



# **Child Protection Policy and Procedures**

## **December 2018**

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## **1. Preface**

“Processes and procedures are never ends in themselves, but should always be used as a means of bringing about better outcomes for children. No guidance can, or should attempt to offer a detailed prescription for working with each child and family. Work with children and families where there are concerns about a child’s welfare is sensitive and difficult. Good practice calls for effective cooperation between different agencies and professionals: sensitive work with parents and carers in the best interests of the child; and the careful exercise of professional judgement and critical analysis of the available information”.

(*Working Together to Safeguard Children – A Guide To Inter-Agency Working To Safeguard And Promote The Welfare Of Children-HM Government 1999*).

## **2. Statement of Intent**

Northcott School recognises that protecting and safeguarding children and young people is a shared responsibility and depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise. Individual children and young people, especially some of the most vulnerable children and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need coordinated help from health, education and children’s social care services. The voluntary sector and other agencies also have an important role in protecting and safeguarding children.

Northcott School has a responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people they come into contact with. The need for guidelines and procedures is important to ensure that this is done with understanding and clarity. The school follows the statutory guidance for schools and colleges, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015.

This Child Protection Policy adheres to the statements and principles of the school’s inclusion policy.

Disabled children are at an increased risk of significant harm, as defined by section 31 of the Children Act 1989 and amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

Where there are concerns about the welfare of a disabled child, they should be acted upon in the same way as with any other child. Expertise in both safeguarding and promoting the welfare of child and disability has to be brought together to ensure that disabled children receive the same levels of protection from harm as other children.

As our pupils have special needs we need to ensure that their learning or communication difficulties do not leave them open to abuse or prevent that abuse from being recognised. Therefore our staff need to be extra vigilant and mindful to individual pupil’s difficulties and needs, thus ensuring that any changes in behaviour or attempts to communicate distress, anxiety or concerns are quickly identified. No member of staff should prevent a pupil from expressing their concerns.

**All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.**

Northcott School will aim to protect and safeguard children and young people by:

- Ensuring that all staff are carefully selected following the school’s safe recruitment policy
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers have an enhanced DBS (with barred list) check

- Ensuring that all visitors and volunteers are supervised appropriately
- Having a Child Protection Policy which is regularly reviewed and updated in line with national and local policy developments
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers are familiar with the Child Protection Policy and Procedures
  - the Child Protection Policy is in staff handbooks which are located in all classrooms and the staffroom, as well as on the school's staff area of the IT system
  - there are notices in Reception and the staffroom informing visitors, staff and volunteers who is the school's Child Protection Co-ordinator
  - Child Protection Information is part of all new staff's induction
  - Child Protection Information is given to supply staff and volunteers
- Ensuring that staff / volunteers attend appropriate Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Safeguarding Children: A Shared Responsibility Training which will be held annually in school
- Ensuring that Northcott School has a designated Child Protection Co-ordinator and that all staff and volunteers are aware of the named person and process of reporting concerns to them. The Child Protection Co-ordinator will be required to attend additional training to support their role
- Assessing the risk that children and young people may encounter and taking steps to minimise and manage this
- Ensuring adequate supervision of pupils is maintained at all times during the school day
- Letting parents, carers, children and young people know how to report concerns about a child, young person, staff member or volunteer, or complain about anything that they are not happy about
  - The Child Protection Policy is in the school's information pack which is given to all new parents
  - Child Protection procedures are explained during new pupils' admission meetings
  - The school has a complaints procedure

One of the most consistent messages is through our teaching of personal, social, health education and citizenship (PHSE), as part of the National Curriculum. This helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children and makes them aware of the impact their decisions have on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them, helping children and young people to make informed judgements, making effective decisions and build resilience.

### **3. National and Local Guidance**

This Child Protection Policy and Procedure should be read in conjunction with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Guidelines and Procedures (accessible via: <http://www.proceduresonline.com/hull/scb/>). In accordance with the Children Act 2004 it is a statutory responsibility for key agencies coming in to contact with children and young people, to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging their functions, they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (Section 11, Children Act 2004). Where private or voluntary organisations come in to contact with, or offer services to, children they should as a matter of good practice take account of this guidance.

