



Child Protection Policy

Definitions of Terms

College: Ashville College, including the Boarding Houses, Pre-Prep, Junior and Senior Schools

Head, Headteacher, Headmaster: Headmaster of the College

Pupils, Students: Pupils who attend the College including boarders and pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Circulation: Whole School
(including support staff in regular contact with students
and senior boarding prefects)

Review Date: By September 2012



Ashville College

Child Protection Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Ashville College is a caring community based on Christian principles whose purpose is to enable each pupil to develop his/her full potential both individually and in society as a person of infinite worth to God. We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult aid prevention of abuse.
- 1.2 Ashville College recognises that all children have a right to protection from abuse. It takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people.

As such it is our responsibility to:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where our pupils feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- Ensure our pupils know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if worried or in difficulty;
- Include in our curriculum activities and opportunities which equip our students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and know whom to turn to;
- Help our pupils to develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life with regard to child care and parenting skills.

- 1.3 The following policy sets out guidelines for dealing with issues of Child Protection which might arise in Ashville College. In view of the potential seriousness of all issues of Child Protection the guidelines are mandatory for **all members of staff** (teaching and non-teaching) plus volunteers and must be rigidly adhered to.
- 1.4 The key figure in interpreting and implementing the guidelines is the school's Child Protection Co-ordinator who alone, always in consultation with the Headmaster or, in his absence, his nominated deputy, may initiate statutory procedures for dealing with suspected cases of child abuse.

NB. The Child Protection Co-ordinator for Ashville College is Mrs. E. Fisher (Deputy Head Pastoral) and her deputy is Mrs. C. Berrie (Head of Pre-Prep School), who will take responsibility for safeguarding children within the EYFS setting.

- 1.5 The Child Protection Policy is reviewed regularly to take account of revisions/deficiencies or weaknesses at local or national level and amendments are remedied without delay. To oversee this aspect of the running of the College the Governing Body reviews the policy and procedures as well as the efficiency with which the related duties are charged on an annual basis, and has a designated Governor who acts in a supporting role.
- 1.6 This policy has been prepared bearing in mind the guidance issued by North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board (NYSCB) as well as the guidance issued in the DfES's "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education". As Ashville College also has a Boarding element, then reference is made to the "National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools" (in particular, Standard 3). For the EYFS, reference is also made to "The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage", in particular paragraphs 3.8 and 3.9.

2. Definitions

2.1 Categories of Child Abuse

Child abuse may fall into four broad categories:

■ **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 feigns symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill-health to a child whom they are looking after.

■ **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve a consistent lack of love and affection, or continual verbal attacks, taunting and shouting. Children may seem sad, cry a lot, display apathetic or aggressive behaviour. They may lack confidence and have low self-esteem.

■ **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative 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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, 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.

2.2 People, or agencies, who may be involved include:

- The Child Protection Co-ordinator and her deputy (as above);
- The Headmaster or the Deputy;
- Children's Social Care, who, through the Duty Team, can provide a source of informal advice;
- NYSCB (North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board) who will help us to increase our knowledge and provide us with people with whom to discuss problems;
- The Police, who, through the Family Protection Unit, can provide a source of informal advice.

3. Recruitment

3.1 Ashville College follows the Government's recommendations for the safer recruitment and employment of staff who work with children. All members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at the College, including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff, and visiting staff, such as musicians and sports coaches, are checked with the Criminal Records Bureau before starting work. All Governors, volunteer helpers, contractors working regularly during term-time, such as contract catering staff, as well as adult members of the families of members of staff who live on site, are also vetted. Our policies are reviewed by Governors annually.

Further details of our recruitment practises can be obtained from the Human Resources Manager at the College.

3.2 The College makes contact with a number of outside agencies, in particular taxi drivers who transport boarders locally. Letters are sent to these organisations ascertaining that all staff, in particular taxi drivers

have a valid CRB check. Students and staff are advised to use only these organisations that are approved by the College.

4. Procedures

For all staff it is essential to follow a standard procedure in the event of concerns arising about a child protection issue.

4.1 A teacher who has a general concern about the welfare of a child **must OBSERVE, RECORD and DISCUSS** this concern with the following people:

- (i) In the ***Pre-Prep School*** - the ***Head of Pre-Prep***
- (ii) In the ***Junior School*** - the ***Head of Junior School***
- (iii) In the ***Senior School*** - the relevant ***Head of Year*** for day pupils, the ***Housemaster/mistress*** for boarding pupils or the ***Deputy Head Pastoral***, who will give advice on the best course of action.

BUT

4.2 In the circumstances where there are **clear indicators of Child Abuse** the teacher **must**

- **OBSERVE**
- **RECORD**
- **REPORT**

The **Report** must be made promptly by the concerned teacher to the ***Child Protection Co-ordinator***.

The principle is that any suspicions based on clear indicators **must** be reported as above, and not shelved at the initiative of the concerned teacher in any circumstances.

The **reporting teacher** should be absolutely clear in his/her own mind that in no circumstances is it his or her responsibility, or the schools', to investigate allegations or suspicions.

