



Abbey Court School Trust

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

Safeguarding is broader than child protection as it also includes prevention. The term safeguarding covers safer recruitment, safer working practice, responding to concerns, working with partner agencies, dealing with allegations against those responsible for children and other matters that may be relevant.

“Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government July 2018)” sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. It is important that everybody understands fully their responsibilities and duties as set out in primary legislation and associated regulations and guidance.

Safeguarding children and young people plays a vital part within Abbey Court. Having safeguarding in place not only protects the welfare of children and young people, but also enhances the confidence of parents, staff, Trust members and all those associated with the Trust. While there is no single way to prevent opportunities for abuse, various measures can be used to lessen the risk of abuse occurring, therefore Trust members will be aware of and accept the procedures and processes put in place by the school to protect children from harm.

The safeguarding and protection of children is everyone’s responsibility; procedures and formal processes alone (though essential) will not protect children. The Trust, including all its members, needs to be aware of dangers and be prepared to report concerns and take action if necessary. The child’s welfare is paramount and where there is conflict between the welfare of the child and that of the adult, it is the welfare of the child that will be given priority.

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. Members of Abbey Court Trust are committed to the physical, emotional

and spiritual well-being of all children. Both children and adults need a safe and secure environment in which to work for:

- the care, nurturing of all children and adults;
- the safeguarding and protection of all children and adults; and
- the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a safe environment where there is a culture of informed vigilance regarding the dangers of abuse.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children – and in particular protecting them from significant harm - depends upon effective communication between all associated with children, so Trust members need to:

- be aware of the school's Safeguarding policy and safe practices;
- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare;
- report any concerns immediately to the School DSL.

Definitions of abuse and neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

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.

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 insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These 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.

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, though 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 (eg: rape, buggery or oral sex) 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 occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, 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.

Trust Members awareness

All Trust members will be made aware of this policy and read it in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding Policy and KEEPING Children Safe in Education 2021, as part of their initial induction process and there will be regular briefings and updates. Where necessary or possible, Trust members will be encouraged to attend appropriate training courses. All members of the Trust will have a current DBS enhanced disclosure certificate.

Reviewing the Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure will be reviewed every year, this will include any updates required by a change in local or national policy.

October 2021

What to do if you have a welfare concern in Abbey Court School

Why are you concerned?

For example:

- Allegation /child shares a concern or worry
- Indicators of abuse or neglect

Immediately record your concerns

- Follow the school's procedure on CPOM's and/or advise the DSL/DDSL
- Reassure the child
- Clarify concerns if necessary (**TED Tell, Explain, Describe**)
- Use the child's own words/use facts

Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy if Lead unavailable

Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Consider whether the child is in immediate risk of harm e.g. unsafe to go home
- Access the MCSP [Inter-Agency Threshold Criteria for Children in Need](#) for further guidance
- If the child is **at imminent risk of harm** a referral will be made to First Response – 01634 334466
- If the child is **NOT** at imminent risk, then a **referral will be made via the portal**
- If unsure then consult with First Response 'No name consultation line' 9.30-12.30 (01634 331662) or First Response on 01634 334466

If you are unhappy with the response

Staff:

- Follow local escalation procedures
- Follow Whistleblowing procedures

Pupils and Parents:

- Follow school complaints procedures on school website and in school prospectus

Record decision making and action taken in the pupil's Child Protection/Safeguarding file

Monitor- Be clear about:

- What action you have taken at the time of reporting the concerns.
- What you are monitoring e.g. behaviour trends, appearance, etc.
- How long you will monitor
- Where, how and to whom you will feedback and how you will record

Review and request further support (if necessary)

At all stages the child's circumstances will be kept under review

The DSL/Staff will request further support if required to ensure the **child's safety is paramount**