

# Child Protection Policy

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**Plymouth Safeguarding Children Board Guidance:**  
[www.plymouth.gov.uk/localsafeguardingchildrenboard.htm](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/localsafeguardingchildrenboard.htm)

**South West Child Protection Policy:** [www.swcpp.org.uk](http://www.swcpp.org.uk)

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## **Introduction**

Research suggests that more than 10 per cent of children will suffer some form of abuse. Due to their day-to-day contact with pupils, school staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that school staff are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns.

The Children Act 2004 and the ISI Regulatory Requirements place a duty on our school to safeguard and promote the well being of our pupils. All teachers and support staff are expected to be competent and safe to work with our young people. The school also aligns its practice closely with the Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Board guidance.

Plymouth College's core safeguarding principles:

- the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance
- safer children make more successful and happy learners
- policies will be reviewed annually, unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

## **Policy aims**

- to provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities
- to ensure consistent good practice
- to demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to child protection to pupils, parents and other partners
- to contribute to the school's safeguarding portfolio

## **Child protection statement**

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and governors and are consistent with those of the Plymouth Local Safeguarding Children Board (PLSCB).

## **Policy principles**

- Welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support

## **Terminology**

**Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children refers to the overarching process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

**Child protection** refers to the specific processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

**Duty of Care** refers to the duty upon the school to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of a child during any activity for which the school is responsible. All adults in charge have a moral and legal duty to show this duty of care.

**Staff/ adult** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

**Child/ young person** refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday.

**Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

All schools must nominate a senior member of staff to hold the post of Designated Senior Person and coordinate child protection arrangements.

#### **The Designated Senior Person:**

- is appropriately trained every 2 years
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- has an understanding of LSCB procedures and has regular contact with the LADO to ensure that procedures are correct and up to date.
- keeps written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the pupil's general file
- refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- notifies children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation
- ensures that when a pupil with a child protection plan leaves the school, their information is passed to their new school and the pupil's social worker is informed
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences
- coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensures that all staff have read and understood the child protection policy
- ensures that the child protection policy is updated annually
- liaises with the nominated governor and headteacher as appropriate
- keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- ensures that any weaknesses or deficiencies in the school Child Protection Policy are remedied without delay using appropriate action
- makes the child protection policy available to parents via the internet

**The deputy designated person** is appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

**The Governing body** ensures that the school has:

- a DSP for child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- a child protection policy and procedures that are consistent with LSCB requirements, reviewed annually and made available to parents on request
- procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the headteacher
- safer recruitment procedures that include the requirement for appropriate checks
- a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the headteacher, receive child protection training, with refresher training at three-yearly intervals. The DSP should receive refresher training at two-yearly intervals
- arrangements to ensure that all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection.
- undertake an annual review of the schools child protection policies and ensure that all duties are efficiently discharged

The governing body has nominated Jan McKinnel to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the headteacher.

**The Headteacher:**

- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time and resources to enable the DSP and deputy to carry out their roles effectively,
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistleblowing procedures
- Ensures that the Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually including the efficiency by which the related duties have been discharged
- ensures that pupils' safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum

**All school staff:**

- ensure that they read the school Child Protection Policy
- Know who the Senior and Deputy Senior Designated Person are
- place the safety and welfare of pupils above all other considerations
- treat all members of the school community, including pupils, parents, colleagues and governors with consideration and respect
- adhere to the principles and procedures contained in the policies in our safeguarding portfolio and in teaching and learning policies
- treat each pupil as an individual and make adjustments to meet individual need
- demonstrate a clear understanding of and commitment to non-discriminatory practice

- recognise the power imbalances between pupils and staff and ensure that power and authority are never misused
- understand that school staff are in a position of trust and that sexual relationships with a pupil, even over the age of 16, may be an offence
- be alert to, and report appropriately, any behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is at risk of harm
- encourage all pupils to reach their full potential
- never condone inappropriate behaviour by pupils or staff
- take responsibility for their own continuing professional development
- refrain from any action that would bring the school into disrepute
- ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place themselves or pupils at risk of harm or allegations
- value themselves and seek appropriate support for any issue that may have an adverse effect on their professional practice.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent. Staff should also be aware that any abuse involving a child under the age of 13 must be reported immediately to the Designated Senior Person.

