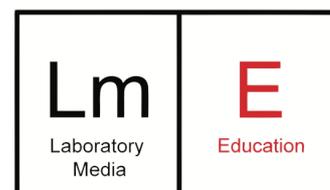


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**Initiated:** 1st March 2017  
**Reviewed:** 11th March 2022  
**Review Date:** 1st March 2024



## Child Protection Policy

LME's Child Protection Policy applies to all staff and volunteers working within the organisation and should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment Policy.

There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills required to keep them safe
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of abuse
- Supporting pupils who have been abused
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop

We recognise that because of our day to day contact with children, staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. LME will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to
- Ensure that children know that there are adults at LME that they can approach if they are worried
- Include opportunities outside of normal curriculum time for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse

We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) and take account of the guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE) to:

- Ensure we have designated staff for child protection who have received appropriate training and support for this role
- Ensure that every member of staff and volunteer knows the name of the designated staff for child protection
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuses and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated staff responsible for child protection
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on LME and staff for child protection
- Notify children's services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a student who is in the child protection register
- Ensure that all records are kept securely, separate from the main and case work files and in a locked location

- Develop and follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or a volunteer
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

LME recognises that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. LME may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at LME their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. LME will endeavour to support the student through:

- The content of the curriculum
- The project ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives students a sense of being valued
- The project behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable students in the project. Project workers will ensure that the student knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to blame for any abuse which has occurred
- Liaison with other agencies that support the student
- Ensuring that, when a student on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to their new environment immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

### **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

This Policy document is reviewed regularly by the school Principal (working with Teachers and Staff) and the School Governance Sub-Committee before being adopted by the Full Board of Trustees.

Reviews include assessment of the implementation and effectiveness of this policy, along with the review arrangements themselves.

## **ANNEX B – Child Protection Procedures & Information**

### **Immediate Action to Ensure Safety**

In some cases it may be necessary to take immediate action to safeguard children if serious concerns are raised. The designated Child Protection Officer/s will always be consulted if there are concerns about a child's health & wellbeing.

If a child is in immediate danger the police should be contacted (dial 999) as they alone have the power to remove a child immediately if protection is necessary, via their powers to use Police Protection.

It is vital that action to safeguard children from immediate danger is not delayed for any reason.

## **Recognition of Abuse or Neglect**

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

Physical Abuse - Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse - Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person.

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 (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, discussing sexual activity or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect - Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision

Individuals within the organisation must be alert to the potential abuse of children both within their families and also from other sources including abuse by members of the organisation, other children or other groups.

The organisation should know how to recognise and act upon indicators of abuse or potential abuse involving children and where there are concerns about a child's welfare. There is an expected responsibility for all members of the organisation to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with these procedures.

It is good practice to be as open and honest as possible with parents/carers about any concerns. However, you **MUST NOT** discuss your initial concerns with parents/carers in the following circumstances:

- Where Sexual Abuse or sexual exploitation is suspected (particularly if the abuse is suspected to originate from parents/carers)
- Where Organised or Multiple Abuse is suspected
- Where Fabricated or Induced illness (previously known as Munchausen Syndrome by proxy) is suspected

- In these instances you must immediately raise the issue with the senior management team and designated child protection officer. Raising these issues immediately with the parent/carer could place a child, yourself or others at immediate risk.
- These decisions should not be taken in isolation. Consult with your senior manager/line manager/designated child protection officer.

