

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Updated by: J Furlong July 2011

Child protection and Safeguarding – The National Context

The protection of children is everyone's responsibility and is of paramount importance to all those involved in education of children.

This policy outlines the School's commitment to safeguarding students and outlines the procedures for child protection at Thomas Telford School and shows due regard to the statutory guidance *Safeguarding Children in Education* issued in **September 2004** and **Safer Recruitment January 2007**.

"Section 11 of the Children Act and section 175 of the education Act 2002 places the duties on organisations to ensure that their functions are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children" – *"Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2006 (revised 2010)*

At Thomas Telford School – The Ethos

We recognise that students develop a special relationship with the School and view staff as significant and trustworthy adults. Therefore, our policies aim to provide clear guidance and for all those working in the School setting – including volunteers, support staff and teachers.

We believe that the school should be a safe and caring environment for students to learn in, where students' moral, social and physical development is promoted. Therefore, it is not surprising that if a child has been abused, they may confide in a member of staff at the School. It is important to note the four defined categories of abuse being Physical, Sexual, Emotional and neglect.

Consequently we aim to raise awareness so that staff are able to identify students who are suffering or who are likely to suffer significant harm. We will then ensure that staff are supported in the School taking appropriate action with the aim of ensuring students are kept safe both at home and at School – in line with statutory guidance.

Achieving these aims requires school systems to:

- Prevent unsuitable people from working with students through clearly defined safe recruitment procedures and vetting practices - Thomas Telford School adopts safe recruitment practice. Applicants are scrutinised, identity and qualifications verified, professional and character references obtained, previous employment history checked and the mandatory check of List 99 carried out. All school staff complete an Enhanced Disclosure Application Form for the Criminal Records Bureau prior to appointment.
- Promote safe practice and challenge unsafe practice through on-going staff development
- Identify instances where there are grounds for concern about a child's welfare and initiate appropriate action to keep them safe
- Contribute to effective partnerships, working with all those involved with providing services for children
- Ensure confidential, detailed and accurate record keeping to improve quality of information shared with external agencies
- Liaise with the **Local Area Designated Officer (LADO)** and **Leading Safeguarding Children Boards** within Telford and Wrekin and Wolverhampton
- Include personal safety and wellbeing within the School curriculum

Thomas Telford School – Statement on Child Protection

At Thomas Telford School we agree that the safety and protection of all students is of paramount importance and that any delay in reporting concerns is unacceptable. All staff will adhere to this policy and also the Child Protection Procedures established by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. <http://www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk/>

We will work appropriately with each child, their families and other agencies to protect in all cases the welfare of the child. We will refer any concerns received to the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) and seek advice from the helpdesk where necessary.

All staff who work within the School Community are in positions of trust and as such, codes of conduct are based on the underlying principle that the highest standards are expected from all. When dealing with any allegations against staff, the school will adhere to the procedures drawn up by the LSCB as outlined at <http://www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk/>.

The document "**Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with children and Young People in Educational Settings**" 2009 provides detailed guidance on the expected standards for all staff at the School and this can be viewed in the Child Protection folder on the school system: H/child protection. It covers areas such as Confidentiality, Social Contact and Favouritism.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00311/>

All staff undertake Level 1 Child Protection training at least every 3 years as provided by the Local Authority. The School's induction process contains up-to-date Child Protection Training. All staff volunteering at the School are issued with guidance on how to deal with Child protection concerns. Teaching and support staff are given initial training to recognise signs and possible symptoms of abuse in all its forms i.e. physical, sexual, emotional and neglect. In addition, the School has an experienced senior member of staff who receives additional specific training in child abuse recognition and referral methods. This member of staff becomes the school's Designated Teacher for child protection matters in the school and will liaise with other agencies. All staff are acquainted with these procedures and are frequently reminded how any concerns they have must be communicated.

The named Child Protection Officer at Thomas Telford School is **Mrs Jeanette Furlong**. In her absence, all matters should be reported quickly to the Headmaster **Sir Kevin Satchwell**.

Child Protection Procedures require all disclosures and suspicions of abuse to be reported directly to Social Services. Usually the matter becomes the responsibility of the Social Work Team to discuss any Child Protection matters directly with the parents. Whilst all staff, teacher and social workers are very aware of the need for sensitive and appropriate handling of often difficult situations, the safety of the child remains the paramount concern in any child protection case. This may mean that on occasions a referral is made to Social Services without the knowledge of the child's parents or carer.

