

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy – *full policy*

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When this document refers to related policies or documents, they are underlined.

1. Policy Statement and Introduction

Definitions

Safeguarding – concerned with looking after children and ensuring their wellbeing

Child Protection – concerned with protecting children from harm

Stakeholder – any adult involved with the education or care of students attending Alba English School

Child/Children – a person under the age of 18

Young Adult – those aged 16 or 17 years old.

Junior Students – those aged between 12 and 15 years old

Vulnerable Adult – a person 18 years and over who needs extra help due to mental, disability, illness or unable to take care of themselves. Alba English School also recognises that a student at an early stage of English acquisition or an adult who may be unfamiliar with a countries laws and customs as a Vulnerable Adult.

The School – Alba English School

Staff – All persons in paid work at Alba English School

Context – about Alba English School

Alba English School provides English language courses and accommodation to young adults and adults throughout the year (except over the Christmas/New Year period) and to junior students in the Summer Programme

(July/August) and to closed groups throughout the year. The vast majority of students are adults. A large proportion of the adult students are already integrated into the local community or arrange their own accommodation and after a period of time, become integrated into the local community. There are a very limited number of year-round children. There are a growing number of closed group or seasonal children.

The School is located at 86 Causewayside, Edinburgh, EH9 1PY.

Statement

The school recognises that it has a duty of care to all its students and especially those students under the age of 18. The policy is for all – everyone is entitled to be protected irrespective of race, gender, religion, class or sexuality. This duty of care extends to the school itself (at 86 Causewayside, Edinburgh), to any additional premises used and to accommodation provided. The school recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding the safety, welfare and well-being of students and minimising their risk from harm during classes, in the school, during social events/activities/excursions, in homestay or residential accommodation and, in the case of under 18s, in any free time out with scheduled activities. This Safeguarding Policy gives a guide and specifies procedures for employees, homestay families and any other adults responsible for or in close contact with Alba English students throughout their time as an Alba English student.

The School expects all Stakeholders to have read and understood this Safeguarding Policy, or a shortened version and to follow its procedures and guidelines.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

All Stakeholders have a duty to provide a safe and supportive environment for the students in their care and to report suspicions or allegations of abuse in accordance with the Child Protection Policy outlined below.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – the designated person

The School Director, Jenny McLay, is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and takes responsibility for Safeguarding Policy and implementation throughout the organisation. This includes Child Protection Policy and its implementation.

The role of Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) is included in this role and in the Child Protection Policy, is referred to as the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) role is to:

- ensure the School's Safeguarding Policy is up-to-date and compliant with currently legislation and good practice.
- have overall responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of Children and Vulnerable Adults attending the School
- make this policy known to all adults in contact with under 18s through their role with the School (including staff, sub-contractors, homestay hosts, group leaders and volunteers)
- provide guidance or training relevant to the effective implementation of this policy to all Stakeholders as well as guidance for the students themselves and their parents, guardians and agents.
- ensure all stakeholders are aware of how to respond to suspicions or allegations, including off-site teachers who will follow Safeguarding and Child Protection Guidelines for Off-site Teachers and Staff
- inform Edinburgh City Council Children & Families Social Care department of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person in contact with a Child or Vulnerable Adults. Tel: 0131 200 2327 (Children and Families Social Care Direct).

- ensure any incidents are recorded on an Child Protection Concerns or Disclosures/Allegations Report Form as appropriate
- ensure teachers and homestay hosts responsible for or with significant access to under 18s are members of the PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) Scheme
- review the School's Safeguarding Policy annually, taking into account feedback from all Stakeholders, Children and parents as well as changes in legislation and industry good practice
- ensure Children are aware of who they can contact in case of concern and how they can do this

Designated Safeguarding Staff Member (DS) – supporting role for the designated person

The Academic Manager, Hugh Black, is a Designated Safeguarding Staff Member (DS). The roles of a DS are to:

- support the DSL in delivering their role
- assume the roles of the DSL in their absence
- be a person that other staff can turn to for help and advice should a disclosure occur or a concern be raised
- serve as a secondary person who can refer a disclosure should the DSL be the subject of a disclosure
- serve as staff member who can support under 18s should two designated members of staff be require (e.g. in the case of the accuser and accused both being under 18s in our care)

3. Code of Conduct

The Alba Code of Conduct is applies to all Stakeholders and all students, not only those under the age of 18. All Stakeholders should be committed to treating children and adults with respect and dignity and helping to foster a supportive environment. **This Code of Conduct is to protect everyone.**

Everyone at Alba English should:

- understand the core British values of
 - democracy
 - the rule of law
 - individual liberty
 - respectful tolerance of different faiths or beliefsand that these values are important for maintaining a supportive, harmonious, free and tolerant society within the school and in the wider community.
- treat everyone equally and with respect, irrespective of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, personality or appearance. Abusive behaviour will not be tolerated.
- be respectful of cultural differences and other people's views and opinions.
- challenge any inappropriate behaviour such as rudeness, disrespect, abusive behaviour or language, offensive behaviour or extreme political or religious views which may deny rights to others and report any concerns to the School Director or school staff.
- use language appropriate those around you and challenge inappropriate language, especially in the presence of under 18s
- communicate in English whenever possible and ensure that no one feels excluded, isolated or upset.
- be respectful of the property of others
- never smoke in the school building
- know that any complaints or concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon and all feedback is welcome