The following national guidance should also be referred to,

- The Children Act (1989)
- The Children Act (2004)
- Working Together To Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working To Safeguard and Promote The Welfare Of Children (HM Government 2015).
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Criminal Justice & Court Services Act 2000
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Sexual Offences Act 2003
- What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused (HM Government 2015)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People (2015)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers. (HM Government 2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education. DfE 2018

The following school policies are available in staff handbooks / staff shared area / school website (as appropriate):

- Health and Safety
- Behaviour Management
- Anti-Bullying
- Home – School Liaison
- Attendance
- Equal Opportunities
- Disability Equality Scheme
- Multi-racial and anti-racist
- Gender equality
- Intimate Care
- Confidentiality
- Safe Recruitment
- Freedom of Information
- Well-being
- Whistle blowing Policy
- E Safety Policy

#### **4. Safeguarding & Promoting Welfare & Child Protection**

##### **4.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:**

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

## **4.2 Early Help**

It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risk and prevent issues escalating. Therefore, at Northcott School we aim to identify where early interventions are needed to support families in need by closely monitoring children and highlighting any emerging issues. If necessary, and with appropriate consent, information is shared or meetings are convened with other professionals to support effective early help assessments.

***“Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child’s life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years” (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015).***

## **4.2 Child Protection**

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. Effective child protection is essential to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However all agencies should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect from harm is reduced.

## **4.3 Children in Need**

Children who are defined as ‘in need’, under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, are those whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health or development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services. This includes those children with a disability. Local authorities have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need.

Early identification of the needs of an individual pupil and their family is essential, and the school will provide a pivotal role in this. Where a member of staff has such concerns (e.g. parents tell them they are struggling to manage their child’s behaviour) they should report this to the Child Protection Coordinator / Headteacher. The coordinator will then liaise with the appropriate agencies. This may involve action such as calling a core group meeting, or making a referral to the Children and Families Disability Team for support.

## **4.4 Significant Harm**

Some children are in need because they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The concept of significant harm is the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of the child, and gives the Local Authority a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

## **5. Who Abuses Children?**

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child.

## **6. What is Abuse and Neglect?**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or young person. Child refers to anyone under the age of 18. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

- **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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

- **EMOTIONAL ABUSE:**

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 include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. 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 overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying) 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.

- **SEXUAL ABUSE:**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration, for example rape or oral sex or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children

- **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. 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 and 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

This is not an exhaustive list and it must be recognised that it is not the role of staff / volunteers to make an assessment of whether children or young people have suffered

harm. Staff / volunteers / child protection co-ordinator do have a duty to report any concerns about harm in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board, Guidelines and Procedures.

## **7. Recognition of Harm**

The harm or possible harm of a child may come to your attention in a number of possible ways;

1. Information given by the child, his/ her friends, a family member or close associate
2. The child's behaviour may become different from the usual, be significantly different from the behaviour of their peers, be bizarre or unusual or may involve 'acting out' a harmful situation in play
3. An injury which arouses suspicion because;
  - It does not make sense when compared with the explanation given
  - The explanations differ depending on who is giving them (e.g. differing explanations from the parent / carer and child)
  - The child appears anxious and evasive when asked about the injury
4. Suspicion being raised when a number of factors occur over time, for example, the child fails to progress and thrive in contrast to his/her peers.
5. The child's attendance may be a concern, or they may become 'Missing in Education'. (See the school's Attendance Policy).
6. Contact with individuals who pose a 'risk to children' relates to an individual that has been identified as presenting a risk or potential risk of harm to children. This can be someone who has been convicted of an offence listed in Schedule One of the Children and Young Person's Act 1933 (Sexual Offences Act 2003), or someone who has been identified as continuing to present a risk to children.
7. Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures. In such instances both the perpetrator and the victim's parent/carer will be contacted, unless to do so would affect the safety of any individual. In this situation advice will be sought from the Access and Assessment Team.
8. Mental Health – Mental illness in a parent or carer does not necessarily have an adverse affect on the child or young person but it is important to assess its implications for any children involved in the family. The adverse affects of parental mental illness on the child are less likely when parental problems are mild, last for a short period of time, are not associated with family disharmony, and where there is another parent or family member who can respond to the child's needs and offer protection. Where mental illness is accompanied by problem alcohol use, domestic violence or associated with poverty and social isolation, children are particularly vulnerable. The potential impact of a parental mental illness and the child's ability to cope with it is related to age, gender and individual personality