Key Responsibilities at Thomas Telford School

Headmaster - Kevin Satchwell

Child protection Governor – Bromley Jones

The Designated Person – Jeanette Furlong

1. Headmaster and Governors

The Headmaster and Governors are committed to working together to create and maintain a safe learning environment for the children and young people attending the school. The Headmaster and Governors will follow the specific guidance as set out in paragraph 2.155 of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006 & 2010' and will ensure that:

- clear arrangements are in place to encourage, facilitate and support the reporting of child welfare concerns, including instances where pupils are missing from school
- that a Designated Person is available at all times whilst students are under direct supervision of school staff
- provision is made for appropriate training, induction, support and supervision for Designated Persons and other members of the school's community and workforce
- the school works with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and appropriate partner agencies proactively to safeguard pupils
- records relating to safeguarding are kept safely and shared appropriately
- appropriate safeguarding policies are adopted, monitored and evaluated which will include areas such as:
 - ❖ child protection
 - ❖ bullying and discrimination
 - ❖ behaviour management
 - ❖ health and safety including use of equipment and provision of first aid
 - ❖ staff communication policy inc. use of internet and social networking sites
 - ❖ school trips, placements, outdoor activities
 - ❖ meeting the needs of pupils with special medical conditions
 - ❖ Emergency Procedures Plan
- the school premises are safe and that the school grounds are not open to unwanted intruders
- appointments to staff positions and other roles within the school community are made following the safer recruitment guidance issued previously by the DCSF and all appropriate vetting checks have been completed (see safer recruitment section)
- safer recruitment training, as designated by the National College for School Leadership, has been completed by appropriate members of selection panels (see safer recruitment section)
- the school's single central record of recruitment and vetting checks covering all staff and others identified by the school as having regular contact with children is kept up-to-date in line with Ofsted requirements
- the identity of visitors to the school is checked, a record made in the visitors book and that visitors are not left unsupervised within the school

- Governors are informed of on-going concerns at every Governing Board meeting and via regular contact between the designated person and the child protection governor (student confidentiality is maintained)

2. The Designated Person

The Designated Person for child protection is Jeanette Furlong

Responsibilities

- To maintain level 2 training at least every 2 years
- To ensure that whole school child protection training is made available to all staff, the content of which will meet the requirements identified in 'Training Resource for Working Together to Safeguard Children' - 'Suggested Outcomes for Targeted Groups' at: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters>
- To make known to the whole school community the location of the SCB website address www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk where the policies & procedures are on view; these are regularly reviewed and updated by the SCB. http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/health_social_care_2/children_young_people_social_care/children_family/protection - for Wolverhampton-based students
- To have direct referral links with the Social Care Safeguarding Team Helpdesk at The Mount in Wellington 01952 385700 and 01902 555288 in Wolverhampton. **For avoidance of doubt the Designated Person(s) should be the point of contact with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse.** A formal written referral should not delay a verbal discussion so that immediate action can be taken if necessary. However, any referral should be confirmed in **writing within 24 hours.**
- To keep all written records of concerns confidentially about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral for action; this will include any e technology use issues that may cause indirect abuse to a child. E safety will be treated as any other form of abuse and a recognition that bullying can transgress across all 4 categories of abuse.
- Ensuring that they or a senior colleague are available to attend any Strategy/Resolution/Conference/Professionals/CAF/TAC or Planning Meetings as deemed necessary in the remit of child protection.
- Ensuring information regarding any pupil currently subject to a Child Protection Plan and deemed "at risk", who is absent without explanation for two days, is shared with Children's Services Social Care Safeguarding Team.

3. The Staff (both teachers and non-teaching staff)

- All those in the school community, including supply teachers, visiting professionals working with students in the school (e.g. counsellor), those who support sex education (e.g. school nurse) and those supporting visits, are informed of the name of the Designated Person and the school's procedures for protecting children, for example, how to report their concerns, suspicions and how to receive, record and report disclosures:
 - ❖ during their first induction to the school
 - ❖ through a copy of this policy
 - ❖ through the staff handbook
 - ❖ through the school website
 - ❖ through staff briefings

- ❖ through their line managers (esp. Non-teaching staff)
 - ❖ through regular staff development
- All staff need to be alert to signs of abuse. They should report any concerns or suspicions if not immediately, as soon as possible, that day to the Designated Person(s). If in doubt they should talk with the Designated Person(s), **delay is unacceptable**. Jeanette Furlong / Kevin Satchwell can be contacted on 01952 200000 or via jfurlong@ttsonline.net and ksatchwell@ttsonline.net
 - We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All of the school community should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues. Unacceptable standards, conduct or behaviour should be challenged appropriately at the outset, and will not be tolerated. If in doubt, discuss the matter with the designated person within 24 hours of your first concern.