Students should also:

- come to learn and have fun. Never behave in a way that stops others' learning or enjoyment – in or out of class
- come to class on time
- switch off your phone during lessons
- if a fire alarm sounds continuously, you must leave the building quickly. Follow instructions from staff.
- put your rubbish in the bins and wash up your cup

Stakeholders should also:

- lead by example and provide appropriate role models for the students, Children and Young Adults in their care or around them
- provide a supportive environment through encouragement and positivity
- avoid physical contact with Children which could be misinterpreted. Physical contact with Children is not normally acceptable except in special circumstances (such as if a Child is injured)
- avoid electronic contact with Children, such as on Social Media sites, except through the School's official accounts. (See Electronic Contact, Photography and Social Media Code of Conduct below)
- never make inappropriate or suggestive remarks to a Child, even in fun
- be aware that actions may be misconstrued, however well intentioned
- staff and homestay hosts need to be aware that they are in a 'position of trust' and any sexual activity with an under 18 is illegal (even though the age of consent is 16).
- staff and homestay hosts need to be aware of the Prevent strategy which aims to protect people from extremism. As part of the Prevent duty, Stakeholders should know and exemplify the core British values and use them to challenge any extremist statements.
- there is a duty to report actions that do not follow the Code of Conduct and all Stakeholders should report **any** concerns about any inappropriate or concerning behaviour to the Safeguarding Lead (Jenny McLay). Any reports and information will remain confidential and the person reporting will not be penalised in any way. If you aren't sure where to report something or not, **always** report it.

Staff should also:

- keep your possessions in a suitable place
- tidy up after yourself and wash up your cup before you leave
- not do anything that would put the school's reputation at risk
- wear clothing to engender respect. Clothing should not be dirty, scruffy, torn or revealing either whilst at school or when involved with social events, excursions or activities with the School
- never allow the drinking of alcohol or smoking of tobacco to those below the legal minimum for doing so. Failure to do this would lead to disciplinary action.
- avoid spending time alone with Children
- not socialise with Children outside of scheduled classes and activities

Homestay Hosts and Accommodation providers should also:

- never allow the drinking of alcohol or smoking of tobacco to those below the legal minimum for doing so
- ensure that Children and adults are given sufficient privacy when using the bathroom or when changing

- recognise that Children are far from home and may feel more vulnerable than usual or homesick
- help Children feel welcome and encourage them to feel at home
- discourage the use of inappropriate use of the internet such as by blocking the use of the internet overnight

Children and Young Adults should also:

- have respect for themselves and others around them, including all adults, Children and Young Adults
- read, understand, agree to and follow the rules in Safety and Behaviour – a guide for under 18s.

4. Electronic, Online and Media Code of Conduct

This policy relates to all Stakeholders and students, not only to those under the age of 18.

Electronic contact is defined as the communication or publication of information (including images) between two or more people using an electronic device. This may occur when using landline and mobile phones, other handheld electronic devices, gaming equipment and computers. Electronic contact may include voice communication, text communication, instant messaging, email, social networking sites, blogs, photos and videos.

- Staff must request permission from the Safeguarding Lead for any electronic contact, outside of the school's official email accounts, with a student before, during or after a course. The School accepts that exchanging phone numbers or using the School's WhatsApp account may be necessary for an excursion but social-networking on Facebook etc. and sending text messages to students is strictly prohibited out with the School's official accounts.
- in any electronic contact with students, staff must pay particular attention to use neutral, unemotive language that will not be misconstrued.
- mobile phone numbers of students taken for excursions must be deleted from records when no longer required.
- Stakeholders must not exchange any information with a Child that they would not be happy to share with the Child's parent or guardian.
- Stakeholders must not access or share any indecent or inappropriate material during working hours, on any school devices or internet services.
- Stakeholders and students must not access extremist material from the school. Accessing such material may result in dismissal for staff, students being asked to leave the school or in serious cases, reporting the matter to the police.
- Stakeholders must never access or share any indecent, offensive or inappropriate material in the presence of under 18s who are, ever have been or ever will be attending Alba English School.
- No one at may access inappropriate, offensive, indecent or extremist material on the internet at Alba English School or any premises hired by the school. The accessing of extremist or illegal material will be reported to the relevant authorities.
- Stakeholders should Cc the Safeguarding Lead (Jenny Mclay, jenny@albenglish.co.uk) into any email correspondence with under 18s – this keeps correspondence in a public sphere.

5. Accommodation Safeguarding

For Children, the school arranges homestay accommodation only. Some Children live with family members in the community or the family of the student arranges accommodation privately – out with the scope of the school.