9. Domestic Violence – The Home Office (2009) defines domestic violence as ‘Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality’
10. Domestic violence affects both adults and children in the family. Children and young people can suffer directly and indirectly if they live in a household where there is domestic violence. It is likely to have a damaging effect on the health and development of children. The amendment made in section 120 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 to the Children Act 1989 clarifies the meaning of harm to include, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. This can include children witnessing violence in the home. Domestic violence has an impact in a number of ways:
  - It can pose a threat to the physical well-being of an unborn child, if a mother is kicked or punched.
  - Children may suffer injuries as a result of being caught up in violent episodes.
  - Children become distressed by witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent.
  - The physical and psychological abuse suffered by the adult victim can have a negative impact upon their ability to look after their children.
  - The impact of domestic violence is exacerbated when the violence is combined with problematic alcohol or drug use.
  - People working with children should also be alert to the frequent inter-relationship between domestic violence and the abuse and neglect of children

## 11. Bullying

This can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the four main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from activities and social acceptance of their peer group) and online bullying. The damage inflicted by bullying (including bullying via the internet) can be underestimated. Bullying can be through the use of electronic communication, e.g., text or social network sites, and is commonly known as online bullying. It can cause considerable distress, to the extent that it can affect health and development and at the extreme significant harm. All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies

## 12. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE occurs when a child or young person or another person, receives 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of the child or young person performing sexual activities, or another person performs sexual activities on a child or young person. The presence of any significant indicator for sexual exploitation should trigger a referral to Children's Social Care Access & Assessment team.

### **Significant indicators:**

- Having a relationship of concern with a controlling adult or young person (this may involve physical and/or emotional abuse and/or gang activity)

- Entering and/or leaving a vehicle driven by an unknown adult
  - Possessing unexplained amounts of money, expensive clothes, or other items
  - Frequenting areas known for risky activities
  - Being groomed or abused via the internet and mobile technology and,
  - Having unexplained contact with hotels, taxi companies, and fast food outlets
13. Radicalisation and Extremist behaviour  
At Northcott School we assist our children to become more resilient to the messages of violent extremists through creating an environment where all young people learn to understand others, value and appreciate diversity and develop skills to be able to debate. Through the balanced curriculum we offer we will help young people learn and explore the values of different faiths and cultures. However, should any concerns of radicalised or extremist behaviours be brought to the school's attention, it will be dealt with in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures, and advice will be sought from either the Access and Assessment Team or Humberside Police. Any referrals to the Channel process should be emailed to: prevent@humberside.pnn.police.uk.
14. Self Harm  
School staff can play an important role in preventing self-harm and also supporting student, peers and parents currently engaging in self-harm. Any member of staff who is aware of a student engaging in or suspected of being at risk of engaging in self-harm should always consult with the Child Protection Co-ordinator.  
Students need to be made aware that it may not be possible for staff to offer complete confidentiality. If you consider a student is at serious risk of harming themselves then confidentiality cannot be kept.
15. 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.  
Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 places a statutory duty upon teachers 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. In addition, it is illegal for someone to arrange for a child to have this procedure. Therefore, if concerns are raised about the possibility of this taking place Children's Social Care and/or the Police will be notified. **Refer to the Home Office guidance - Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information, October 2015.**
16. Honour Based Violence  
Honour Based Violence is a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups with the aim of protecting perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and / or community by breaking their honour code.

It can be distinguished from other forms of violence, as it is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family and/or community members.

Children may find themselves in an abusive and dangerous situation against their will with no power to seek help. The usual avenues for seeking help – through parents / carers or other family members may be unavailable. Honour Based Violence manifests itself in a diverse range of ways including:

- Rape;
- Physical assaults;
- Kidnap;
- Threats of violence (including murder);
- Witnessing violence directed towards a sibling or indeed another family member
- Forced Marriage

It is likely that awareness that a child is the victim of an honour based crime will only come to light after the commission of an assault of some kind. There are inherent risks to the act of disclosure for the victim and possibly limited opportunities to ask for help for fear that their families will find out.

