

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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Next review: September 2020

Policy Document OP-01

RISE LEARNING ZONE

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Contact detail of Safeguarding Officers

In the first instance, refer all safeguarding matters to the Welfare Officer Fiona Bourne, who is the Deputy Safeguarding Person and responsible for the day to day management of safeguarding.

For any allegation concerning the Welfare Officer or when the Welfare Officer is not available, please inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately by contacting Martin Sumner on 0115 952 5040

If the Welfare Officer is unavailable and you believe social services need to be contacted, phone **0115 915 5500**. Keep a note of whom you speak to and make a written record of the conversation and its outcomes.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Martin Sumner 0115 952 5040

Deputy Safeguarding Person, Welfare Officer: Fiona Bourne 0115 952 5040

Nottingham City Council:

Children & Families Direct Team: 0115 876 4800

Local Authority Designated Officer: Steven Feaver, 0115 915 5500

In all cases report to the Welfare Officer and to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible and provide reports and statements to them for case management in a timely manner.

Aim of the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

RISE Learning Zone fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding. Our policy applies to all staff, directors and volunteers working in

RISE. Therefore this policy aims to set out for RISE staff how to keep those children we work with safe from harm and neglect. There are 6 main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse (including child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, and radicalisation).
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Statement of Purpose

Everybody shares some responsibility for promoting the welfare of children as a parent or family member, a concerned friend or neighbour, an employer, staff member or volunteer. RISE is committed to ensuring that the safety, well-being and development of all children who attend is our paramount concern. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, supported, valued, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to and know that their wishes and feelings will be taken into account.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the school's curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from, abuse, bullying, child sexual exploitation, radicalisation, teen relationship abuse, gender based violence, drug and alcohol misuse and when using the internet and social media (enabling children to take age appropriate risks as part of their growth and development).
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and co-

operating as required with child protection matters including attendance at case conferences. Ensuring that the right child has the right support at the right time, to ensure they achieve good outcomes.

- Challenge any discriminatory behaviour, derogatory language or radical and extremist views and provide help and support to children about how to treat others with respect.
- Maintain a culture of vigilance and an attitude of, 'it could happen here', where safeguarding is concerned and always act in the interests of the child.

Parents should be encouraged to take an active interest in their child's progress and both children and parents should be informed that they should approach their designated staff member or a senior manager in the first instance if they have any concerns.

RISE is committed to the safe recruitment and supervision of staff. All those who will be working with children will be appointed according to clear standards. All employed, casual and volunteer staff working with children will have used a formal application form, they will have received a clear person specification, will have had formal interviews (containing at least one person who has successfully completed an approved Safer Recruitment training course), two references will have been taken up (and verbally checked with the referrer), identity and qualifications will have been checked, there will have been a DBS Disclosure at Enhanced level and prohibition checks. Upon appointment, there will be a mandatory induction which includes familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures, followed by regular reviews (part of annual performance management) of staffs ongoing safeguarding and child protection practice.

Definitions of Abuse

The following categories of abuse in which a young person is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm apply in these procedures. The categories may apply singularly or in combination.

- **Physical Abuse** – a physical injury or suffering to a young person or the failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a young person where there

is a definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury has been or may be inflicted by another person.

- **Neglect** – A severe or persistent lack of attention to a young person’s basic needs resulting in significant harmful impairment of health or development.
- **Sexual Abuse** – The involvement of a young person in sexual activity which is unlawful or abusive to the young person by virtue of being a breach of trust between the adult and young person. These procedures apply to abuse by parents, carers or other adults acting singly or acting in an organised way, or another young person or persons. This abuse includes abuse which is rewarded or appears attractive to the young person.
- **Emotional Abuse** – Significant abuse to the emotional and psychological well-being or development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment by parents, other adults or young people.
- **Child Sexual Exploitation and Prostitution** – The involvement of any young person, particularly under the age of 16 in activities that can be defined as prostitution by parent or another adult, another young person or the individual.
- **Self harm and threatened/attempted suicide** – When a young person voluntarily causes harm to themselves by cutting, solvent/glue abuse, overdosing, swallowing glass or other forms of self harm, or when a young person discloses that they are feeling or have been feeling suicidal, or when a young person states that they will or are considering taking their own life.

Recognising Abuse

Child abuse occurs to young people of both sexes, at all ages and in all cultures, religions, social classes and to young people with and without disabilities.