The School is aware that homestays for children under the age of 16 have a limit of 28 days unless the homestay host is a registered foster carer.

The School recognises the greater freedom that can be afforded to Young Adults aged 16 or over and this is reflected in the Under 18s Summary of Care - a guide for parents and Safety and Behaviour – a guide for under 18s documents.

On enrolment, the parents/guardians of Children or their representatives are sent a Under 18s Summary of Care - a guide for parents, Safety and Behaviour – a guide for under 18s and a Parental Consent Form to ensure that there is awareness about and agreement with the supervision and freedoms that the Child will have during their time in our care.

To ensure homestay hosts provide a safe and secure place to stay for our students, we:

- follow safer recruitment procedures for all hosts
- inspect all potential hosts in advance and revisit them every 2 years or less
- maintain an open and positive dialogue with all hosts through regular emails and telephone conversations, encouraging them to give feedback and share concerns, complaints or worries
- give hosts and students clear guidelines on appropriate behaviour and manage hosts and the students expectations
- ensure that all hosts have read and agree to uphold our policies and procedures
- informing students of their host, and the travel arrangements to/from school, in advance as well as from the airport
- encourage students and/or their parents to contact the host in advance to introduce themselves and start to get to know their host
- ask for mobile phone numbers and emergency contact details in advance
- ask students and/or their parents for details of any allergies or special requirements, or the type of host preferred before placing them with a host family
- do our best to match students with hosts with similar interests or other factors that would make them a good match
- ensure students under the age of 16 are not placed with adult students (except where they are related and have requested to be placed together)
- ask for regular feedback from students about their host families, acting promptly to resolve issues and using feedback to inform future placements

6. Transportation Safeguarding

- When using taxi and coach companies to provide unaccompanied transport to Children, only fully licenced and insured companies with a written policy of using disclosed drivers will be used.
- If a member of staff uses their own vehicle, they must ensure that they have the appropriate insurance cover and not transport unaccompanied Children without disclosure.
- Stakeholders should avoid travelling alone in a vehicle with a Child.

Travel from the Airport

- Under 18s will be met at the airport by a Group Leader or school representative. This may be a taxi driver.
- Students are advised to travel with emergency contact numbers to hand and to come to the UK with a mobile phone that works in the UK.

7. Training

All members of staff who are have responsibility for or substantial access to Children will have a degree of Child Protection Training. All Stakeholders must read and have access to this Safeguarding Policy.

The School Director shall be the Safeguarding Lead (Jenny McLay) will have Level 3 training and make contact with Edinburgh City Council Children & Families Social Care department. The Safeguarding Lead has responsibility for training other members of staff.

The Academic Manager shall be a Designated Safeguarding Staff member (Hugh Black) and will have Level 2 training.

Any Staff with responsibility for or substantial access to under 18s should have Level 1 training.

Training will be updated every 3 years in line with the state sector.

On recruitment, if the new member of staff does not have the appropriate level of training, they must undertake this training at the earliest possible opportunity.

Training required is recorded on the School Policy and Student Welfare Record and scheduled by the Safeguarding Lead and training received is recorded on the Safer Recruitment Grid – single central record spreadsheet.

8. Safer Recruitment

Due attention and care to the well-being of children will be carefully considered when recruiting all English Teachers, Homestay Hosts and Activity Leaders working with Children. The School recognises that for adults with responsibility for or who have substantial access to Children, it is essential that steps are taken during the recruitment process to minimize the risk to children and ensure those working with Children are appropriate for the role. Disclosure and PVG membership will be sought for relevant staff and homestay hosts. A Safer Recruitment Grid – Single Central Record will be maintained to provide a single central record for Safeguarding checks for staff and homestay families working with Children.

Note: The School does not accept students under the age of 8. Therefore the disqualification by association (living at the same address as a disqualified person) is not relevant.

Recruitment Process

Teacher and Activity Leader Recruitment

The Job Description and Person Specifications which are sent to potential staff will include wording informing applicants for roles involving under 18s that their background will be checked.

Job Application Forms which are sent to potential staff will be accompanied by Job Application Declaration Form for applicants for roles involving under 18s asking them to confirm that they understand they will require disclosure, that they understand their references will be followed up, that they have no criminal record or pending court cases, that they understand their right to work in the UK, their identity and their qualifications will need to be verified and that there is no reason why they should not be considered a person suitable to work with children.

At **interview**, for candidates who wish to be considered for positions working with under 18s, Interview Questions will include questions designed to help ascertain whether the person is suitable for working with children. Some of the following questions may be included:

What attracted you to teaching? Do you have any experience of working with under 18s? In which context?

What do you think is important for the wellbeing of under 18s when coming to take an English course in the UK and what is the Teacher's/Activity Leader's role in supporting such students? Give examples of what you would consider appropriate and inappropriate staff behaviour around our students.

For a full list of possible interview questions, see [English Teacher Interview Questions – working with under 18s](#).