Any staff with concerns around this should follow the usual child protection procedures.

#### 17. Children Missing Education

Children are best protected by regularly attending school where they will be safe from harm and where there are professionals to monitor their well-being. At Northcott School we will encourage the full attendance of all our pupils. Where we have concerns that a child is missing from education we will follow the local authority protocols and refer to the Education Welfare Service, CME Officer who will make reasonable efforts to identify the child's whereabouts.

The child will not be removed from our school roll until notified by the CME officer that it is appropriate to do so.

(Ref: Attendance policy and Local Authority CME protocols)

### 8. Seeking Medical Attention

If a child has a physical injury and there are concerns about abuse;

If Emergency medical attention is required then this should be sought immediately by phoning for an ambulance. You should then follow the procedures for referring a child protection concern to Local Authority Children's Social Care.

### 9. Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is a partnership between the Police and designated school staff, known as Key Adults. Working together to safeguard children, the Police will inform the Key Adults within schools, about any incident where the child or young person has been present or exposed to domestic abuse.

The information shared with the school's trained Key Adult allows the provision of immediate early intervention through overt or silent support, dependent upon the needs and wishes of the child.

## **10. Sexual Violence and Sexual Harrassment**

### **Peer on peer abuse – Allegations against other pupils which are safeguarding issues**

Northcott School believes that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated, dismissed or minimised.

Occasionally, allegations may be made against pupils by others, which are of a safeguarding nature. Although research shows that girls are more likely to be victims of peer on peer abuse, staff should remain open minded and acknowledge that this form of abuse can affect any pupil within our school.

Peer on peers abuse usually manifests as one, or a combination of the following:

- **Bullying**  
If a child is suffering or at risk of significant harm, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern. Bullying can take different forms, including physical, verbal, cyber, racist, religious, cultural and homophobic bullying.
- **Domestic Abuse**  
Teenage relationships abuse involves controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour and violence. It can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial and/or emotional in nature.
- **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**  
Defined as an individual or group taking advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person into sexual activity.
- **Harmful sexual behaviour**  
Involves a child engaging in discussions or acts that are inappropriate for their age or stage of development, whether online or offline. It includes sexualised language or role play, viewing pornography, sexual harassment and sexual violence. It also includes ‘sexting’.
- **Sexual Harassment**  
This is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, which can include sexual comments, sexual “jokes” or taunting, physical behaviour or online sexual harassment.
- **Sexual Violence**  
This includes rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, as defined by the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Reports of peer on peer abuse are likely to be complex and require difficult professional judgements to be made. However, if a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger, or is at risk of significant harm, basic safeguarding principle, as outlined in this policy, should be applied.

### **Procedures for managing allegations of sexual harassment**

Sexual harassment creates an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviour and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence. These behaviours should never be tolerated, passed off as ‘banter’ or part of growing up.

- When a report of sexual harassment is made, a factual record should be made. It is important to take into account the wishes and feeling of the alleged victim.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be made aware, and along with Senior Leaders, a decision made on most appropriate course of action, as per the academy’s Anti-Bullying or Behaviour policy.

- Parents of all the children concerned will be contacted and informed of the nature of the incident.
- Pastoral support will be offered to all affected parties.
- Where cases are proven, appropriate sanctions, as outlined in the behaviour policy, will be applied.
- Decisions, reasons for decision, actions and outcomes should be accurately recorded and retained on Behaviour Watch and/or the pupil's files.

### **Procedures for managing allegations of sexual violence**

- When an allegation is made, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed immediately.
- A factual record must be made, but no attempts should be taken to investigate the circumstances, at this stage.
- If required, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact EHaSH, or in cases where an alleged criminal offence has been committed, Humberside Police. Advice will be sought on how to proceed and academy will follow the recommended actions. Advice should also be taken on notifying the alleged perpetrator and parents of both parties.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make an accurate record of the concern, the discussions, recommendations and any outcomes. A copy of the record will be retained on Behaviour Watch and/or the pupil's files.
- Pastoral support will be offered to all affected parties.
- It may be appropriate to exclude the pupil being complained about for a period of time, according to our behaviour policy.
- Where EHaSH nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough internal investigation should take place into the matter.
- In situations where the school/academy/college considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative supervision plan. This plan should be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation.