All staff should know the procedures for reporting any child protection issue and dealing with a pupil going missing (whether a day pupil or a boarder) (Appendix 3)

All staff will be asked to read the policy and good practice guidelines and sign a form to confirm that they have done this (Appendix 1).

## **Good practice guidelines for staff**

Guidelines for all staff regarding good practice in safeguarding children – good practice includes:

- treating all pupils with respect and as individuals
- knowing who the senior and deputy senior designated person are in school
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving pupils in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive and safe behaviour among pupils
- never condone inappropriate behaviour by pupils or staff
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the school's child protection policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, cyberbullying, e-safety etc.
- adhering to all policy principles
- asking the pupil's permission before doing anything for them of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- take appropriate care when physically restraining a pupil
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between pupils and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- take appropriate care when undergoing 1:1 tuition or coaching, corresponding by electronic communication methods and travelling by car with pupils
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse.
- Understanding that staff are in a position of trust and inappropriate relationships with a pupil may be an offence.

**Plymouth Safeguarding Children Board**  
**Safeguarding Children Good Practice Checklist**

- Have you been able to speak to the child alone?
- Can you still speak to the child alone?
- Where will the child be, for the next 24 hours?
- Is there an immediate risk of harm to the child?
- Do you have the information about the child and family?
- Have you completed the Common Assessment Framework, or equivalent?
- Are other children at risk of harm?
- Is the mother at risk of harm?
- Do you consider it safe to discuss the concerns with the parents?
- Will the child/young person resist efforts to safeguard them (drugs/coercion)?
- Have you recorded, clearly and promptly everything said by:
  - The child
  - Parents
  - Family
  - Professionals
- Have you recorded, clearly and promptly everything you have said to:
  - The child
  - Parents
  - Family
  - Professionals
- Is there any disagreement about non-accidental injuries between professionals? If so please refer to the “Resolving Professional Differences” Procedure.
- Have you complied with the current Child Protection Procedures?
- Is there a need to inform Police, because a crime has been committed?

## **Child protection procedures**

### **Recognising abuse**

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

### **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 (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

### **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 for meeting the needs of another person. There may be inappropriate expectations being imposed on children regarding academic or other developmental aspects. Further expectations 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 such as in the case of domestic violence. It may involve serious bullying, 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, although it may occur alone.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **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 involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care-takers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Indicators of abuse – what you might see**

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated person.

Remember, it is your responsibility to report your concerns. It is not your responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused. It is important to know that if an abused child is under the age of 13 years old, social services must be contacted immediately by the DSP.

A child who is being abused or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school or arrive late
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.

There will be occasions when you suspect that a pupil may be at risk, but you have no 'real' evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre,

they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or you may have noticed physical but inconclusive signs. In these circumstances, you should try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk. The signs you have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill. It is fine to ask the pupil if they are OK or if you can help in any way.

If you notice signs that worry you or, following a conversation with the child, you remain concerned, you should take action.

## **Impact of abuse**

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

## **Taking action**

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSP to decide how to proceed. It is very important that you report your concerns – you do not need ‘absolute proof’ that the child is at risk. If a child is reported missing from school, staff should take action immediately.

Key points to remember for taking action are:

- report your concern to the DSP by the end of the day or the Deputy DSP if the DSP is away
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a cause for concern and submit this to the DSP / Deputy DSP
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.
- It is important to know that if an abused child is under the age of 13 years old, social services must be contacted immediately by the DSP

Appendix 4 provides a flowchart for reporting a concern. Appendix 3 provides a procedure to follow should a day pupil or boarder be reported missing.

## **If a pupil discloses to you – how to act**

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual, their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a pupil talks to you about any risks to their safety or wellbeing you will need to let them know that you must pass the information on if you have any concerns – you are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which you do this is a matter for professional

judgement. If you jump in immediately the pupil may think that you do not want to listen, if you leave it till the very end of the conversation, the pupil may feel that you have misled them into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

### **During your conversation with the pupil:**

- Allow them to speak freely.
- Remain calm and do not over react – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you.
- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’.
- Do not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the pupil.
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the pupil’s mother think about all this.
- At an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them you must pass the information on.
- Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused.
- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be your way of being supportive but the child may interpret it that they have done something wrong.
- Tell the pupil what will happen next. The pupil may agree to go with you to see the designated person. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- Report verbally to the designated person.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible on the cause for concern form and hand it to the designated senior person.
- Seek support if you feel distressed.