For adults **offered positions** with responsibility for or substantial access to under 18s the school will:

- follow up references provided with two [Reference Requests](#) sent to referees
- ensure that gaps in employment are satisfactorily explained.
- check the adult's identity and qualifications
- require a [disclosure certificate](#) and PVG scheme membership
- require a police [statement of good conduct](#) for teachers who have spent more than 3 months overseas in the past 5 years
- ensure this Safeguarding Policy is read and understood and that the staff member agrees to abide by its policies and procedures
- ensure the staff member has Level 1 safeguarding training before or soon after recruitment.

Homestay Family Recruitment

The [Homestay Registration Form](#) which is sent to potential homestay hosts will include wording informing applicants for roles involving under 18s that their background will be checked.

Homestay hosts wishing to accommodate students under the age of 18 will be required to complete the following declarations stating that

- they have been provided with a copy of and agree to adhere to the Alba English School's (Condensed) Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and understand their roles and responsibilities.
- that they have no criminal record or court case pending against them, and there is no reason why they should not be considered a person suitable to host children in their home.
- that they have no reason to believe that any person in my household is not a suitable person to live with children.
- that they understand that Alba English School will apply for a Disclosure Certificate and be registered with the PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) scheme. Only the main host is required to be registered with the PVG scheme.

Group Leader Recruitment

Group Leaders, whether recruited by Alba English School, by the Agent or by the students or their representatives, must have a police background check before they are allowed unsupervised access to children.

The Agent may send a copy of the police certificate to Alba English School for each group leader **or** sign a declaration that they have seen and taken a copy of a police certificate for each group leader.

On arrival all Group Leaders will be given the Condense Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and asked to sign the [Group Leader Agreement](#) declaring that:

- they are a fit and proper person to be allowed unrestricted access to students under the age of 18.
- they understand and agree to abide by the school's Safeguarding Policy.
- that they are aware of the school rules and level of care that has been shared with the students and parents.

9. Secure Handling, Use, Storage, Retention and Destruction of Disclosure Information

(Created with guidance and wording from Disclosure Scotland).

1. Introduction

The Code of Practice (referred to as “the Code” here) is published by Scottish Ministers under section 122 of Part V of The Police Act 1997 (“the 1997 Act”). The Code sets out obligations for registered bodies, counter signatories and other recipients of disclosure information issued under the 1997 Act and the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 (“the 2007 Act”).

2. General Principles

We comply with the Code and the 1997 and 2007 Acts regarding the handling, holding, storage, destruction and retention of disclosure information provided by Disclosure Scotland. We comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 (“the 1998 Act”). We will provide a copy of this policy to anyone who requests to see it.

3. Usage

We will use disclosure information only for the purpose for which it was requested and provided. Disclosure information will not be used or disclosed in a manner incompatible with that purpose. We will not share disclosure information with a third party unless the subject has given their written consent and has been made aware of the purpose of the sharing.

4. Handling

We recognise that, under section 1241 of the 1997 Act and sections 66 and 67 of the 2007 Act, it is a criminal offence to disclose disclosure information to any unauthorised person. Disclosure information is only shared with those authorised to see it in the course of their duties. We will not disclose information provided under subsection 113B(5)2 of the 1997 Act, namely information which is not included in the certificate, to the subject.

5. Access and Storage

We do not keep disclosure information on an individual's personnel file. It is kept securely, in lockable, non-portable storage containers. Access to storage units is strictly controlled and is limited to authorised named individuals, who are entitled to see such information in the course of their duties.

6. Retention

To comply with the 1998 Act, we do not keep disclosure information for longer than necessary. For the 1997 Act, this will be the date the relevant decision has been taken, allowing for the resolution of any disputes or complaints. For the 2007 Act, this will be the date an individual ceases to do regulated work for this organisation. We will not retain any paper or electronic image of the disclosure information. We will, however, record the date of issue, the individual's name, the disclosure type and the purpose for which it was requested, the unique reference number of the disclosure and details of our decision. The same conditions relating to secure storage and access apply irrespective of the period of retention.

7. Disposal

We will ensure that disclosure information is destroyed in a secure manner i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. We will ensure that disclosure information which is awaiting destruction will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. a waste bin or unlocked desk/cabinet).

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

Please see *Recruitment of Ex-Offenders* policy in [Recruitment Policy and Procedure](#) for further details. The policy here relates specifically to work with under 18s.

If a disclosure shows a job applicant, existing member of staff or homestay host has a criminal record the adult's suitability to work with or host children will be judged on a case by case basis. The fact that a person has a criminal record does not automatically make them unsuitable to work with children. In the first instance, we will discuss the conviction with the concerned person to verify that the information we written on the disclosure is correct and relates to them.

We will take into account only those offences which may be relevant to position or role in question. In deciding the relevance of convictions , we will carry out a consultation with the person concerned and involving 2 members of staff that will consider:

- the seriousness and nature of the offence(s). Anyone convicted of sexual, violent or drug offences will be prevented from having responsibility for or access to Children. This includes assault and violence against a person, affray, riot and violent disorder, aggravated criminal damage, arson, drink and drug induced driving, drug offences, robbery and sexual offences.
- the nature of their role
- when the offence(s) was/were committed
- how often/how many times the offence(s) were committed
- whether the offence(s) was/were concealed during recruitment
- the advice of Edinburgh City Council's Children and Families Department

After the consultation, a written record will be made with a rationale of the decision and the signatures of the concerned person and the two members of staff. Details of the convictions will not be recorded on this rationale. At all times, the safety and welfare of the Children in our care are paramount.