Through our broad and balanced curriculum, we will educate pupils about keeping themselves safe, and how to build respectful relationships.

Further DfE guidance on managing Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and college can be found at:

**[Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in ... - Gov.uk](#)**

### **11. The Role of the Child Protection Co-ordinator**

Where there are concerns about the welfare of any child or young person all staff / volunteers have a duty to share those concerns with the designated Child Protection Co-ordinator.

#### **The Child Protection Co-ordinator is responsible for:**

- Monitoring and recording concerns about the well being of a child or young person
- Making a referral to the Local Authority Access and Assessment Team, or the allocated social care team if the pupil is already open to them
- Liaising with other agencies
- Arranging training for staff / volunteers

The Child Protection Co-ordinator, after receiving a referral, will act on behalf of Northcott School in referring concerns or allegations of harm to Local Authority Access and Assessment Team or the Police Protecting Vulnerable People Unit.

If the Child Protection Co-ordinator is in any doubt about making a referral it is important to note that advice can be sought from Local Authority Access and Assessment Team. The name of the child and family should be kept confidential at this stage and will be requested if the enquiry proceeds to a referral.

The Child Protection Co-ordinator may share limited information on a need to know basis amongst the staff / management but respecting the need for confidentiality.

It is not the role of the Child Protection Co-ordinator to undertake an investigation into the concerns or allegation of harm. It is the role of the Child Protection Co-ordinator to collate and clarify details of the concern or allegation and to provide this information to the Local Authority Access and Assessment Team, whose duty it is to make enquiries in accordance with Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

## **12. Managing Disclosures of Abuse**

If a child discloses abuse it is important that, as far as possible, the following basic principles are adhered to;

- Listen to what the child has to say with an open mind
- Do not ask probing or leading questions designed to get the child to reveal more
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events
- Make note of the discussion, taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, as well as what was said
- Do not ask children to write a statement
- Never promise the child that what they have told you can be kept secret. Explain that you have the responsibility to report what the child has said to someone else.
- THE CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR MUST BE INFORMED IMMEDIATELY.

## **13. Seeking Consent for a Referral**

The Child Protection Coordinator / Head should in general seek to discuss any concerns with the family (including the child where appropriate) and where possible seek their agreement to making referrals to the Local Authority Access and Assessment Team. This should only be done where such discussion and agreement seeking will not place the child at an increased risk of significant harm.

It should be noted that parents, carers or child may not agree to information being shared, but this should not prevent referrals where child protection concerns persist. The reasons for dispensing with consent from the parents, carer or child should be clearly recorded.

In cases where an allegation has been made against a family member living in the same household as the child and it is the view of the Child Protection Coordinator / Head that discussing the matter with the parent would place the child at risk of harm, or where discussing it may place a member of staff / volunteer at risk, consent does not have to be sought prior to the referral being made.

If the Child Protection Coordinator / Head is unsure about whether to seek parental consent prior to a referral being made then advice can be sought from the Duty Social Worker at the Local Authority Access and Assessment Team.

#### **14. Reporting Concerns or Allegations of Abuse**

- a. A member of staff or volunteer must report any concerns or allegation of harm immediately. This would usually be made to one of the designated Child Protection Co-ordinators, however at any point, if there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral. In the absence of the Child Protection Co-ordinators the matter should be reported to the Headteacher (also a trained Child Protection Coordinator). In the event of neither of these individuals being available the matter should be reported to one of the other Assistant Heads
- b. At the discretion / advice of the Child Protection Co-ordinators / Head the concern may be logged in the individual pupil's 'Welfare Log'. This would be the case in which concerns raised are such that they may form part of a bigger picture in the longer term.
- c. Where the concern is of an elevated risk and the child may be deemed to have suffered, or be at risk of, serious harm / immediate danger, the reporting member of staff should complete a 'Cause for Concern' form (which can be found in the pigeonholes near the staff pigeonholes) and hand it to the Child Protection Coordinator. In certain circumstances the member of staff may need to be 'covered' so that they can complete the form immediately
- d. Staff reporting suspicion of abuse or disclosures should be clear about what they have seen, what happened or what was said. Staff should not 'interview' children but can, by using open questions, allow disclosures. Leading questions should not be used
- e. After consideration and review of the evidence (and possibly consultation with Access and Assessment Team) the Child Protection Coordinator and Head will decide what further action should be taken