### **Responding to a disclosure**

It is recognised that a child may seek to share information about abuse or neglect, or talk spontaneously individually or in groups when you are present. In these situations **YOU MUST:**

- Listen carefully to the child. DO NOT directly question the child
- Give the child time and attention
- Allow the child to give a spontaneous account; do not stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the child's presentation as well as what was said. Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence.
- Use the child's own words where possible.
- Explain that you cannot promise **not** to speak to others about the information they have shared - do not offer false confidentiality.
- Reassure the child that:
  - They have done the right thing in telling you;
  - They have not done anything wrong;
- Tell the child what you are going to do next and explain that you will need to get help to keep him/her safe.
- NOT ask the child to repeat his or her account of events to anyone

### **Responding to concerns or suspicions**

There may be circumstances where children exhibit signs or indications of abuse. Also, because of your observations of children, or information received you may become concerned about a child who has not spoken to you. In these situations **YOU MUST:**

- Share your concerns with the designated child protection officer immediately and relay any pertinent information. A record should be kept of any concerns. Currently the organisation's child protection officer is: William Wilson
- If there are physical or obvious signs of abuse, enquire how these were caused. It is important that any questions are not leading and that the child is allowed to respond in their own time and under their own direction.
- The management team will make child protection their highest priority in the event of a disclosure or if concerns or suspicions are raised.

## **Consultation and partnership**

It may be necessary to inform or consult with other agencies in order to ensure the welfare of a child. You should consult the **Norfolk County Council Children's Services Dept** in the following circumstances;

- When you remain unsure (after internal consultation) as to whether child protection concerns exist
- When there is disagreement as to whether child protection concerns exist
- When you are unable to consult promptly or at all with your designated child protection officer/s
- When the concerns relate to any member of the organisation

Consultation is not the same as making a referral but should enable a decision to be made as to whether a referral to the appropriate agency is required.

## **Making a Referral**

This involves giving Children's Services or the Police information about concerns relating to an individual or family in order that enquiries can be undertaken by the appropriate agency followed by any necessary action.

Parents/carers should be informed if a referral is being made except in circumstances where concerns relate to those individuals. However, inability to inform parents for any reason should not prevent a referral being made. It would then become a joint decision with Children's Social Care about how and when the parents should be approached and by whom.

- If your concern is about harm or risk of harm from a family member or someone known to the child you should make a telephone referral to Children's Services
- If your concern is about harm or risk of harm from someone not known to the child or child's family, you should make a telephone referral directly to the Police and consult with the parents
- If your concern is about harm or risk of harm from an adult in a position of trust see above
- If your concern is that a child or family need additional help or support, you should raise the issue internally before contacting children's services

## **Information you should provide when making a referral**

Be prepared to give as much of the following information as possible (in emergency situations all of this information may not be available). Unavailability of some information should not stop you making a referral.

- Your name, telephone number, position and request the same of the person to whom you are speaking.
- Full name and address, telephone number of family, date of birth of child and siblings.
- Gender, ethnicity, first language, any special needs.

- Names, dates of birth and relationship of household members and any significant others.
- The names of professionals known to be involved with the child/ family e.g.: GP, Health Visitor, School.
- The nature of the concern; and foundation for the concern.
- An opinion on whether the child may need urgent action to make them safe.
- Your view of what appears to be the needs of the child and/or family.
- Whether the consent of a parent or guardian/carer with parental responsibility has been given to the referral being made

### **Action to be taken following a referral**

- Ensure that you keep an accurate record of your concern(s) made at the time, including
  - The name of the person you made the referral to
  - All of the information you provided when making the referral
- Put your concerns in writing to the Children's Services Dept. following the referral (Ensure this is done within 48 hours of the referral)
- Accurately record the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision

### **Allegations against Adults who work with Children**

If you have information which suggests an adult who works with children (in a paid or unpaid capacity) has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child
- Behaved towards a children in a way that indicated s/he is unsuitable to work with children

You should speak immediately with the designated child protection officer and a member of the senior management team. The senior management team, your line manager and the child protection officer will meet with you to discuss the concern.

Following this meeting a course of action will be agreed and the child protection officer will consult with/make a referral to Children's Services Dept. If one of those people is implicated in the concerns you should discuss your concerns directly with Children's Services Dept.

### **Confidentiality**

All records made in relation to referrals or child protection concerns will be treated as highly confidential and will be kept in a secured place.

Information in relation to child protection concerns should be shared on a 'need to know' basis. However, the sharing of information is vital to child protection and, therefore, the issue of confidentiality is secondary to a child's need for protection.