10. Welfare and Implementing Safeguarding

Risk Assessments

The purpose of carrying out Risk Assessments is to highlight potential areas of risk in order to produce risk reducing measures. These risk reducing measures will be read and understood by the person responsible for managing the given situation or leading the event.

Reviews of Risk Assessments aim to act as a prompt to consider alternative, safer ways of working.

Risk Assessments are carried out when:

- there is a new or changed social programme event, excursion, visit or any other activity involving Children
- there is new premises in use or significant change to an existing premises
- there is a concern about placing a student with a homestay family
- there is a concern about a member of staff working with Children

- there is a concern about a Child coming to student with us, such as Children with disabilities or existing emotional or behavioural difficulties

Risk Assessment reviews are carried out twice per year by the Safeguarding Lead and take into account feedback from Stakeholders. For events and excursions, staff record suggested changes to Risk Assessments after each event. Reviews of Risk Assessments are recorded on the School Policy and Student Welfare Record. Risk assessments for social events and visits shall be carried out by the Safeguarding Lead but the person responsible must read and sign to show they understand and accept their responsibilities.

Each risk assessment shall detail if and how the information is to be communicated to students.

Ratios

These ratios are for children over the age of 8 years.

Low risk activity (e.g. historical visits): 1 Activity Leader: 15 students

Higher risk activity (e.g. 12-13 year-old students at a very busy market, sports with significant risk of injury): 1 Activity Leader: 8 students

Ratios will be stated on the Risk Assessment for each course.

Missing Students

The Safety and Behaviour – a guide for under 18s will make it clear to students that it is essential that they come to all classes and that they come to classes on time.

Under 18 students who do not arrive in class in the first 15 minutes will be contacted by the school. In the first instance the school will attempt to contact the student themselves via phone. If they cannot be contacted, the school will try to find out their whereabouts by contacting their group leader, friends and/or homestay family. If the student is missing from the class all morning and still cannot be located, the police and the Child's parents will be informed.

Welfare Provision

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for student welfare. The Student Handbook gives a wealth of information to students and includes information on:

Location, Facilities and Essential Information
Courses
Starting at the School – books and enrolment
Booking classes and the student portal
Learning English – in and out of class
Testing and Levels
Certificates, Letters and Student Cards
Code of Conduct (contained in this Safeguarding Policy)
Safeguarding Policy (short version) with Prevent Strategy
Attendance and Lateness
English Only
Social Programme

Living in Edinburgh
Places of Worship
Accommodation
Working in Edinburgh
Visiting Edinburgh and Scotland
Emergencies
Health
Laws in Scotland
Complaints and Feedback
Refunds
Safety and Behaviour – a guide for Under 18s

After Accreditation, the following section shall be added:
Visas

The Student Handbook includes the Safety and Behaviour – a guide for Under 18s document which gives additional information and advice for under 18s, for example, on how they can access emergency medical care and the care of General Practitioners.

First Aid

First Aid boxes are kept on teaching premises and carried with Activity Leaders when on excursions. Parental Consent is required on enrolment which permits staff and homestay hosts to administer basic first aid. Parents are also asked whether basic pain relief (paracetamol, ibuprofen) can be given to their child without contacting them first.

Fire Safety

Please refer to the School's Fire Safety Policy and Procedures. In addition, staff must take extra care to check that the students have understood where to go and what to do in the event the fire alarm sounds.

Prevent Duty

Please refer to the Schools Prevent Policy.

11. Annual Reviews and Reports

The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and related documents will be reviewed annually, taking into account new and updated laws, regulations and best practice guidance. Records will be reviewed to look for patterns and to collate statistics. Stakeholders will be consulted and their feedback taken into account. A training audit will also be carried out. Reviews will be recorded on the School Policy and Student Welfare Record.

12. Related Policies and Documents List

General

Organisational Chart – roles and responsibilities

School Policy and Student Welfare Record.

Terms and Conditions

Risk Assessments

Recruitment

Recruitment Policy and Procedure

Application Forms

Job Application Declaration Form

PVG Application Forms

English Teacher Interview Questions

English Teacher Interview Questions – working with under 18s

Group Leader Agreement

Safer Recruitment Grid – Single Central Record

Welfare

Student Handbooks

Under 18s Summary of Care – guide for parents

Safety and Behaviour – a guide for under 18s

Parental Consent Form

Guidance for Host Families and their students

Complaints Procedure, Complaint Forms and Complaint Record

Child Protection Concerns or Disclosures/Allegations Report Form

Prevent Policy

Prevent Strategy - staff and host family need to know guide

Abusive and Unacceptable Behaviour Policy

Other versions of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Condensed Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy – for staff, group leaders and homestay hosts

Short Safeguarding Policy – for all (aimed at visitors, drivers, posters and students)

Safeguarding and Child Protection Guidelines – for Off-site Teachers and Staff

13. Child Protection Policy

To be shared with all Stakeholders. This Child Protection Policy is in line with Scottish Law and industry good practice as recommended by English UK. It pulls together GIRFEC principles, with a Named Person for every child and seeks to embody child protection good practice throughout the school.