If the Headteacher and Co-ordinator decide that referral under child protection procedures is needed, the following procedures should be followed:

- If the child needs immediate medical attention, arrangements will be made for them to be taken to a Hospital Emergency department
- A decision will be taken as to whether the pupil should remain in class or be supervised by an appropriate member of staff
- The pupil will not be interviewed or interrogated about the incident by any member of school staff
- Parents will normally be contacted by school if a referral is to be made unless to do so is likely to cause further harm to the child. The school may take advice from Access and Assessment Team on this issue. The advice will be logged by school
- The co-ordinator or Headteacher will notify the Access and Assessment Team by telephone as soon as possible (See Contact Details below)
- The co-ordinator or the Headteacher will notify the L.A. by the standard form within 24 hours. These are available to download through the Hull City Council website.
- The Headteacher will inform the Chair of Governors that a child protection referral has been made (without naming the child)
- Further action will depend on the response of Access and Assessment Team and other agencies involved

- The pupil will not normally leave the premises until the usual time for buses/taxis. If the class is going on a visit the pupil should stay in a neighbouring classroom. The pupil should, however, go home at the normal time unless the Headteacher and the involved agencies make other arrangements
- If the abuser is another child the Headteacher may decide to exclude for up to 15 days or however long current regulations allow so that an investigation/inquiry can take place

## **15. Making a Referral**

Referrals of all children in need, including those where there are child protection concerns will be made to;

Hull - To Children's Social Care – Access and Assessment Team or Police Public Protection Unit

East Riding – By telephoning the Golden Number/Children's Social Care or Police Public Protection Team

Out of Hours – To the relevant Immediate Help Team

All referrals made by telephone need to be followed up in writing within 48 hours.

The Child Protection Co-ordinator should make the referral as appropriate. The referrer should be prepared, where possible, to give the following information:

- The nature of the concerns / allegation.
- Whether the child will need immediate action to ensure their safety.
- Are the parents aware of the concerns? Has consent for the referral been sought? If not, the reasons for this?
- Factual information about the child and family, including other siblings.
- The nature of the involvement with the family.
- Other professionals involved with the family.
- The source of the referral - is it based on the referrer's own assessment of the needs of the child, a reported allegation or disclosure, or has the concern been reported by another person (and if so, by whom)?
- Child's current whereabouts and when they were last seen
- If it is considered the child is suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm, who is the source of that harm and what is their current whereabouts?

## **16. Allegations against Staff Members / Volunteers**

The school will at all times follow the government guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2016)

Any member of staff or volunteer who has concerns about the behaviour or conduct of another individual working within the group or organisation will report the nature of the allegation or concern to the Head or Assistant Heads immediately. The member of staff who has a concern or to whom an allegation or concern is reported should not question the child or investigate the matter further.

If staff do not feel comfortable using internal reporting systems this should not prevent a report being made. If this issue does occur then staff are advised to contact the NSPCC Whistle Blowing helpline tel: 0800 028 0285 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

The Head will Report the matter immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) directly.

In the case that the concern or allegation relates to the Head, the Chair of Governors should be contacted.

In cases where there is an immediate risk to any child or young person, the information must be passed to the Access and Assessment Team or the Police, as soon as possible

## **17. Responding to a Complaint or Allegation**

The school will at all times follow the government guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2016)

If any member of staff or volunteer has concerns about the behaviour or conduct of another individual working within the group or organisation including:

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

the nature of the allegation or concern should be reported to the Designated Officer for dealing with allegations against staff/volunteers/carers immediately.

### **Underlying principles:**

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- Adults about whom there are concerns should be treated fairly and honestly and should be provided with support
- It is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This responsibility extends to a duty of care for those adults employed, commissioned or contracted to work with children and young people.

