



Lichfield Cathedral School

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY & GUIDANCE

Background

This school recognises its legal duty under Section 175 Education Act 2002 and the 1989 Children Act to work with other agencies in safeguarding children and protecting them from “significant harm”. The framework for such procedures is defined by DCSF Guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education and the Staffordshire (Local) Safeguarding Children Board. These duties relate to all children and young people under the age of 18.

The staff seek to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards children and young people as part of their general responsibility for pastoral care. Staff hope that parents and children will feel free to talk about any concerns or worries which may affect educational progress and that they will see the school as a safe place if there are any difficulties at home. Children will be taken seriously if they seek help from a member of staff.

This policy is available to parents and prospective parents on request from the School Office and it can be accessed through the Parents' Handbook which is available on the school's website.

“Children in Need” and “Children in Need of Protection”

Parents will normally be consulted and their consent obtained before any referral is made to an agency outside the school under local “children in need” procedures. However, staff cannot guarantee to consult parents first, or to keep children's concerns confidential, if referral must be made to the appropriate agencies in order to safeguard the child's welfare.

If staff have significant concerns about any child which may indicate physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect, they are required to discuss them with the agencies responsible for investigation and Safeguarding.

Staff who observe injuries which appear to be non-accidental, or who are told anything significant by a child, must report their concerns to the designated school Safeguarding officer. School staff do not, however, carry out investigations into whether children have been abused. That is a matter for the specialist agencies.

Referrals are required to be made to the local Social Services Department in writing within 24 hours of an allegation being made or there being cause for suspicion of abuse.

Procedures

All staff will be familiar with the School's internal procedures for keeping a confidential written record of any incidents and the designated officer understands the inter-agency recording requirements of the Staffordshire (Local) Safeguarding Children Board. In addition, staff are aware that every possible measure should be taken to protect children from abuse. Staff will inform pupils that disclosures cannot be guaranteed to be held in confidence, and in responding to concerns will caution against asking leading questions. In all dealings with children, staff will conduct themselves in a professional manner, giving particular consideration to circumstances outside the classroom such as in one-to-one tuition, sports coaching, changing areas and car journeys.

Staff are required to report to the School's Safeguarding Officer any concern they might have about the abuse of a pupil by any other person, or one or more other pupils. Beyond normal internal disciplinary procedures and where the allegation is against the school's designated Safeguarding Officer, contact with external agencies may be required.

Further information about procedures to be adopted is available on request from the Headmaster. Advice may be sought from the Local Authority, the Social Services Department or the Police if staff are unsure how to proceed.



Lichfield Cathedral School

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY & GUIDANCE

Resources

Safeguarding is important. The School endeavours to ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable the necessary tasks to be carried out properly under inter-agency procedures, including attending meetings, collating and writing assessment reports, staff training, etc. One member of the Governing Body is responsible to the other governors for the oversight of Safeguarding issues and the policies and procedures which are in place in the school to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils in the School.

Curriculum

Safeguarding issues will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate, especially in Personal, Social and Health Education and Sex Education.

Further Policies of Relevance

All employees have a responsibility to acquaint themselves with the School's policies on bullying, supervision of children on trips away from the School premises, missing pupils, use of images of pupils on any website and in local media, computer screening and any other related child safety matters contained in the Staff Handbook or the Parents' Handbook.

Boarders and Cathedral Choristers

Particular emphasis is placed on the protection of boarders at the school and the quality of their welfare. The School's policy and procedures are fully compliant with the Safeguarding standards as required by the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. All staff involved in boarding, including newly appointed and ancillary staff, have been given briefing or training on responding to suspicions or allegations of abuse and know what action they should take in response to such suspicions or allegations. In particular, they are made aware of the need to avoid asking leading questions or of giving inappropriate guarantees of confidentiality; and of the need to keep and make written records. They are also made aware of procedures to be followed should a boarder go missing from School.

The School has direct responsibility for the protection of the Cathedral Choristers, all of whom are boarders (with the exception of some probationers) but the Cathedral authorities assume responsibility for the choristers' care and welfare from the moment the choristers arrive at the Cathedral for rehearsals, services, tours or special events, until they are returned to the School. The Cathedral has its own Safeguarding Policy and Procedures which is available on request from the School Office and can be found in the Staff Handbook.

