

Appendix 1: School-Specific Safeguarding Information and Procedures

Overview

This document sits alongside our full *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy*, which is fully in line with Warwickshire Safeguarding's procedures; it details the additional school-specific safeguarding systems and processes that we follow at *The Polesworth School*. In addition, this document outlines the key contextual issues that we take into account to ensure our students are fully safeguarded at all times.

The information detailed in this document is as follows:

- Safeguarding in the local community
- The DSL Team
- Site security
- Priorities - Intent and Implementation
- Priorities - Measuring impact/Review

Safeguarding in the local community

As Polesworth draws students from a number of more distant areas, many of our students arrive to school on school buses while others walk in or are transported by car. The local area is quite rural and there are few concerns raised about safety on the way to or from school; complaints regarding behaviour on buses when reported are dealt with rapidly by the school in liaison with parents and the Local Authority. The main concerns raised are when occasionally local service buses fail to stop for students and thus a group of students are late into school as a result. This is always followed up by the school, again in liaison with Warwickshire transport.

The school has a good relationship with the local community and safeguarding concerns are occasionally raised by members of the public which are followed up rapidly by the DSL Team in the school.

The DSL Team

There are seven members of the DSL Team at The Polesworth School. Their roles, responsibilities and locations are highlighted to all students at the start of every year, as well as to all staff members at induction and at least annually as part of annual safeguarding training. Regular reminders are also provided to all throughout the year. All visitors, including supply teachers, receive a leaflet upon arrival which details our safeguarding systems and approach and which identifies the DSL Team members, their location and what they must do if they are concerned about the welfare of a child.

The following poster is visible in every classroom, every office and on every corridor, as well as in rotation on every visual monitor around the school.

Safeguarding at Polesworth

- Do you feel unsafe either inside or outside of school?
- Do you feel you are in danger of harm – physically or emotionally?
- Are you worried about the safety of a friend?

If the answer to any of these questions is, “Yes” **tell someone.**

The staff shown here are trained to help you in these situations but if you would rather talk to another member of staff first, that’s fine too.

We are here to support you!

Mr Ford
Designated
Safeguarding Lead
Senior Deputy
Headteacher



Mr White
Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead
Assistant
Headteacher



Mr Crane
School
Behaviour Lead



Mrs Pickett
Safeguarding
Officer



Mrs Williams
Safeguarding
Officer



Mrs Grigg
Safeguarding
Officer



Need confidential support? Email us!

help@thepolesworthschool.com

Safeguarding children is everyone’s responsibility!

Reporting Concerns

Staff report safeguarding concerns about students by completing the green welfare concern form and emailing it, or giving it, to a member of the safeguarding team all of whom are all located in the Nethersole building. Forms must be handed in or emailed without delay. If the concern is relating to a member of staff or volunteer, a yellow concern about the behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer form should be completed and handed to the Headteacher without delay. Low level concerns should also be reported using this form.

Site Security

All doors in the school are key card controlled to ensure secure access throughout the day.

All staff and post 16 students wear school lanyards to confirm they are part of the school community. All visitors to the school must wear a lanyard to confirm they are permitted access. Pink lanyards identify visitors who must be escorted while lime-green lanyards are used to identify those who are DBS checked and are permitted to move around the school unescorted. Contractors for whom a lanyard might pose a health and safety risk are provided with pink or lime-green armbands. All visitors are challenged if they are not wearing a lanyard.

On very rare occasions a student may choose to leave school without permission; on these occasions parents are notified immediately and communication remains regular until the student is located and returned to site. Reasons for leaving site are always ascertained and plans are put in place to prevent repeat occurrences, including Risk Assessments where appropriate.