4.3 Referral to Outside Agencies

- (a) Once the Child Protection Co-ordinator has considered the report(s) received she must, in consultation with the Headmaster, decide whether all the evidence presented, together with her own observations, if appropriate, warrants immediate referral to Children's Social Care and the activation of Child Protection procedures. If she concludes that a referral should be made this must be done without delay and within 24 hours (either in writing or with written confirmation of a telephoned referral).
- (b) If the Child Protection Co-ordinator feels that the case is not clear cut she should seek informal advice from the Senior Education Social Worker by presenting the circumstances as a hypothetical case.
- (c) If all parties agree that no clear case has been revealed, the Head of Pre-Prep in the Pre-Prep School, the Head of Junior School in Junior School or the relevant Head of Year in Senior School should ensure that a watching brief is maintained to monitor the child's continuing welfare.

NB. It must be recognised that initiation of the full Child Protection Procedures by Children's Social Care is a serious matter and should only be requested by the Child Protection Co-ordinator in cases of the clearest need.

4.4 Parental Contact

Where parental contact is required it is the role of the Child Protection Co-ordinator, in consultation with the Headmaster, to take the necessary steps. The exception to this rule is where the school is advised against this by an outside agency, i.e. where the pupil or member of staff may be put at risk by such an approach.

4.5 Allegations Against Staff

Where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer working on behalf of the College then the matter should be overseen by the Head and the Child Protection Co-ordinator who will follow the normal procedures as defined in this policy. They will also notify the Chair of the Board of Governors as soon as possible of the situation.

Where the allegation is against the Child Protection Co-ordinator then the matter should be overseen by the Head and the Deputy Child Protection Co-ordinator, who will follow the normal procedures as defined in this policy.

In the case of an allegation against the Head then the matter should be overseen by the Child Protection Co-ordinator and the Chair of the Board of Governors who will follow the normal procedures as defined in this policy.

In the case of an allegation against a member of the residential boarding staff the Head and the Child Protection Co-ordinator will make an initial assessment about the safety of the children in the Boarding Community and will act to ensure their safety. If required, the member of staff will be moved off campus, and the normal procedures as defined in this policy will be followed.

Since the College is registered with Ofsted for our Boarding element and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), any allegation of serious harm or abuse by a person working, living or looking after children in that area of the College (whether committed on the premises or elsewhere) must be reported to Ofsted within 14 days, along with details of the action taken in respect of the allegation.

Ofsted Telephone: 0845 6014772

Where allegations are made the College adopts their Whistle-blowing Policy for the protection of those making allegations.

4.6 Allegations Involving Students

Where allegations involve students then the matter should be overseen by the Child Protection Co-ordinator and the appropriate member of the pastoral staff, who will follow the normal procedures as defined in this policy.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1** All parties involved in a possible Child Protection issue must recognise the primary importance of maintaining discretion and confidentiality at all stages of the procedures. However, all staff should understand that they must never give a promise “not to tell anyone” to a pupil confiding in them.
- 5.2** However, staff should recognise that dealing with a case of actual or suspected child abuse can be harrowing and that they, as a teacher or non-teaching member of staff, may need the support and help of others in coping with the involvement. Staff should not feel that this is a burden they have to carry alone. Further help should be sought if required from someone who can be relied upon to be discreet. Staff indicated in this statement will be able to help.
- 5.3** If a report is produced on computer under no circumstances should it be saved. One copy may be printed, dated and signed on the day and endorsed by the Child Protection Co-ordinator as the only copy. Alternatively it can be hand written.
- 5.4** Child Protection files must never be stored in the child’s education file – not even in a sealed envelope, but should be stored in a separate file along with other third party reports, e.g. Police reports, child protection notes, medical notes and Social Work reports. The Headmaster and the Child Protection Co-ordinator should know where such reports are stored.
- 5.5** Child Protection records containing the pure facts and not just feelings should be kept until the “pupil” has reached the age of 25.

6. Training

- 6.1** The Child Protection Co-ordinator and her deputy both undertake training with NYSCB every two years to ensure they are up-to-date with policy and procedures within this area, and supplement this with local area training for Independent Schools bi-annually.
- 6.2** To ensure safer recruitment practices are followed in the appointment of new staff to the College there are a number of staff who have completed certified courses in safer recruitment procedures. This included the Head, Deputy Head Pastoral, Senior Master, the Estates Manager, the Finance Bursar and the Catering Manager as well as a member of the Governing Body.
- 6.3** The Child Protection Co-ordinator and her deputy ensure that all new staff to the College undertake initial Child Protection training on arrival as well as arranging/delivering whole College training at least every three years. All resident boarding staff and the Boarding Liaison Governors are trained annually in aspects of Child Protection considering, in particular, issues relating to the Boarding Community.
- 6.4** Senior pupils who have been given posts of responsibility around the College, for example, Red Ties, Liaison Prefects and Boarding Prefects, receive Child Protection Training (with a focus on the appropriate action that should be taken if they receive allegations or have concerns about a fellow pupil) annually from the Child Protection Co-ordinator

7. Conclusion

Staff are asked to recognise that this policy is designed above all to protect the interests of the child, to support staff and to ensure that required action is taken as quickly as possible. As such they must be followed without exception by all staff who may become involved with a Child Protection issue.

Headmaster
September 2011

If anyone wishes to contact Children's Social Care at North Yorkshire County Council Children and Young People's Service directly, then they can do so through the Customer Services Team at the address below:

NYCC
Customer Services Team
County Hall
East Block
Northallerton
DL7 8AH

Telephone: 0845 034 9410