To promote continuity and communication in this regard, the Headmaster is a member of the Cathedral's Choral Foundation, the Cathedral Clergy are members of the Governing Body of the School, and the Cathedral Organist meets on a weekly basis with the Boarding Staff.

Boarding staff are aware that they may report matters direct to OFSTED (see below for contact details) should they have any concerns that they feel unable to discuss directly with anyone at school. They are also made aware that they will have immunity from any retribution or disciplinary action so long as 'whistle blowing' has been carried out in good faith.

Staff issues including safe recruitment

Parents can feel confident that safe recruitment procedures are in place to ensure that all staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children. (For further details see Safe Recruitment Policy, available on request from the School office.) Checks, as required by the Criminal Records Bureau and the Independent



Lichfield Cathedral School

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY & GUIDANCE

School Standards Regulations, are carried out on all employees and volunteers who will have unsupervised contact with children, and the School takes all reasonable steps to ensure that all adults with whom the children come into contact during the course of their School day are appropriately checked. No adult is permitted to work within the boarding facilities until the school has seen and recorded an up-to-date CRB check.

Any use of physical force or restraint of pupils will be carried out and documented in accordance with the relevant guidance and policy. If it is necessary to use physical action to protect a child from injury, to prevent a child from harming others, or if any child is injured accidentally, parents will be informed immediately. Children will not be punished within the school by any form of hitting, slapping, shaking or other degrading treatment. The Staff Handbook contains a full policy on physical restraint.

The school will ensure that in instances where pupils are working on a different site, e.g. work experience or field trips, that adults with whom they may have contact have undergone appropriate Safeguarding checks. Reference to this is made in the school's Health and Safety Policy on Educational Visits.

Informing School Authorities and External Agencies

Any complaints about the behaviour of a member of staff, a volunteer, or any other adult with whom the children come into contact during the School day may be made to the Headmaster, or to the Chairman of the Governing Body, and all staff know that it is their duty to report immediately any suspicion about another member of staff, volunteer or other adult, in relation to Safeguarding matters. An allegation against the Headmaster should be reported to the Chairman of Governors. If a complaint is made, all those involved will be entitled to a fair hearing, both children and staff. Complaints which raise Safeguarding issues will be reported under local inter-agency procedures for investigation outside the school. For the School's full policy on Complaints, please see the School website or the Parents' Handbook.

Where an allegation or suspicion of abuse against a child has been made, the School undertakes to contact the appropriate welfare agency (Staffordshire County Council Social Services) as soon as possible and, at the latest, within 24 hours. This may be done by any staff or adults working at the School.

The School will inform the Independent Safeguarding Authority within one month of leaving School of any person, whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student, whose services are no longer used because he or she is unsuitable to work with children. The School also undertakes to inform Ofsted within 14 days should there be any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working or looking after children in the EYFS (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is related to have taken place on the premises, and of the actions taken in respect of these allegations. If a resident member of staff is suspended pending an investigation of a Safeguarding matter, that member of staff will be found accommodation by the School outside the Cathedral Close.

The Governors accept that failure to make a report to the appropriate authority, including as much evidence about the circumstances as possible, constitutes an offence. This may result in the School being removed from the DCSF register of independent schools.

Useful contact details

Staffordshire County Council Social Services, Vulnerable Children Services, may be contacted via the First Response Team on 0800 131 3126. Out of office hours, they may be contacted on 01785 354030.

Ofsted (Children's Directorate) may be contacted on 0845 015 0120.

The Independent Safeguarding Authority may be contacted on 0300 123 1111 or by post at PO Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA.



Lichfield Cathedral School SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY & GUIDANCE

Designated Officers, Training and Contacts

The School's designated officer, with designated status and authority to take responsibility for Safeguarding matters is the Headmaster, Mr Peter Allwood. The Head of Middle School (Lichfield), Mrs Cara O'Donnell, and the Head of Junior School (Longdon), Mrs Margaret Pearson, act as the Headmaster's deputies for Safeguarding matters at the two sites. The Early Years Coordinator (Longdon), Mrs Alison Stevens, is designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), that is the Nursery and Reception including all children from age 3 to 31st August in the year of their fifth birthday. The Nominated Governor for Safeguarding is Mrs Lyneth Lockwood.