The person to whom an allegation or concern is reported should not question the child or investigate the matter and should:

- Treat the matter seriously
- Avoid asking leading questions and keep an open mind
- Communicate with the child (if the complainant) in a way that is appropriate to the child's age, understanding and preferred language or communication style
- Make a written record of the information (where possible in the words the child used) including:
  - when the alleged incident took place (time and date)
  - who was present (witnesses)
  - what was said to have happened
- Sign and date the written record
- Report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer directly

In cases where there is an immediate risk to any child or young person, the information must be passed to Local Authority Access and Assessment Team or the Police, as soon as possible.

It is a criminal offence under the Education Act 2011 to name a teacher who has had an allegation made against them before they are charged by the Police. This includes all stakeholders and parents, and any form of disclosure, i.e. social networking sites, speaking with the press, playground or staffroom ‘gossip’, etc.

NB. Children / young people must not be asked to produce or sign any statement as this could undermine any potential investigation.

### **Peer on peer abuse**

Peer on peer abuse can include: all forms of bullying, being coerced into sending sexual images (sexting), physical or sexual assaults, child sexual exploitation or teenage relationship abuse.

At Northcott School we do our utmost to ensure that children and young people are protected from harm and will educate pupils on how to build resilience. Our staff receive regular training to help equip them with the tools to recognise different form of peer abuse, and the mechanisms for responding and reporting incidents.

A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be fixed term excluded pending an investigation and the school’s ‘Behaviour’ policy may apply. Our school will take advice from Children’s Social Care and/or the police on the investigation of such allegations and will take appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved.

## **18. Staff & Volunteer Self Protection**

Adherence to guidelines on self protection for staff and volunteers working with children and young people can avoid vulnerable situations where false allegations can be made.

Northcott School’s guidelines include:

- To avoid situations where a volunteer is on their own with a child
- To avoid a situation where a member of staff is working 1:1 with a pupil in an isolated area
- In the event of an injury to a child, accidental or not, ensure that it is recorded on the appropriate forms which are kept in the pigeonholes in the main office
- Keep written records of any allegations a child makes against staff and volunteers and report in line with the Child Protection Policy
- Adhere to the Northcott School’s Behaviour Policy (which can be found in the Staff Handbook section on the staff area of the school IT network)

## **19. Code of Practice**

Staff / Volunteers / children should always;

- Take all allegations, suspicions or concerns about abuse that a young person makes seriously (including those made against staff) and report them through the procedures
- Provide an opportunity and environment for children to talk to others about concerns they may have
- Provide an environment that encourages children and adults to feel comfortable and confident in challenging attitudes and behaviours that may discriminate others

- Risk assess situations and activities to ensure all potential dangers have been identified
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect

Staff / volunteers / children should not;

- Permit or accept abusive or discriminatory behaviour
- Engage in inappropriate behaviour or contact either in or outside the school environment
- Use inappropriate or insulting language
- Show favouritism to anyone
- Undermine or criticise others
- Give personal money
- Use social networks for personal communication with children and young people for whom they are responsible.

### **Mobile Phones & Cameras**

Staff must not use mobile phones in rooms where children are present, including those where children are cared for. It is appropriate to take photographs of children to capture a curriculum activity or a celebration of school life using school equipment providing we have permission to do so from the parents. Staff must not, however, use their personal mobile phone, camera (still or moving images) or other devices to take, edit or store images of children from this school.

### **20. Recruitment & Selection**

It is important when recruiting paid staff and volunteers to adhere to the organisation's recruitment policy. This will ensure potential staff and volunteers are screened for their suitability to work with children and young people.

The school will at all times follow the government guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2016)

Northcott School has a Safe Recruitment Policy which can be found in the Staff Handbook section of the staff shared network.