This Child Protection Policy has been adapted from government advice under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 and text from the NSPCC website.

Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

The eight indicators of wellbeing (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included) have been taken into account when writing the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies. The policies and procedures that have been put in place encourage and promote those aims and is in line with the values and principles of GIRFEC:

- **Promoting the wellbeing of individual children and young people:** this is based on understanding how children and young people develop in their families and communities and addressing their needs at the earliest possible time
- **Keeping children and young people safe:** emotional and physical safety is fundamental and is wider than child protection
- **Putting the child at the centre:** children and young people should have their views listened to and they should be involved in decisions that affect them
- **Taking a whole child approach:** recognising that what is going on in one part of a child or young person's life can affect many other areas of his or her life
- **Building on strengths and promoting resilience:** using a child or young person's existing networks and support where possible
- **Promoting opportunities and valuing diversity:** children and young people should feel valued in all circumstances and practitioners should create opportunities to celebrate diversity
- **Providing additional help that is appropriate, proportionate and timely:** providing help as early as possible and considering short and long term needs
- **Supporting informed choice:** supporting children, young people and families in understanding what help is possible and what their choices may be
- **Working in partnership with families:** supporting, wherever possible, those who know the child or young person well, know what they need, what works well for them and what may not be helpful
- **Respecting confidentiality and sharing information:** seeking agreement to share information that is relevant and proportionate while safeguarding children and young people's right to confidentiality
- **Promoting the same values across all working relationships:** recognising respect, patience, honesty, reliability, resilience and integrity are qualities valued by children, young people, their families and colleagues
- **Making the most of bringing together each worker's expertise:** respecting the contribution of others and cooperating with them, recognising that sharing responsibility does not mean acting beyond a worker's competence or responsibilities

- **Coordinating help:** recognising that children, young people and their families need practitioners to work together, when appropriate, to provide the best possible help
- **Building a competent workforce to promote children and young people's wellbeing:** committed to continuing individual learning and development and improvement of inter-professional practice.

Named Person

The Named Person for all under 18s attending courses at Alba English School is Jenny McLay, School Director, Safeguarding Lead and Designated Child Protection Officer (DPCO).

Designated Staff

Child Protection Officer – the designated person

The Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) is Jenny McLay, School Director.

In the absence of the Designated Child Protection Officer, contact Hugh Black, Academic Manager and Designated Safeguarding Staff member (DSS).

Contact details:

During Business Hours	Outside Business Hours	In the absence of the Designated Child Protection Officer
Jenny McLay	Jenny McLay	Hugh Black
School Director, Child Protection Officer and Designated Safeguarding Lead	School Director, Child Protection Officer and Designated Safeguarding Lead	Academic Manager and Designated Safeguarding Staff member
jenny@albaenglish.co.uk	jenny@albaenglish.co.uk	hugh@albaenglish.co.uk
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Overview

The NSPCC defines abuse as:

Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child.

In addition to the four areas of abuse of physical, sexual, emotional and neglect, we must also be aware of and vigilant to guard against online abuse, bullying and child exploitation. Should a Stakeholder have any safeguarding concern, they should immediately inform the Child Protection Officer who will in turn, if appropriate, inform the local authorities. Concerns of an under 18 about another under 18 should also always be reported.

All Stakeholders have a statutory responsibility to immediately report all incidents and safeguarding concerns to the Child Protection Officer (Jenny McLay). A concern can be described as any incident, allegation, evidence, or suspicion of abuse.

Incidents that **must** be reported:

- a Child is accidentally hurt (which requires first aid or medical attention) by a Stakeholder or another Child

- a Child is involved in an accident
- a Child seems visibly upset or distressed
- a Child makes a disclosure of abuse about you
- a student appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- a student misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said or done
- you accidentally touch a student in a way that could be misinterpreted.

All reports will be dealt with in confidence and if appropriate, reported to the relevant local authority. You should not let other considerations, such as the fear of damaging relationships with adults get in the way of protecting children from abuse and neglect. If you think that referral to the local authority is necessary, you should view it as the beginning of a process of inquiry, not as an accusation

Understanding and Identifying Types of Abuse and Neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment – a person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. There are four main categories of abuse and neglect: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is deliberately hurting a child causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

It isn't accidental - children who are physically abused suffer violence such as being hit, kicked, poisoned, burned, slapped or having objects thrown at them. Shaking or hitting babies can cause non-accidental head injuries (NAHI). Sometimes parents or carers will make up or cause the symptoms of illness in their child, perhaps giving them medicine they don't need and making the child unwell – this is known as fabricated or induced illness (FII).

