

Potter's College

Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

At Potter's College, we promote the kind, caring, welcoming environment which keeps our community safe. We want everyone to feel proud of being part of Potter's College and act with courtesy and consideration both within school and in the wider community. We aim to enable all pupils to achieve their full potential in secure, well ordered, supportive surroundings.

This Policy is applicable to all staff (teaching and non-teaching) and students in the School. Information about safeguarding and the staff whom pupils should contact about any safeguarding concerns they may have will be displayed across the School.

Information about further ways in which the School safeguards its pupils can be found in other policies (Anti-bullying policy, Equality policy and Inclusion policy)

Response to 'Keeping Children safe in Education' DfE 2014

'Keeping Children safe in Education' lists a number of safeguarding issues about which schools are advised to be vigilant. (Section 25, page 9) These include issues such as: child sexual exploitation, bullying, FGM, radicalisation, sexting and others. The safeguarding and nursing team and Divisional Leadership Group have considered the levels of risk to which Potter's pupils might be exposed and have put in place measures to educate pupils accordingly.

Pupils are kept well informed about issues through a coordinated programme of assemblies, form periods and PSHE lessons - at appropriate ages and points in the school year. Staff training is a priority at Potter's College. Senior pastoral staff and Child Protection Officers undergo regular safeguarding training and the school makes use of courses and training from the government and other organisations in order to remain up-to-date.

Child Protection Officers (CPOs)

The Senior Child Protection Officer is Mrs K. Hudson. Other Child Protection Officers are Mrs E. Lily, Mr M. Freeman and Mr E. Norton.

The CPOs can be contacted on 01233 456 789.

The team of Child Protection Officers (CPOs) - consisting of the Senior Designated Person for Child Protection and Deputies – have been fully trained for the demands of this role in Child Protection. They regularly attend courses with other child support agencies to ensure that they remain familiar with the policies with best practice. They undergo refresher training every eighteen months and regularly report to the Head on safeguarding matters.

All Child Protection Officers will deputise for each other should one of the CPOs not be available.

CONTACT INFORMATION: What to do if you have concerns as a parent/pupil/member of staff

A parent, pupil, or member of staff who has a concern about any pupil within the Potter's College should without delay report that concern to one of the Child Protection Officers.

Senior Child Protection Officer Mrs K. Hudson **01233 456 789**

Child Protection Officer Mrs E. Lily **01233 456 789**

Child Protection Officer Mr M. Freeman **01233 456 789**

Child Protection Officer Mr E. Norton **01233 456 789**
Headmaster **01233 456 789**

CEC Safeguarding Children in Education and Settings 0300 123 5033

Police Protection Unit 0845 458 0000

Ofsted 0300 123 4666

Summary (CLICK ON THE LINK TO ACCESS FULL POLICY)

I – Staff duties

II – Staff training

III – Reporting to CPOs

IV – Advice for staff on pupil disclosure

V – Making referrals to external agencies

VI – Guidance for parents and staff

VII – Raising awareness within the school

VIII – Appointment of staff

IX – Guidance towards professional standards

X – Storage of files

I. Staff duties

Potter's College staff members are obliged to:

- Stand by the Safeguarding Policy and follow the advice and procedures without failing
- Attend training as required by the school
- Report immediately to the Child Protection Officer (CPO) any suspected cases of abuse and not to share that information with any other person unless guided to do so by the CPO
- Play a proactive role in contributing to the safeguarding of Potter's pupils
- Keep accurate, objective and up-to-date notes about any case with which they may be involved. The Data Protection Act states that information should be: 'accurate, up-to-date, fit for purpose, relevant'
- make the CPO aware of any queries they may have regarding the School's safeguarding procedures
- attend refresher training as provided by Potter's CPOs

II. Staff training

- Staff is provided with up-to-date and high quality safeguarding training every 18 months
- New Staff appointed have a meeting with the Senior Child Protection Officer (CPO) and receive appropriate training
- Staff is given a copy of the Safeguarding Policy, Potter's Safeguarding Guidance and Procedures, the Staff Code of Conduct, a copy of Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and the names of all the Child Protection Officers, for which they sign to acknowledge receipt.

- The Potter's College takes the safeguarding of its pupils extremely seriously. Temporary and voluntary staff are made aware of the School's Safeguarding Policy, on arrival at the school and training is provided at regular intervals for newcomers
- The School will also offer training on issues such as eating disorders, other mental health problems, and First Aid as part of its Staff Development Programme. Specific safeguarding training and advice is given to those colleagues who engaged in one-to-one teaching, such as specialist DT provision.
- It is the CPOs' responsibility to ensure that pupils and staff are well-informed about the specific safeguarding issues through PSHE, the form period programme, assemblies and staff training sessions.

