

Safer Recruitment and Allegations against Staff September 2020

Safer recruitment

Our Trust endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff by following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016) together with WDSCB and the Trust's individual procedures.

Recruitment, selection and pre-employment vetting is carried out in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 including:

- Verifying identity
- Enhanced DBS (disclosure and barring service) check for those in regulated activity
- Prohibition from teaching check
- Verification on mental and physical fitness
- Right to work in UK check
- Professional qualifications check.

References will be sought before interview so any concerns can be explored. At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

The Single Central Record is maintained in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016.

We will obtain written confirmation from supply agencies that agency and third party staff have been appropriately checked.

Staff Training and Induction

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. All staff, including non-classroom-based staff and the Headteacher, will be regularly trained in Safeguarding.

The DSL will receive training updated at least every two years, including training in inter-agency procedures. They will be supported and encouraged to attend additional training to keep up to date, including forums and multi-agency training offered by WDSCB and the Safeguarding Advisor.

Governors will receive appropriate governor safeguarding training.

All training will be recorded and monitored to flag in advance when updates are required.

The booklet 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' 2015 and Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 is available on the staff safeguarding notice board.

New staff and governors will receive an induction in safeguarding which includes the school's child protection policy, details of the DSL, reporting and recording arrangements specific to the school, dates of their last training, the staff code of conduct and the whistleblowing policy. Staff will sign to say they have received this and understood.

Supply staff and other visiting staff will be given the school's 'Visitors Leaflet' with a brief summary of the above.

Allegations against staff

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is important to have a culture of openness and transparency and a consultation with the LADO will happen if staff have:

- Behaved in a way which has harmed, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they would pose a risk of harm to children.

It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen. We recognise that a child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. However if a child is found to continually make false allegations this may be a sign of mental health issues and a referral to services such as CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health) may be required.

An uncomfortable fact is that some professionals do pose a serious risk to pupils and we must act on every allegation. However 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 the default option and alternatives to suspension will always be considered. In some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected. Staff will be advised to contact their trade union and will also be given access to a named representative.

Allegations against staff should be reported to the Headteacher. Allegations against the Headteacher should be reported to the Chief Executive. Staff may also report their concerns directly to police or the Designated Officer if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action. The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2016).

Staff, parents and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites. We will communicate this to all parties.