### **Notifying parents**

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents if it is deemed safe to do so. This must be handled sensitively and the DSP or Deputy DSP will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure. If a child is reported missing, parents will be notified as soon as an initial search of the site is complete (Appendix 3).

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, then advice will first be sought from children’s social care.

### **Children with sexually harmful behaviour**

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. The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young

people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator.

### **Confidentiality and sharing information**

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated senior person, deputy designated senior person or the headteacher. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with Data Protection Act 1998 principles. Information is:

- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept no longer than necessary
- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- secure

Cause for concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility with the DSP and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort should be made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. Child protection information will be stored separately from the pupil's school file which will be tagged.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them.

### **Reporting directly to child protection agencies**

The Headteacher or DSP will contact the external agencies if the situation warrants it such as if the child is at very significant risk or under the age of 13.

All other Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, Ofsted, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their deputy, the headteacher and the designated governor for child protection are all unavailable.
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety.

### **Referral to children's social care**

The DSP will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm and especially if they are under the age of 13 years old. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

### **Children who may be particularly vulnerable**

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions, and child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- living away from home (mainly boarders)
- do not have English as a first language.
- disabled or have special educational needs
- living in a domestic abuse situation
- affected by parental substance misuse
- asylum seekers
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality

### **Support for Children**

The school and its staff will offer appropriate support to children who have suffered trauma or abuse or who have abused others through:

- An individual support plan which is reviewed regularly
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and other agencies as appropriate.  
These may include:  
Children's Social Care  
Counselling sessions from professionals  
GPs  
Providing initial support through the school's own trained listeners e.g. Tara Dodd – general listening  
Heather Chapman and the School Nurses – bereavement counselling

In difficult more complex cases, children will be referred to other external agencies if necessary.

### **Bullying**

Plymouth College takes cases of bullying very seriously realising that it can cause considerable anxiety and distress.

All incidences of bullying should be reported and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. The subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in the personal, social, moral and health education (PSHME) curriculum and through student led assemblies. A central bullying log is kept by the DSP.

The school has a additional anti-bullying policy.

## **E-Safety**

Most of our pupils will use mobile phones and computers at some time. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings.

The school's e-safety policy explains how we try to keep pupils safe in school. Due to the ever increasing access routes to electronic communications, our greatest emphasis is on educating young people to use electronic communication safely as well as realistic blocking and filtering of potentially harmful sites.

Cyber-bullying by pupils, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. There is zero tolerance of such behaviour.

Chatrooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour. Some pupils will undoubtedly be 'chatting' on mobiles or social networking sites at home, particularly 'Facebook'. The schools e-safety steering group provides advice, guidelines and parameters to pupils in an endeavour to keep them safe. Pupils will be given annual guidance on the dangers involved in social networking.

## **Support for those involved in a child protection issue**

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. Plymouth College will support pupils and their families and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact. Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a pupil, separate link people will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest
- responding sympathetically to any request from pupils or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of counselling or other avenues of external support
- following the procedures laid down in our whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

## **Complaints procedure**

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a pupil, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or belittling a pupil or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by the deputy headteacher, the headteacher and governors. Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

## **If you have concerns about a colleague / Whistleblowing**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's whistleblowing policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. Boarding particularly should have a culture of immunity from whistleblowing. All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the headteacher. Complaints about the headteacher should be reported to the chair of governors.

## **Staff who are the subject of an allegation**

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. The Plymouth LADO and/or the Schools Advisory and Assessment Team will be contacted immediately (or within one working day) for advice and guidance if a member of staff has allegedly:

1. Behaved in a way that may have harmed a child, or
2. Committed a criminal offence against a child, or
3. Behaved in an inappropriate way towards a child

Guidance is followed in accordance with the South West Child Protection Policy found at [www.swcpp.org.uk](http://www.swcpp.org.uk)

It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events can and do happen. A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to pupils and we must act on every allegation. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected. Again, advice will be sought from the Plymouth LADO and the Independent Reviewing Service. No school investigations will take place until the LADO has given permission.