Guidance on Indications of Harm

The abuse, or possible abuse, of a child may come to your attention in a number of different ways.

This may be from:

A Information given by the child, his/her friends, a family member or close associate. When a child makes a **direct disclosure of abuse**, it is important that, as far as possible, the following basic principles are adhered to.

- Listen to the child rather than directly question him or her
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events
(This is absolutely crucial to the success of any further Police Investigation)
- Make a note of the discussion, taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, in addition to what was said
- Record all subsequent events up to the time of the substantive interview, wherever possible attempt to record verbatim what the child said
- Never promise the child that what they have told you can be kept secret. Explain that you have a responsibility to report the child's story to someone else.
- If you believe that you may be dealing with a serious case of abuse or neglect it is important that you confine your interviews to the minimum required to elicit the key points of the allegation. You must not ask any questions, which may be construed as leading the child. Always ask open questions e.g. Who was involved? Tell me what happened.

B The child's behaviour

- Has become significantly different from the child's own normal behaviour
- Is significantly different from the behaviour of their peers
- Is bizarre or unusual
- Involved the child 'acting out' an abusive situation in play

C An injury which arouses suspicion because

- The explanation does not make sense when compared to the information given and/or
- When explanations differ, depending on who is giving them, for example, the parent and child give different accounts and/or the child appears anxious and evasive when asked about the injury.

D Long Term Concerns for the Welfare of a Child

- When a number of factors occur over time, for example, the child fails to progress and thrive in contrast to his/her peers without explanation.

Eg. Substance Abuse

The potential for a child to be harmed as the result of the excessive use of alcohol, illegal or controlled drugs, solvents or related substances, may occur at any time during a child or young person's life. The potential for harm may be attributable to a parent or carer's substance abuse or from use by young people themselves.

The use of drugs or other substances by parents or carers does not, in itself, indicate child neglect or abuse, and there is no assumption that children living in such circumstances will automatically be considered under the child protection procedures. However, 70% of children taken into care have parents who are suspected of substance abuse.

If you have concerns discuss them with **Mrs Furlong**.

Eg. History of Domestic Violence

Children may suffer both directly and indirectly if they live in households where there is domestic violence. Domestic violence is likely to have a damaging effect on the health and development of children and it will often be appropriate for such children to be regarded as children in need. Everyone working with adults and children should be alerted to the frequent inter-relationship between domestic violence and the abuse and neglect of children.

If you have concerns discuss them with **Mrs Furlong**.

Staff – guidance on how to respond

Reporting to the Designated Person(s)

- Any concern must be discussed with Jeanette Furlong or the Headmaster as soon as is possible, no later than the end of the morning or afternoon session of that day.

Immediate response to the Child

- It is vital that our actions do not harm the child further or prejudice an investigation, for example:
 - ❖ listen to the child, if you are shocked by what is being said, try not to show it
 - ❖ it is OK to observe bruises but not to ask a child to remove their clothing to observe them
 - ❖ if a disclosure is made, the pace should be dictated by the child, without the child being pressed for detail or by asking leading questions such as "what did he/she do next?" or "where did he/she touch you?" **It is our role to listen not to investigate.** Use open questions such as "is there anything else you want to tell me?" or "yes?" or "and?"
 - ❖ accept what the child says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking "why didn't you tell me before?"
 - ❖ do acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you this and reassure them that they have done absolutely the right thing by telling you
 - ❖ don't criticise the alleged perpetrator, the child may have warm feelings for them, but merely wish any abuse to stop

- ❖ **don't promise confidentiality**, reassure the child that they have done the right thing, explain whom you will have to tell (the Designated Person) and why; and, depending on their age, what the next stage will be. It is important that you don't make promises that you cannot keep such as "I'll stay with you all the time" or "It will be all right now".