All designated officers are required to receive training in Safeguarding and inter-agency working every two years. The next training for designated officers is due in Summer 2011. All employees of the School, including those who work on a part-time or voluntary basis, are made aware on appointment of the school's Safeguarding arrangements, and are trained or re-trained every three years. The next training for staff is due in September 2012. Appropriate training will be provided for new staff as soon as possible after appointment.

The Nominated Governor reviews the Safeguarding arrangements every term and meets with the Headmaster at least once each term. The Governing Body receives an annual report from the Nominated Governor, and conducts an annual review of the School's Safeguarding policies and procedures and the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. Reference to this is made in the minutes of the appropriate meeting. The Governing Body requires that any deficiencies or weaknesses in Safeguarding arrangements will be remedied without delay.

[END]

Doc name	Safeguarding Policy & Guidance
Author	Headmaster
Version	3.2
Circulation	Public document
Last updated	November 2009

The guidance which follows forms an important part of the school's policy on matters concerning the safeguarding of all children in its care.



Lichfield Cathedral School **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY & GUIDANCE**

Guidance Part 1: Safeguarding Children - Guidance for Pupils

It is our greatest wish that all pupils will be as happy as possible at School.

All pupils of the Cathedral School should feel that they can approach any member of Staff at any time with a problem and that it will be looked into and where possible resolved. A mechanism is in place for all pupils to approach adults for help as and when it may be necessary. The first person to whom a child should go will be the Form Teacher, and thereafter, any subject teacher in whom they have confidence.

When there appears to be no other reasonable option, pupils may speak directly to the Headmaster who is the designated Safeguarding Officer for the School.

For Boarders and those staying at School

For boarders, during the School day the guidance above applies as for all day pupils. After School, the following options are available should any boarder have a concern which he wishes to share:

- In the evenings or at weekends, one or more of the following adults are available:
 - the Duty Member of Staff;
 - one of the Boarding Tutors;
 - the House Mother or one of the Assistant Matrons;
 - the Headmaster or the Headmaster's wife.
- There is a payphone on the main staircase available to boarders, and telephone numbers are provided for organisations such as ChildLine (0800 1111). Personal mobile phones are also available after prep and before bedtime.
- In instances where a boarder may wish to speak to his parents in total confidence, the member of staff on duty will make suitable arrangements.

Boarders' meetings take place at least twice per term, under the guidance of the Housemother. Any points raised will be given consideration and where possible action taken and changes made.

The Independent Person for the Cathedral School is Helen Wadkin. Boarders may ring Mrs Wadkin at any time if they wish to speak to an adult not directly connected to the School.

The designated teacher for all Safeguarding matters in the School is the Headmaster and thereafter the Chairman of the Governing Body, currently the Dean of the Cathedral. Boarders may speak to either the Headmaster or the Dean if they have any serious concerns.

Any boarder who wishes to put in writing any grievance may do so at any time to any member of staff listed above. All pupils should feel confident that their concern will be addressed swiftly and fairly.

The Lichfield Cathedral School Anti-Bullying Policy Document is available from any member of staff, or from the school website, should any child wish to refer to it.



Lichfield Cathedral School

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY & GUIDANCE

Guidance Part 2: Safeguarding Children – Guidance for Staff

Disclosure of concerns

If a child (pupil or student) approaches a member of staff with a concern about his or her welfare, the following guidelines should be observed:

- Allow the child to feel free to talk to you about problems and to feel that they are believed.
- Give no judgement, but listen sympathetically.
- Never **promise** confidentiality, but state that you may need to talk to someone who can help.
- Never prompt the child to give more detail than is given naturally. Any pressure from the listener can “close a child down”.
- Report any concern which worries you to a member of the Leadership Group or the Headmaster, who is the designated Safeguarding Officer.
- Cross-questioning a child can lead to difficulties for you should a court case follow.
- The child should **NOT** be questioned by a second person or asked to repeat a story.
- Write notes of conversations immediately, date them and give a copy to the Headmaster.
- Be aware that parents who abuse children often appear to be the most caring. Therefore never collude with a family to save the relationship with School.
- Remember that your own standards may influence your judgement.
- Allegations involving abuse by one or more children against another pupil should be treated with the same care as those involving an adult. Reference to the school’s anti-bullying policy may be of help in some situations.
- After initial enquiries and reporting, further action is the job of Social Services and not the teacher or the School’s Safeguarding Officer.