If the member of staff is a boarding tutor, alternative accommodation arrangements must be made for this staff member away from the boarding community and other pupils.

Allegations against staff should be reported to the headteacher. Allegations against the headteacher should be reported to the chair of governors.

### **Staff training**

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. New staff and governors will also receive training quickly on arrival. All staff, including voluntary and support staff as well as the headteacher and the designated governor will receive training that is updated at least every three years and the DSP will receive training updated at least every two years, including training in inter-agency procedures. Supply staff and other visiting staff will be given the school's Visiting Staff Leaflet (see: Appendix 2).

In addition, all staff will receive a copy of the 2006 Government publication "Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people"

In addition, senior pupils such as senior prefects or boarding prefects with positions of responsibility for younger pupils will be given training on appropriate actions to take should they receive or witness any disclosures or allegations or direct evidence of abuse.

### **Safer recruitment**

Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff by following the guidance in the DCSF *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education* together with the local authority and the school's individual procedures. The mandatory two members of staff will have received training in safer recruitment.

Safer recruitment means that all staff will:

- complete an application form
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- be checked through the Criminal Records Bureau to the enhanced level irrespective of their role and will be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority from June 2010
- be interviewed

Appropriate CRB and ISA checks will be made by the Bursarial office and correct procedures applied if a pupil from the school is working under the supervision of a person employed by a different organisation. The Bursar's office will hold and keep updated the Single Central Record of CRB checks.

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's child protection policy and identification of their child protection training needs. All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the child protection policy (Appendix 1).

The school will report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) within one month any person (whether fully employed, contracted, a volunteer or a GAP student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children. No compromise agreements will be entered in these circumstances. Reports will be made to:

Independent Safeguarding Authority, P.O.Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA  
(Tel: 0300 123111)

### **Enrichment activity and off-site arrangements**

Where school enrichment activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

### **Photography and images**

The school will regularly use images of our pupils for newspaper articles, newsletters, promotional material and the Yearbook. To protect pupils we will alert all parents to the likely use of photographic or video images to be taken and used by the school and offer them the opportunity to refuse such material being published if they so wish.

## Appendix 1

### Good practice and ethical guidelines for school staff regarding safeguarding children

All school staff are valued members of the school community. Everyone is expected to set and maintain the highest standards for their own performance, to work as part of a team and to be an excellent role model for our pupils.

All school staff should:

- ensure that they read the school Child Protection Policy
- know who the Senior and Deputy Senior Designated Person is
- place the safety and welfare of pupils above all other considerations
- treat all members of the school community, including pupils, parents, colleagues and governors with consideration and respect
- adhere to the principles and procedures contained in the policies in our safeguarding portfolio and in teaching and learning policies
- treat each pupil as an individual and make adjustments to meet individual need
- demonstrate a clear understanding of and commitment to non-discriminatory practice
- ensure that power and authority are never misused
- understand that school staff are in a position of trust and that sexual relationships with a pupil, even over the age of 16, may be an offence
- Any child abuse involving a child under the age of 13 must be reported immediately to the DSP
- be alert to, and report appropriately, any behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is at risk of harm
- encourage all pupils to reach their full potential
- never condone inappropriate behaviour by pupils or staff
- refrain from any action that would bring the school into disrepute
- value themselves and seek appropriate support for any issue that may have an adverse effect on their professional practice.

I confirm that I have read and accept all of the above.

Staff signature .....

Date .....

Print name .....

**Please return this form to the Designated Senior Person**

## **Appendix 2**

### **Visiting staff child protection information leaflet**

#### **School statement**

*We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. While working in our school we expect you to take care of our pupils and follow our procedures.*

#### **Key facts about child abuse**

Abuse and neglect can happen to any child, boy or girl, of any race, culture, ethnicity or sexuality. Disabled children and children with SEN are particularly vulnerable. Many children are unable to disclose what is happening to them and rely on us to interpret their behaviour and spot signs of abuse.

A pupil may:

- have a bruise, burn or injury that seems suspicious
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- be unnaturally passive or withdrawn
- be unpredictable and challenging
- seem anxious, fearful or distressed
- provide an unlikely explanation for their injury or their behaviour.

If you are concerned for a child's health, welfare or safety in any way you must speak to the designated senior person (DSP) Sarah Dunn (Deputy Head) or a senior member of staff before you leave the school site.