- Identification of abuse may be difficult. However if a young person discloses their belief that they have suffered or are suffering abuse it must be taken seriously and the appropriate procedure followed (see below)
- Previous suspicions or disclosures of abuse are often significant factors and must be taken into account.
- Always listen to the young person, a written report should always be made on a project incident form as soon as possible after any disclosure, so that the facts of what was disclosed are recorded.
- If necessary, immediate medical assistance may be required and a young person should be taken to casualty or to see a Doctor.
- Beware if details about an “accident” appear vague, lacking in detail, inconsistent with the injury or varies with each telling.
- Watch out for regular bruising or marking on arms, legs, faces and necks. Scratches on forearms may indicate self harm.
- Watch out for changes in behaviour, or sores around the mouth which could indicate solvent abuse, or be aware if a young person is regularly sick which may indicate attempted overdoses.

Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for ensuring that any concern for the welfare of a child is dealt with promptly and appropriately as it is important that children receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. RISE has a ‘Designated Safeguarding Lead’ (DSL) who therefore has lead responsibility for such issues, and a ‘Welfare Officer’ (WO) who is the Deputy Safeguarding Person and who manages safeguarding reports and concerns as first point of contact. The DSL will be able to offer advice as well as to liaise with statutory agencies where there are concerns about a child’s welfare. The current appointed officers are:

DSL: Martin Sumner, Development Manager & Governance Officer

WO: Fiona Bourne, Programme Manager & Welfare Officer

Any child that goes missing from RISE will receive a well-coordinated response that decreases the harm or risk of harm to them (absence from school is a known potential indicator of abuse or neglect). If a learner is subject to a child protection

plan, the school will notify social care if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days, and ensure that if a learner leaves the school, their information is transferred to the new school immediately (including their child protection file which will be transferred separately from the main file) and that the learner's social worker is informed. If any learner has 20 continuous days of unauthorised absence, with no contact from parent(s) / carer(s), a CME referral must be made to the Attendance Monitoring Service (or if a learner has 10 consecutive days of unauthorised absence following a leave of absence, with no contact from parent(s) / carer(s)).

Female Genital Mutilation

In the case of a disclosure of FGM, a report must be made to the police **by the member of staff** to whom the disclosure was made – the Welfare Officer and Designated Safeguarding Lead must be notified immediately and will support and advise throughout the process.

Code of Behaviour

RISE aims to provide an environment where young people are able to feel safe, secure and valued.

This means that there is a high expectation that all team members behave appropriately with young people. As well as working within the law regarding inappropriate relationships, team members should not be initiating contact with young people outside of RISE, unless there is a specific reason for this and it has been discussed with the DSL or WO. If any contact is initiated by a young person, this should be reported as quickly as possible to the WO, who should retain a written description of the contact if appropriate.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

It is right that children and others using the service expect that private and sensitive information is kept confidential, and it is good practice that informed consent should be obtained before sharing information (explicit consent can be expressed

either verbally or in writing, written consent is always preferable). Nonetheless confidentiality can never be guaranteed. While it will always be preferable to explain when a confidence is to be breached, information that indicates a child may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm can be shared without consent and will require a referral to either Social Care or the Police in a timely fashion to reduce the risk of harm. The decision to disclose in these circumstances should be properly recorded on the learner's file. The most important consideration is whether sharing information is likely to safeguard and protect a child and reduce the risk of harm.

Appointment of Staff

Staff will only be appointed subject to satisfactory references being taken up, which include the applicants suitably working with young people aged 11-21 years, male and female. All staff appointments will be made subject to a police check being made with the Criminal Records Bureau / Disclosure and Barring Service (from Nov 2012)

Staff Induction and Training

All staff should attend a training course in Safeguarding Children, ran by an official body such as the NCSCB or through the Nottingham City PCT Contraception and Sexual Health Outreach Services. Staff should also have the opportunity to attend advanced courses and refresher courses. New staff members should receive training as part of an induction programme, which should be completed within three months of the start of their paid or unpaid employment.

Disclosure, Action & Referral

Should a child choose to disclose details of abuse to a member of staff, it is almost always best practice to listen rather than to ask questions. During the disclosure they must not offer alternative explanations for the child's concerns or ask leading questions. All staff are required to make written notes as soon as possible, using the

child's words. As these notes may be used as evidence, they should be signed, timed and dated. A 'skin map' should be completed if it has been necessary to record learner's injuries, which should be given to the DSL and sent to the **Children & Families Direct service (C&FD), Nottingham City**. Written records of concerns about children should be kept on file, making use of the recommended chronology (for low level/accumulative concerns), even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately, or the Safeguarding Monitoring Form for higher risk concerns.