Recording information

- Make some brief handwritten notes at the time or immediately afterwards; record the date, time, place and context of disclosure or concern, recording facts, who you shared them with and not assumption, supposition and interpretation.
- Also record where you spoke with them and personal safety details such as "I discussed the incident with the child in the Head's office with the door open" or justify if it were closed, but naming those who you told this to be the case. If alone, reason that rationale stating "the child stated they would only confide in me if I was alone".
- If it is observation of bruising or an injury try to record detail, e.g. "right arm above elbow", "bruise noticed on fleshy part leg"
- Note the non-verbal behaviour and the key words in the language used by the child (try not to translate into 'proper terms' ensuring that you use the child's own words). Body language should be noted and support any disclosure.
- It is important to retain on file signed original handwritten notes and pass them on to the Designated Person(s)

Support for Children & Staff

Children.

- The child would be made aware of the school's pastoral support and offered access to that or any other appropriate service if needed
- Recognition that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth. We recognise that a child may feel self blame and we will ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty eg. The Nurse or Personal Tutor
- Recognition that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have or who are at risk from harm. The school community will therefore establish an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Acceptance that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn. We will ensure PSHE curriculum opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm.
- Our policy on bullying and racist incidents is set out in separate documents and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying or racism may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. These will be documented like all other incidents. Any bullying

whether racist, emotional, physical, sexist, homophobic, cyber or in any other forms will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Staff.

- Staff (to whom the disclosure was made, who will be supporting the child and who might be attending, strategy and case conferences) would be able to liaise with the Designated Person, with the minimum number of people involved who have “a need to know basis” of detail.
- Of the staff not directly involved they will be informed on a “need to know basis”.
- Staff may also need support either as a person who has received a disclosure or if an allegation has been made against them and subsequently needs investigation to conclusion. In both cases support should be offered appropriately.
- Staff should be advised to seek support from their Professional Association or Trade Union or named persons within School
- All governing board meetings will have Child Protection and Safeguarding as a standing agenda item on all meetings, this is testament to our school making these priority areas and at the forefront of our minds.
- The process of managing allegations against those who work with children can be viewed on the SCB website www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk

Confidentiality

- If abuse is suspected, information should be given directly to the Designated Person(s) for child protection or, in their absence, to another member of the Senior Management Team.
- The personal information about all families is regarded by those who work in this school as confidential. All staff need to be aware of the confidential nature of personal information and will aim to maintain this confidentiality in all areas of the school – cases must not be discussed in public areas
- Staff should understand they need know only enough to prepare them to act with sensitivity to a child and to refer concerns appropriately. It is inappropriate to provide all staff with detailed information about the child, the incident, the family and the consequent actions.
- Staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly investigating agencies.
- If a child confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child sensitively that he/she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for the welfare of that child.
- Within that context, the child should however be reassured that this will be shared on a “need to know” basis. If conversations need to take place and confidentiality is paramount to welfare, then these conversations will be held in appropriate settings and away from any general areas, where that confidentiality may be compromised. Further details on information sharing can be viewed at www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters

Parents

- Parents play an important role in protecting their children from abuse. The school is required to consider the safety of the child and should a concern arise, professional advice will be sought prior to contacting parents. If deemed appropriate parents will be contacted, and the school will continue to work with the parents to support the needs of their child.
- The school aims to help parents understand that the school, like all others, has a responsibility for the welfare of all children and has a duty to refer cases to Social Care in the interests of the child. The Governors will include a child protection statement in the school prospectus.
- There is a statement concerning safeguarding in the School's prospectus and key policies such as bullying and discrimination can be viewed on the School's website – all parents can request a copy of these policies as well as the Child Protection Policy.
- Parents that may have concerns regarding a staff member can in the first instance raise those with the Headteacher, Designated Person or Governing Body of the school for further exploration. This may involve sharing those concerns with the relevant agencies. Where the parent may have concerns regarding the Headteacher, the Governor for Child Protection or Deputy Head should be consulted in the first instance.
- Parents can liaise with Ofsted on such conduct issues or regulatory concerns, advice can be found on its website www.ofsted.gov.uk or contact can be made direct to Ofsted on; Helpline (08456 40445) or a Whistle-blowing line (08456 404046)
- We will keep parents informed in all areas of safeguarding and child protection through the regular methods of interaction such as parents evenings, newsletters and other communication.