- All paid staff and volunteers with access to children and young people or sensitive information relating to children will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS (with barred list) check.
- Staff and volunteers working directly with children or with access to sensitive information will required to complete LSCB Safeguarding Children: A Shared Responsibility Training
- All staff and volunteers will be required to sign to say they have read the Child Protection Policy and Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. This will be reviewed to ensure up to date knowledge
- All staff and volunteers to complete an application form, including details of previous employment, details of any conviction for criminal offences (including spent convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974), agreement for a enhanced DBS (with barred list) check, permission to contact two referees, including their current or most recent employer (which should be taken up)
- The potential staff member or volunteer will be interviewed for their suitability for the post

- Staff and volunteers will have a period of induction where they will complete any induction training and access internal policies

## **Disclosure and Barring Service**

A person who is barred from working with children they will be breaking the law if they work or volunteer, or try to work or volunteer with those groups. If Northcott School knowingly employs someone who is barred to work with children they will also be breaking the law. If there is an incident where a member of staff or volunteer has to be dismissed because they have harmed a child, or would have been if they had not left, Northcott School will notify the DBS.

## **Childcare Disqualification Requirements 2009**

Northcott School adheres to the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe' document, detailing the legal requirements for 'Childcare Disqualification' checks to be carried out on relevant staff and volunteers working with children. Northcott School will not continue to employ an individual who is disqualified, including 'by association', in connection with early or later years childcare provision, nor will a disqualified individual provide or be directly concerned in the management of such provision unless they have received a waiver from Ofsted which covers the role that they wish to undertake. However, this does not imply that individuals are prevented from working in a school in any other setting.

## **21. Induction**

When new staff join the school they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They will be given access to a copy of the school's child protection policy and told the name of the Child Protection Coordinator/s. They will also be directed to read the Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2016 document. They will be reminded of their responsibility to safeguard all pupils at our school.

Every new member of staff has an induction period and is assigned a mentor. As part of the induction process the mentor will go through the 'Mentor Checklist' with the newly appointed member of staff which includes safeguarding information. The Child Protection Coordinator will also introduce them at the earliest opportunity and if appropriate ensure the new member of staff is given any safeguarding information about specific pupils with which they will be working.

Any newly appointed member of staff who has not completed Level 1 Safeguarding training in the last three years will be assigned to such training as soon as possible. In the interim the Child Protection Coordinator will ensure they have basic information relating to signs and symptoms of harm, how to manage a disclosure from a child, how to record concerns, and issues of confidentiality.

All volunteers and temporary staff to our school will be provided with the same level of information in relation to safeguarding.

## **22. Training**

The Child Protection Coordinator undertakes specific inter-agency training on appointment which gives them the knowledge and skills needed to fulfil their role through working in partnership with other agencies. In order to maintain their knowledge

and skills the Child Protection Coordinator undertakes refresher training at two yearly intervals

All staff have at least Level 1 Safeguarding Children: A Shared Responsibility training that equips them to recognise and respond to child welfare concerns. The school maintains a record of child protection training, which includes all teachers, support staff, lunchtime supervisors, administration staff and the site manager.

The Governing Body will also undertake appropriate training to ensure they are able to carry out their duties to safeguard pupils and staff at our school.

### **23. The Role of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body will ensure that the school,

- Has a child protection policy and procedures in place which is in accordance with Hull Safeguarding Children Board inter-agency guidelines and procedures, and this is made available to all school personnel and parents on request
- Operates safe recruitment procedures by making sure all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff, volunteers and parents who work with children
- Keeps and maintains a Single Central Record of all staff checks (including volunteers and supply staff)
- Has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers that comply with guidance issued by the Department for Education, Local Authority (LA) and Hull Safeguarding Children Board
- Has a member of the Governing Body (usually the Chair) with the responsibility for liaising with the LA and partner agencies in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against the Head

The Governing Body will review all policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding on an annual basis.

### **24. Contacts**

#### **Hull**

Children's Social Care (Local Authority)	
Access and Assessment Team	(01482) 448879
Immediate Help Team	(01482) 300304
Local Authority Designated Officer	(01482) 790933
Police Public Protection Unit	101
Hull Safeguarding Children Board	(01482) 379090
www.hullsafeguardingchildren.org	

#### **East Riding of Yorkshire**

Children's Social Care (Local Authority)	
Golden Number	(01482) 393939
Children's Services	(01482) 396840
Emergency Duty Team	(01482) 880826
Child Protection Administrator	(01482) 396472
East Riding Safeguarding Children Board	(01482)396998/9

Local Authority Designated Officer

(01482) 396999

Police Family Protection Team

Reviewed: December 2018

Approved by Governors:

Next Review: December 2019