III. Reporting safeguarding and child protection concerns to the Child Protection Officer

When reporting suspected abuse, staff **must**:

- Listen to the children and never promise confidentiality
- Let the CPO (or deputy) know of their concerns immediately
- Not share this information with others or investigate
- Keep accurate, factual and objective notes
- Delete these notes once the CPO has acknowledged receipt.

It is important that children receive help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating and that colleagues act upon and refer any early sign of abuse or neglect without delay. Keeping clear records, listening to the views of the child and reassessing concerns when situations do not improve, sharing information and challenging inaction are essential elements of Potter's College approach to safeguarding.

'Keeping children safe in education' DfE (2014) reminds us that any colleague may make a referral to external agencies if the need arises.

IV. What to do in the event of a pupil disclosure – advice for staff

- If you are in a public place, make arrangements to talk in a room where you can talk in private
- Do not promise confidentiality to the child. You might say 'I need to let you know that if you tell me anything which makes me believe you might be at risk, I shall have to tell the Child Protection Officer'
- Do not ask any leading questions, i.e. any question which might trigger a yes/no response.
- Reassure the young person that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- As soon as you are able, make an accurate, detailed and objective account of what has been said. If appropriate, you might also ask the young person do to this. Sign and date any statements.
- Call the CPO immediately to let them know of the disclosure. If you are not sure whether or not the child is safe to go home, do not let her leave until you have spoken to a CPO.
- If the child is able to go, tell her what will happen next and reassure her that she has done the right thing.
- Send your original report on the disclosure (and that of the child) to the CPO, who will keep the original copy on the child's safeguarding file.
- If you send an electronic version of a report via email, mark the mail 'Strictly private and confidential' and send it only to the CPO; do not copy in others. Once receipt of this has been acknowledged, delete your copy of the report.

V. Making referrals to external agencies

The School has regard to the DfE guidance, *Dealing with Allegations of Abuse and Other Staff*. Where abuse is suspected by either an adult or a student:

- The matter should immediately be brought to the attention of the Child Protection Officer. Social Services will be informed within 24 hours.
- In the case of serious harm, the police will be informed from the outset.
- It is the CPO's responsibility to liaise with Social Services on welfare matters including Child Abuse.
- Outside help will be sought from the School Doctor, Police, Social Services, etc.
- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is suspected of abuse, this will without delay be referred to the LADO. A decision will be made by the Head (or a senior member of staff acting on his behalf) to suspend them pending the outcome of the LADO's investigation. An individual will only be suspended if there is no reasonable alternative. If suspension is deemed appropriate, the reasons and justification will be recorded and the individual notified of the reasons.
- Where abuse by the CPO is suspected, the Headmaster should be approached directly.
- Where abuse by the Head is suspected, the Deputy Head should be approached directly.
- Where a student at the school is suspected of abuse against another student, when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, the CPO will report its concerns to the LADO and a decision will be made by the Headmaster to suspend them pending the investigation by the LADO.

VI. **GUIDANCE FOR STAFF AND PARENTS**

Categories of Abuse

Neglect

The persistent severe neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Indicators of Abuse:

- Untreated injuries and/or illness
- Excessive hunger
- Poor school attendance or lateness
- Undue tiredness
- Running away
- Low self-esteem
- Drug / solvent abuse
- Behaviour which is difficult to explain or out of character

Physical Injury

Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child including poisoning, suffocation and Munchausen's syndrome by proxy

Indicators of Abuse

- Bruises which have a distinct shape or pattern, like handprints, grasp or finger marks or belt marks
- Scratches and bite marks with clear outlines
- Weals
- Burns or scalds
- Fractures in very young children

These could be suspicious if:

- There is reluctance to discuss injuries
- There is reluctance to change for PE or other extracurricular activities

- There is reluctance to return home
- The pupil is excessively aggressive
- Improbable reasons are given for the injuries

Sexual Abuse

Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependant and / or developmentally immature. It may involve forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, may involve physical contact, may include assault and may include involving children in watching sexual activities or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Women and other children can also commit sexual abuse.