Record Keeping

- The present policy for record keeping is to chronologically record concerns on a confidential file, including details of dates, times, staff involved and action taken. These should be handwritten but can be typed up to sit alongside handwritten notes. [Never discard handwritten notes.](#)
- Copies of e mail streams are also useful additions which can clearly document sequential action. Again, these should be used alongside handwritten notes and by no means be regarded as a substitute action.
- The records are reviewed annually in the Summer Term by the Designated Person(s) and checked to be chronological, tidy, legible and factual in content. This should be undertaken each year, as records may sometimes be immediately required by Professionals. Where reports are needed for Child Protection Conferences these should include attendance figures where the child is of compulsory school age.
- Access to these records is restricted to the Designated Person and the Headmaster.
- All child protection records are clearly marked as such and are kept securely locked on the premises.
- Upon releasing records the school will request ID Badges for release and ask for records to be signed for

Allegations Against School Staff

Action taken by a member of staff who hears an allegation from a child about a staff member

School staff who hear an allegation of abuse against another member of staff should follow the above considerations, report the matter immediately to the headmaster unless the headmaster is the person against whom the allegation is made.

When an allegation is made against a headmaster

Children who report to a member of staff that a headmaster has abused them must be listened to and on no account must suggestions be made to children as to alternative explanations for their worries.

The Designated Person should discuss the matter with the Governor responsible for Child Protection who is Mr Bromley Jones.

Urgent initial consideration of whether there is substance in an allegation

Where an allegation is made against a teacher, there should be an urgent initial consideration by the Headmaster on whether or not there is any foundation in an allegation to warrant an investigation. The Headmaster will have previously established contact with the Chair of Governors and Local Safeguarding Board for guidance. The staff involved will be offered support via their Trade Union or Professional Association.

Procedures and further guidance are available:

<http://www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk/7%20Managing%20Allegations%20-%20staff%20working%20with%20children/Managing%20allegations%20against%20adults%20working%20with%20children.html>

When a child transfers to another school/college

- If a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan deemed at risk, the child's key worker within Social Care will be contacted by the Designated Person(s).
- When a child changes school within the authority, all child protection records will be passed on to the Designated Person(s) of the next educational setting by the Designated Person or Headmaster, or to Social Care within the authority if the child is transferring to another authority. If the child is transferring/leaving to another school within term time, best practice would be for a signed record/or hard copy acknowledgement that the transfer of files has taken place.
- "School staff need to be particularly sensitive to signs which may indicate possible safeguarding concerns. This could include for example, poor or irregular attendance or children missing from education" (Ofsted September 2009). The recognised figure for persistence absence being less than 80%, although concerns may still be raised if above this. All students leaving the School are reported in writing to the relevant Local Authority.

Children missing from education, poor or irregular attendance

- "School staff need to be particularly sensitive to signs which may indicate possible safeguarding concerns. This could include for example, poor or irregular attendance or children missing from education This may lead to liaison with Safeguarding procedures in the Local Authority and advice will be sought from the helpdesk.
- Where issues may be raised of Forced Marriage whether by people within the community, secondary school/college aged children or information overheard by younger siblings in primary settings, we will follow Government guidance "Handling cases of Forced Marriage" (multi agency practice guidelines) June 2009 and consult appropriately and sensitively in line with that guidance.
- Where we as a school/college may feel that children may be being abused through exploitation, we will consult in the normal way with the Safeguarding Team and seek advice and follow those concerns through sensitively and appropriately with fellow professionals

Training

- The school has bought into the Local Authority Safeguarding Training package for a sum of £250 x 3 years therefore complying with the legal requirements on training as a minimum of every 3 years for all staff and every 2 years for the Designated Person. 3 Senior staff have been on Safer Recruitment training as has the link Governor.
- All new staff receive knowledge of how to access the SCB policies & procedures on induction and access whole school training when held.

Safer Recruitment and E Safety

- The Designated Person and 2 other Senior Managers have attended 'Safer Recruitment' training (June 2010) as has the Child Protection Governor (2009).
- All staff working in the school community will be subject to enhanced CRB checks and registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) upon its inception of registration requirements. Reference to this process can be viewed at; www.isa-gov.org.uk
- All staff have access to the School Communications Policy which gives guidance on acceptable use of social networking sites and mobiles phones etc.
- All children's parents will have access to the Cyber Sentinel home monitoring software package, which will be offered and promoted by our school. This will be in line with our safeguarding agenda to protect children as much as is possible from harm when using e technology, even when they are away from the school community.

Work Placements

Safeguarding Children In Education (DfES September 2004) advises that safeguards should be put in place for students undertaking work placements where the work placement supervisor has substantial unsupervised access to the student because of the nature of the business or the placement has a residential component. To this end the School ensures that the Industrial Consultants are aware of the Child Protection Policy and show due regard for the guidance offered in *DfES Circular 0027/2004*.