Co-ordinate action within school and liaise with Children's Services and other organisations over cases of abuse or suspected abuse
- Act as a source of advice within school
- Ensure that all staff are familiar with policy and procedures
- Ensure that clear accurate records of incidents/concerns and decision - making are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records
- Refer individual cases of suspected abuse and neglect to Children's Services
- Discuss uncertainty with Children's Services or Safeguarding in Education Development Officer
- Ensure that school are represented at Case Conferences and reviews and core groups
- Attend training in Child Protection (every 2 years minimum) and keep up to date with knowledge to enable them to fulfil their role
- Organise training for staff and volunteers (every 3 years minimum)
- Ensure that when a child, who is subject of a child protection plan, moves school their confidential file is transferred immediately and their social worker, is informed

- Ensure that social workers are kept informed in a timely manner of any developments for children subject to a child protection plan including unexplained absence
- Provide, with the Headteacher, an annual report for the governing body detailing
 - any changes to the policy and procedures;
 - training undertaken by the Senior Designated Person, their deputy and by all staff and governors;
 - relevant curricular issues:
 - number and type of incident/cases;
 - numbers of referrals to Children's Services and
 - numbers of children subject to a protection plan (anonymised).