Do not question the pupil or try to secure evidence. Your responsibility is to report your concern, not to investigate.

If a pupil tells you something that suggests they are at risk of harm, allow them to tell you as much as they wish and let them know that you must pass the information on to the DSP.

If you become concerned about a pupil's immediate safety, notify the nearest member of staff and tell them why you are concerned.

You should complete a welfare concern form (attached) and hand it to the DSP or a senior member of staff before you leave the school site. Ask a senior member of staff if you would like help to complete the form.

If you have any questions or wish to see our child protection policy please contact the DSP.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Procedures for a missing pupil**

#### **Boarders:**

If at any stage a boarder is found to be unexpectedly missing from their Boarding House, the member of staff on duty will apply the following procedures:

1. The Daily or Weekend Whereabouts Sheet will be checked.
2. The House Signing In/Out Book will be checked.
3. The boarder's friends will be consulted without causing alarm.
4. The Housemaster/Housemistress will be alerted.
5. The Housemaster/Housemistress will attempt to contact the boarder on their mobile phone.
6. The boarding houses will be searched.
7. The school site will be searched.
8. If the boarder remains unaccounted for, the Head of Boarding must be alerted.
9. The Head of Boarding will contact the boarder's parents/guardian to inform them and consult them for possible destinations.
10. The Head of Boarding will inform the Headmaster.
11. If no clues are gathered, or there is concern for the welfare of the boarder, the Police will be alerted immediately by the Head of Boarding.
12. The incident must be logged in the Staff Handover Books and in the Individual Boarder's Welfare Record.