Indicators of Abuse:

- Sexual knowledge and / or behaviour which is inappropriate for age (including drawings)
- Reluctance to change for PE or games
- Genital irritation or inflammation
- Anxious behaviour with adults
- Timidity or withdrawal
- Seeking reassurance
- Crying easily
- Depression
- Inappropriate aggression

Emotional Abuse

Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment. Parents or carers are not giving the child opportunities to express their views, interactions which are beyond a child's mental capacity, overprotection, limitation of exploration/learning, seeing the ill-treatment of another, (cyber) bullying, corruption, exploitation.

Indicators of Abuse:

- Developmental immaturity
- Low self-esteem
- Speech disorders
- Wetting or soiling
- Timidity
- Over-anxious to please
- Attention seeking
- Phased / inattentive / dream-like behaviour

Domestic Violence

Can have an impact on the safety and welfare of children in a number of ways including: children receiving blows or sustaining injuries during episodes of domestic violence; children being emotionally harmed by witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of parents.

The experience of domestic violence can have a serious impact on the ability of the adult victim to look after the children in the family.

Abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil/Bullying

When there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, at the hands of another child, this must be referred to local agencies. In the event of a disclosure about pupil on pupil abuse, all children involved, whether perpetrator or victim, are treated as being 'at risk'. **(See Anti-bullying policy)**

VII. Raising awareness of safeguarding issues within school

- Form periods
- PSHE lessons
- Posters in classrooms display the identities of the CPOs and nurses
- Teachers are issued with cards which give key safeguarding guidance
- Assemblies are given about the role of the CPOs
- Pupil planners give pupils advice about where to turn to if they have a concern, both inside and outside of school
- Pupils are invited to raise any concerns they have about their safety at College Council
- The School works closely with CEOP and seeks to pass on up-to-date advice about keeping safe on-line through assemblies and form periods (see E-safety paragraph in Anti-bullying policy)
- When a story relating to e-safety appears in the news, this will often be followed up in school
- The School invites a local police officer, into School once a year to talk to parents and pupils about e-safety.

Ensuring that pupils know to whom they can turn if they have a concern about themselves or another young person, whether within or outside of school, is an important part of our safeguarding procedures. The CPOs give assemblies explaining their roles; pupil planners contain information giving children advice about to whom they should turn in school, as well as key phone numbers to call outside of school; and posters in classrooms remind pupils of the identity of the CPOs and the nurses.

VIII. Appointment of Staff

It is imperative that all interviews to appoint staff reflect the importance of safeguarding children.

All teaching and non-teaching appointments at the College are subject to:

- a) Satisfactory confidential references
- b) An enhanced CRB check
- c) A full history of education / employment

When appointments are being made it is essential that the following 'Aware Culture' checklist is used:

- Information will be provided to applicants that clearly states this organisation will create a safe environment for young people – enclose summary of Child Protection
- Candidates will be asked to confirm identity through official documents
- The authenticity of qualifications and references will be verified directly
- A full employment history of prospective staff members will be sought together with the right to approach any previous employer, checking with former employers the reason why employment ended; identifying any inconsistencies and seeking an explanation
- Interviews will be prepared to explore with candidates their attitudes towards young people, their perceptions about the boundaries of acceptable behaviour towards children / young people, and ask questions about sexual boundaries and attitudes.

Confidentiality

Pupils are aware that they may speak with the CPOs in confidence and that information will be shared with others only if the pupil is felt to be at risk. Should any allegations of abuse by or against any member of the School community be made, these will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

Allegations against members of staff

Any allegation against a member of the Potter's College staff should be reported immediately to the Head, who will make the LADO aware of the allegation without delay.

IX. Guidance regarding professional standards

Members of staff must always act in a professional manner and keep a professional distance from pupils.

They **MUST**:

- Not have contact with pupils via Facebook
- Not use pupils' private mobile numbers or give out their own personal mobile number to pupils
- Not post photos of pupils from school trips on their own Facebook page
- Not take photos of pupils on their own camera or phone
- Act in such a way so as to seem not to have favourites
- Not meet pupils privately outside of school
- Must talk to the CPO or a member of SMT if they are unsure about professional standards and seek guidance

If a member of staff is unsure about these guidelines or is concerned about his/her own behaviour, or that of a pupil or colleague, he/she must speak to the CPO.

X. Storage of files

The Child Protection Officer is responsible for keeping safeguarding and Child protection files up-to-date. No other copies of files should exist. Colleagues must pass signed original copies of reports on to the CPO who will keep these in the child's safeguarding file. If a member of staff has sent a report relating to a Child Protection issue to the CPO via email, he/she must delete the electronic version of that report, upon acknowledgement of receipt by the CPO.

Author: Headmaster and safeguarding and nursing team

Approved: Governing Body, January 2015

Review Date: September 2015