Allegations of misconduct against staff

Be aware of situations which could be misconstrued.

- Being alone in a room or car with a child is not advised unless sensible precautions are taken. (The situation for peripatetic music teachers is particularly sensitive in this regard. The Director of Music ensures that new members of the team are fully aware of the School’s policy on Safeguarding and reminds all members of his team at the start of each academic year.)
- Judge your actions by how you would judge another.
- Watch your body language and under normal circumstances keep a reasonable distance from children – physical contact with children is governed carefully by the School’s policy on physical restraint.
- Loss of temper can be misunderstood.
- Avoid any electronic communication with a pupil except through official school sites which are monitored on a regular basis.
- Treat all children fairly so that your motives cannot be questioned.
- Be prepared to question your colleagues’ behaviour.



Lichfield Cathedral School

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY & GUIDANCE

- Witnesses are useful in any potentially difficult situation.
- Record any incident which could be misconstrued.

In the event of allegations being made against a member of staff:

- If you consider it trivial and easily resolved, mention the incident to a member of the Leadership Group who should keep a record on file. The senior member of staff will decide if any further action is required.
- Handle all communications with sensitivity and objectivity in the interests of all parties. Do not take sides as it can be unhelpful.
- If you are accused of misconduct, or have an allegation made against you, take no action whatsoever, apart from reporting it to the Headmaster.
- If a member of staff is not happy that an issue has been properly resolved, they should refer it to the Headmaster, or if it concerns the Headmaster, to the Chairman of Governors.

The death of a child, a child's parents, a child's close relative, or other major tragedy involving a child

Any member of staff in receipt of such information should immediately inform the Headmaster, or in his absence his Deputy, whether during term or during the holidays.

If appropriate, such as in the event of the death of a pupil, the Headmaster will assemble some or all of the following group to discuss the most appropriate reaction of the School: the Deputy Head, the Year Group Leader, the Housemother, the relevant Form Teacher and the member of Staff from whom the information was first received. The Chairman of the Governors will be informed. The Headmaster will coordinate the School's response.

The following matters will be considered:

- Who should be informed, when and how.
- Consent for the sharing of information and its timing should be obtained from each parent.
- The necessity for preparation of a response to press enquiry.
- The need for dedicated communications links.
- A point of reference and a designated person for counselling of children and adults.
- The involvement of support services, such as Winston's Wish, Compassionate Friends and the Educational Psychology Service.

The House Mother and School Nurse have attended training courses in how best to deal with bereavement, and will advise all staff close to the child concerned on the most appropriate ways of meeting the needs of the children most affected.

Divorced/Separated Parents

A detailed policy can be found in the Staff Handbook. Many staff have to deal with parents who are separated and who disagree on how best to care for their child. Here are some guidelines from the policy:

All parents, as defined above, have a right to participate in their child's education. The School's main contact is likely to be with the parent with whom the child lives. The School has a duty to treat all parents equally, unless a Court Order exists limiting their responsibility.



Lichfield Cathedral School

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY & GUIDANCE

Individuals who have parental responsibility, or care, have the same rights as natural parents. All such parents have the right to receive information, to participate in activities, to give consent and to attend meetings.

The parent with whom the child lives is the parent who should collect the child. The School will only pass the child to the other parent if it has been agreed in writing by both parties, or it is on the instruction of a Court Order.

Parental consent for school activities should be sought from the parent with whom the child resides, unless a specific request is received to obtain consent from both natural parents.

If the parents disagree on consent, then the negative is temporarily accepted in order that the School avoids the potential for litigation. Parents will then be asked to obtain a legal ruling on which of the child's parents determines future consent.

Consent for medical treatment should be obtained if possible from each parent who has requested to be kept informed. However, in emergencies it will be normal to approach the resident parent, and when this is not possible, the School has to follow its duty of care to the child and make any necessary decisions. In severe situations, that responsibility is then passed to the hospital. Parents should be kept informed at the earliest opportunity.

In all unusual or unexpected situations, the School's decisions will be governed by the best interests of the child. The School should avoid any involvement in conflict between parents, but where it is impossible to be fair, the welfare of the child should be paramount.