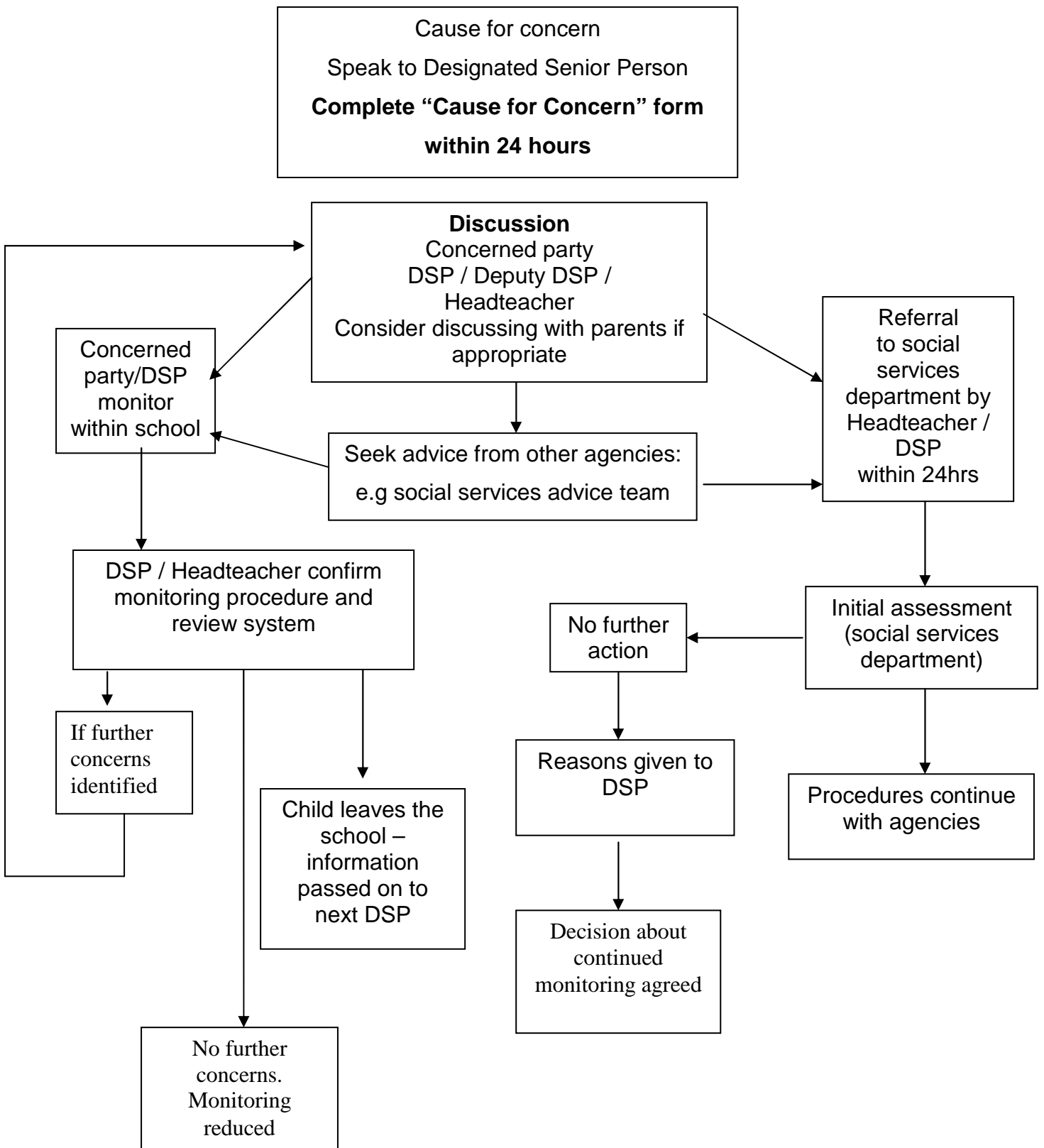
#### **Day Pupils:**

If a day pupil goes missing:

1. Contact the school office immediately.
2. The HOY and Deputy Head will start to search the premises with help from other staff if possible.
3. Attempt to make contact by mobile phone if a number can be accessed through friends.
4. If the child is not found within 15 minutes, parents must be notified.
5. Continue searching and keeping contact with parents.
6. Consider involving the police if the timescale of absence is long and parents are in agreement.
7. Record the incident on SIMS Behaviour Management.

## Appendix 4

### Action flowchart



**Appendix 5  
School cause for concern form**

**Cause for Concern Form**

***Note: Please do not interpret what is seen or heard; simply record the facts. After completing the form, pass it immediately to the Designated Senior Person (S.J Dunn) or her Deputy (M.P. Tippetts)***

**Name of child..... Tutor group.....**

**Name of staff member completing form.....**

**Day..... Date..... Time..... Place.....**  
(of observed behaviour / discussion / disclosure)

Nature of incident / concern including relevant background (Record child's word verbatim)

For Designated Senior Person use (please tick relevant items)

<b>Action Taken</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Discuss with child, parent or carer		
Monitoring procedure		
Check behaviour management database info		
Contact parents		
Check LDD Register and medical records		
Refer to other agency		
Other (Please specify)		

**Confidential**

**Ongoing Monitoring Form**

Name of child..... Tutor group.....

<b>Day &amp; Date</b>	<b>Observation / Incident</b>	<b>Staff initials</b>	<b>Action taken</b>

## Appendix 6

### Essential contacts

<b>Name and role:</b>	<b>Address, telephone and email address</b>
School designated senior person	Miss Sarah Dunn Deputy Headteacher Plymouth College Ford Park Plymouth PL4 6RN  Tel: 01752 203300 Email: <a href="mailto:sdunn@plymouthcollege.com">sdunn@plymouthcollege.com</a>
Headteacher	Dr Simon Wormleighton Plymouth College Ford Park Plymouth PL4 6RN  Tel: 01752 203300 Email: <a href="mailto:mail@plymouthcollege.com">mail@plymouthcollege.com</a>
Nominated governor	Mrs Jan McKinnel St Andrew's Rectory 13 Bainbridge Avenue Hartley Plymouth PL3 5QZ  Tel: 01752 772139 Mobile: 07792494830 Email: <a href="mailto:jan.mckinnel@blueyonder.co.uk">jan.mckinnel@blueyonder.co.uk</a>
Deputy designated senior person	Mr Martin Tippetts Head of Boarding Plymouth College Ford Park Plymouth PL4 6RN  Tel: 01752 203300 Email: <a href="mailto:boarding@plymouthcollege.com">boarding@plymouthcollege.com</a>
Ofsted	Royal Exchange Buildings St Ann's Square Manchester M2 7LA  Tel: 08456 014772 / 08456 404045 Email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk">enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk</a>



Health Authority	NHS Plymouth Plymouth Primary Care Trust Building One Brest Road Plymouth PL6 5QZ  Tel: 01752 315315 Email: ask@plymouth.nhs.uk
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