There's no excuse for physically abusing a child. It causes serious, and often long-lasting, harm – and in severe cases, death.

Signs:

Bumps and bruises don't necessarily mean a child is being physically abused – all children have accidents, trips and falls.

There's isn't one sign or symptom to look out for that will say a child is definitely being physically abused. But if a child often has injuries, there seems to be a pattern, or the explanation doesn't match the injury then this should be investigated.

Bruises

- commonly on the head but also on the ear or neck or soft areas - the abdomen, back and buttocks
- defensive wounds commonly on the forearm, upper arm, back of the leg, hands or feet
- clusters of bruises on the upper arm, outside of the thigh or on the body
- bruises with dots of blood under the skin
- a bruised scalp and swollen eyes from hair being pulled violently
- bruises in the shape of a hand or object.

Burns or scalds

- can be from hot liquids, hot objects, flames, chemicals or electricity
- on the hands, back, shoulders or buttocks; scalds may be on lower limbs, both arms and/or both legs
- a clear edge to the burn or scald
- sometimes in the shape of an implement for example, a circular cigarette burn
- multiple burns or scalds.

Bite marks

- usually oval or circular in shape
- visible wounds, indentations or bruising from individual teeth.

Fractures or broken bones

- fractures to the ribs or the leg bones in babies
- multiple fractures or breaks at different stages of healing

Scarring

- effects of poisoning such as vomiting, drowsiness or seizures
- respiratory problems from drowning, suffocation or poisoning

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the ongoing emotional maltreatment or emotional neglect of a child. It's sometimes called psychological abuse and can seriously damage a child's emotional health and development.

Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare or humiliate a child or isolating or ignoring them.

Children who are emotionally abused are usually suffering another type of abuse or neglect at the same time – but this isn't always the case.

Signs

There often aren't any obvious physical symptoms of emotional abuse or neglect but you may spot signs in a child's actions or emotions.

Changes in emotions are a normal part of growing up, so it can be really difficult to tell if a child is being emotionally abused.

Babies and pre-school children who are being emotionally abused or neglected may:

- be overly-affectionate towards strangers or people they haven't known for very long
- lack confidence or become wary or anxious
- not appear to have a close relationship with their parent, e.g. when being taken to or collected from nursery
- be aggressive or nasty towards other children and animals.

Older children may:

- use language, act in a way or know about things that you wouldn't expect them to know for their age
- struggle to control strong emotions or have extreme outbursts
- seem isolated from their parents
- lack social skills or have few, if any, friends

Sexual Abuse

A child is sexually abused when they are forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities.

This doesn't have to be physical contact and it can happen online.

Sometimes the child won't understand that what's happening to them is abuse.

They may not even understand that it's wrong.

Signs:

Children who are sexually abused may:

Stay away from certain people

- they might avoid being alone with people, such as family members or friends
- they could seem frightened of a person or reluctant to socialise with them.

Show sexual behaviour that's inappropriate for their age

- a child might become sexually active at a young age

- they might be promiscuous
- they could use sexual language or know information that you wouldn't expect them to

Have physical symptoms

- anal or vaginal soreness
- an unusual discharge
- sexually transmitted infection (STI)
- pregnancy

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status.

Children or young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online.

Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs.

Signs:

Sexual exploitation can be very difficult to identify. Warning signs can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour.

Young people who are being sexually exploited may:

- be involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- hang out with groups of older people, or antisocial groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- associate with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- get involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- spend time at places of concern, such as hotels or known brothels
- not know where they are, because they have been moved around the country
- go missing from home, care or education.

They may also show signs of sexual abuse or grooming.

Neglect

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and is the most common form of child abuse.

A child may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care.

A child may be put in danger or not protected from physical or emotional harm.

They may not get the love, care and attention they need from their parents.

A child who's neglected will often suffer from other abuse as well. Neglect is dangerous and can cause serious, long-term damage - even death.

Signs:

- Children who are living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe
- Children who are left hungry or dirty
- Children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter coat
- Children who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence
- Children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm
- Children who fail to receive basic health care
- Parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured

FGM (Female Genital Mutilation)

FGM is a non-medical, partial or total removal of external female genital organs, typically done to young girls from African countries. It is illegal in the UK if carried out here or if a UK resident is taken to another country to have the procedure done there. If it is discovered that FGM has occurred to a girl under 18 (through a disclosure, not physical examination) the police must be informed.

How to Respond to a Disclosure from a Child

Below follows guidance on how to respond. Notwithstanding any initial notes, a [Child Protection Concerns or Disclosures/Allegations Report Form](#) should be used when reporting a disclosure.

Guidance on Handling a Disclosure from a Child

What should you do if a child comes to you and tells you that they are being abused? It's normal to feel overwhelmed and confused in this situation. Child abuse is a difficult subject that can be hard to accept and even harder to talk about. Children who are abused are often threatened by the perpetrators to keep the abuse a secret. Thus, telling an adult takes a great amount of courage. Children have to grapple with a lot of issues, including the fear that no one will believe them. So, care must be taken to remain calm and to show support to the child throughout the disclosure phase. The following guidelines will help lessen the risk of causing more trauma to the child and/or compromising a criminal investigation during the disclosure phase.