Any child protection information should be kept separate along with third party reports, including case conference minutes, within the confidential section of the child or young person's case file and stored securely. Parents, whilst under suspicion, are not entitled to see such information and should have their concerns referred back to social care or the police team who are investigating the matter. Such records should be monitored regularly, and be disposed of confidentially when they are no longer relevant, at an appropriate time agreed with the DSL and social worker.

Whilst safeguarding concerns would form part of a learner's educational records, it would be exempt from disclosure under the Data Protection Act 1989 which states that: 'Schools should not disclose anything on pupil's records which would be likely to cause serious harm to their physical or mental health or anyone else. This should include anything which suggests that they are or have been either the subject of, or at risk of child abuse.'

Confidences including disclosures of possible neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse must always be communicated to the DSL and recorded. If a staff member is unsure whether the information warrants sharing or not it is advised that they discuss the issue with their line manager or DSL anyway, to avoid any possibly important information being lost. It is of the utmost importance that information is shared appropriately and in a timely manner and any referral followed up quickly and appropriate actions taken. In the event that the DSL or another senior manager is not available, then the primary responsibility of the person suspecting abuse should be to contact the C&FD team and then to inform the DSL as soon as possible. RISE recognises the emotional impact on staff dealing with child

protection issues, and will therefore ensure that support, advice and supervision is available to them.

The C&FD Team is now the first point of contact for all referrals and contact into Social Care. They will decide if a situation needs a children's Social Care response or involvement or if it should be responded to by another agency, service or a different action or further assessment needs to be made (you may be asked to complete a CAF for example), and they will help to initiate that response and follow up any actions. To assist in the early assessment of the situation you should have appropriate background information about the child available to share. You will be required to follow up a referral made verbally with a written copy of your concerns or by a completed version of the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) which will also need to be emailed through to C&FD using the secure email:

candf.direct@nottinghamcity.gcsx.gov.uk

This must be sent within 48 hours. Before contacting C&DF team consent from the parent of the child in question must be gained, unless doing so will put that child at immediate risk.

There may be instances where a child is not at risk of abuse but may benefit from services that the local authority can provide, at which point consideration should be given to completing a CAF assessment. With the informed consent of parents and the child such instances may alternatively, lead to a referral to Children and Families Social Care for a child in need assessment.

Suspicious about the welfare of a young person

- Seek an explanation from the young person without raising the question of abuse, unless the concern is sexual abuse or prostitution. Share these concerns with RISE's Welfare Officer, or senior worker. Ensure that a written statement is made with the decisions taken and dated. Child protection forms are available in the child protection folder. Don't be afraid to ask the young person about marks that you suspect may be self harm.
- The DSL or Welfare Officer may refer the matter to social services.

- Continue to observe and give the young person the opportunity to confide
- If there are no further concerns within 3 further months this should be noted on the written report.

If an allegation of abuse is made against a RISE Team member

- The welfare of the young person must be given the greatest importance. Any allegation will be investigated by the DSL. (If an allegation is made against the DSL, a senior worker needs to bring it to the attention of the Welfare Officer, who will conduct an investigation into the allegations and inform the Board of Directors of the allegation).
- If an allegation is made against a team member, the DSL will suspend the worker (without prejudice to pay) until the investigation has been completed. The investigation will be a written account from the young person. This will be referred to the police if the allegation includes sexual abuse or violence towards the young person.
- The following information should be included on the Child Protection form:

Name and Address of the young person

Name and Address of the Staff team member

Contact details for the young person's parents / carers

A written report from the young person

A written report from the worker

When the incident occurred

Who else, if anyone, was involved

Written statements from anyone else who was involved

What evidence of abuse is available

Action taken to safeguard the child

Action taken to remove the worker from the situation

If the parent's / carers have been informed

If the matter has been referred to the social services

- If the allegation is unfounded, the worker will be re-instated and all records relating to the allegation removed from the worker's file.

- If the allegations are proved and result in a conviction or caution the worker will be dismissed immediately. Any subsequent references provided for the worker must state the background to and conclusion of the incident where proven to be true.

Contact detail of Safeguarding Officers

Within RISE, please refer all safeguarding matters to the Welfare Officer if appropriate.

(For any allegation concerning the Welfare Officer, please inform the Management committee immediately by contacting Martin Sumner on 0115 952 5040)

If the Welfare Officer is unavailable and you believe social services need to be contacted, phone **0115 915 5500**. Keep a note of whom you speak to and make a written record of the conversation and its outcomes.

Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Board of Directors: Martin Sumner
Welfare Officer & Programme Manager: Fiona Bourne

Nottingham City Council:

Children & Families Direct Team: 0115 876 4800

Local Authority Designated Officer: Steven Feaver, 0115 915 5500