1. Receive

Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief. A common reaction to news as unpleasant and shocking as child abuse is denial. However, if you display denial to a child, or show shock or disgust at what they are saying, the child may be afraid to continue and will shut down.

Accept what is being said without judgement.

Take it seriously.

2. Reassure

Reassure the child, but only so far as is honest and reliable. Don't make promises that you can't be sure to keep, e.g. "everything will be all right now". Reassure the child that they did nothing wrong and that you take what is said seriously.

Don't promise confidentiality – never agree to keep secrets. You have a duty to report your concerns.

Tell the child that you will need to tell some people, but only those whose job it is to protect children.

Acknowledge how difficult it must have been to talk. It takes a lot for a child to come forward about abuse.

3. React

Listen quietly, carefully and patiently. Do not assume anything – don't speculate or jump to conclusions.

Do not investigate, interrogate or decide if the child is telling the truth. Remember that an allegation of child abuse may lead to a criminal investigation, so don't do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation. Let the child explain to you in his or her own words what happened, but don't ask leading questions.

Do ask open questions like "Is there anything else that you want to tell me?"

Communicate with the child in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference. This is especially important for children with disabilities and for children whose preferred language is not English.

Do not ask the child to repeat what they have told you to another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to. Refer directly to the named child protection officer or designated person in your organisation (as set out in the organisation's child protection policy). [Designated person is Jenny McLay, School Director].

Do not discuss the case with anyone outside the child protection team.

4. Record and Report

Make some very brief notes at the time and write them up in detail as soon as possible using a Child Protection Concerns or Disclosures/Allegations Report Form.

Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by Court.

Record the date, time, place, words used by the child and how the child appeared to you – be specific. Record the actual words used; including any swear words or slang.

Record statements and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions – keep it factual.

Remember that this information is confidential and should not be discussed with anyone outside of the Child Protection team.

Report the disclosure to the Designated Child Protection Officer, (Jenny McLay) or a Designated Safeguarding Staff Member (Hugh Black).

Procedure after a Disclosure

1. The first action after any disclosure is to make sure the child is safe.
2. Senior management (Designated Child Protection Officer, (Jenny McLay) or a Designated Safeguarding Staff Member (Hugh Black) must be informed immediately.
3. If/when it is safe to do so, the child should return to their normal routine
4. The DCPO shall ensure that a clear written record has been made using the Child Protection Concerns or Disclosures/Allegations Report Form and that it has been signed and dated by the person making the allegation.
5. If the allegation involves the senior manager, another DSS member must be informed.
6. The DCPO or DSS must contact the local authorities for guidance and no decision will be made without referring to the local authorities. The following actions should be agreed:
 - Immediate action to protect the student
 - When and what parents should be told
 - What should be said to the adult facing the allegation and should he or she be suspended
7. Suspension is not automatic for the adult facing the allegation and will only be considered when children are at risk of serious harm or the concern is so serious it would result in immediate dismissal. Any adult facing the allegation must be provided with a named contact if they are suspended and be provided with adequate support from the school. If the person is suspended, they must be told the reason within one day.

The school will maintain confidentially and must not release the identity of the accused while there is an investigation in progress. Malicious, unfounded or unsubstantiated allegations must not be referred to when writing references.

If an allegation is unsubstantiated, unfounded or malicious, the school will support the member of staff on return to work, especially if they have been suspended

8. The school will follow the guidance of the local authority in all further actions.

Guidance on Reporting a Concern about Child

1. Details of the concern should be recorded as soon as possible. Include as much detail as possible including the time and place of any specific incidents and who was present.
2. The concern must be raised with the Child Protection Officer and full details recorded on the Child Protection Concerns or Disclosures/Allegations Report Form.
3. The report must be signed by or confirmed by the person who is raising the concern.
4. The Child Protection Officer will investigate the situation sensitively to ascertain whether there is a concern that needs to be referred or whether action needs to be taken. Responses shall be recorded and relevant people informed which could include group leaders, parents, agents, homestay families and other Stakeholders.
5. If in any doubt, the Child Protection Officer will contact the local authority for guidance and to assess whether a referral should be made.
6. The Child Protection Officer will continue to monitor the situation until no further action is required.
7. Records will be kept securely in a locked filing cabinet which is only accessible by the Safeguarding Lead or Designated Safeguarding Staff member for one year after the child concerned has finished his/her studies. During the annual Safeguarding Review, patterns will be looked for to inform decisions and future policies and procedures.

Accusations against Under 18s

If an under 18 is accused the school recognises that there is a duty to protect both the accuser and the accused. Any child accused of inappropriate behaviour or abuse will be allocated a senior member of staff to support them throughout the procedures outlined above. The parents/guardians of an accused child will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity.

Last updated 27th March 2016