Priorities

The following are the school's key areas of focus for the forthcoming year:

- **Early Help Assessments** - Currently there are a high number of students receiving support through EHAs. The DSL regularly monitors the progress of students receiving support via EH with a focus on ensuring progress is rapid and if not, escalating those cases to attain greater support for the child via a referral to social care.
- **Mental Health need and capacity** - Following a steep rise in mental health ill health post lockdown, the school has appointed a full-time mental health professional in order to develop a whole school proactive approach to addressing mental health concerns as well as providing bespoke in school support for lower-level mental health needs. We will continue to embed the role of the new counsellor, supporting the raising of her profile and in the development of an action plan for mental health provision moving forward. The school is also continuing to engage with the Mental Health in Schools Team to ensure pro active work is undertaken with lower-level needs students to help address need before problems escalate.
- **Child on Child abuse** - In full acceptance of the Ofsted 2021 finding that child on child abuse happens in all schools even if unreported, the school continues its focus on a proactive approach to addressing this topic. The school ensures all members of the school community are regularly reminded of its zero-tolerance approach to child on child abuse and are clear on how the school deals with instances of abuse in terms of providing

support to those affected by it and in dealing with those who instigate it. The whole school ethos is designed around ensuring all students have at least one 'go to' person and that relationships are strong so that all students feel they can disclose knowing they will be fully supported and that the school's response will be rapid and effective.

- **Online safety** continues to be a key area of focus. The school uses 'Smoothwall', a Firewall software package, to **filter** internet content. This is run on a proxy in school. All internet traffic goes out through the school Smoothwall so is filtered and **monitored**. Students are limited by blocking lists which restrict content. However different levels of blocking can be applied to different year groups. This is done on a request basis, linked to curriculum needs. Students and staff who attempt to access a blocked site are informed by a Smoothwall screen message. User logins, user printing, user door access, internet access and inappropriate activity on PCs and laptops are all monitored and reported to the appropriate school leader if concerns arise. The safeguarding team receive regular reports from the Digital Safeguarding Team at Warwickshire County Council and meet with students who have attempted to visit blocked sites, searched for inappropriate content or used language that prompts a safeguarding response.
- **Response to bullying - Support for those experiencing prejudice and particularly LGBTQ students** - Bullying in general is a key focus for the school and particularly that of LGBTQ students. Ahead of the *KCSiE '22* guidance, the school had already put in place a regular support group for LGBTQ students and their friends and this is very well attended. Students are given a platform to share their views and to suggest change, and feedback from students with regard to the group is positive. The named member of staff who is available to provide support to, and be an advocate for, LGBTQ students is **Mr Barber** and he is based in Tomlinson Hall. Students can also email help@thepolesworthschool.com to seek support and those emails will be followed up within a working day and usually before that time on evenings, weekends and holidays. A safe space for LGBTQ students is available in Student Services and the school is looking to identify a further location in consultation with students over the Autumn term. The school has also appointed an Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Coordinator who has delivered training sessions to staff and educational sessions to students to promote our culture of inclusivity. These sessions promote our zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and harassment so that this is consistent across the school.
- **Other instances of bullying and prejudice** are also followed up by our pastoral team of Pastoral Support Officers, Heads of Year and our Pastoral Support Manager, all of whom work closely with the DSL Team to ensure those affected by prejudice feel fully supported and are not subject to reprisals. The school is developing its system of follow up to reports of bullying as a recent review identified that while bullying instances are rapidly addressed students do not consistently know the actions that take place as a result and follow up is not as thorough as it should be. This is a key focus and monitoring and evaluation is being enhanced to ensure the proactive work done with all those affected by bullying is transparent and emphasised with students having the opportunity to review the way in which bullying has been addressed, during and subsequent to that intervention.
- **Engagement with parents** following instances of bullying is also a focus for development and indeed increasing communication with parents regarding all aspects of safeguarding.

Using the school's newsletter to promote safeguarding and increasing our use of other forms of social media to publicise this information is a key focus. Developing other opportunities to communicate with parents in person to build relationships and support student mental health and wellbeing is also a focus for the school.

- **Attendance support** - The post pandemic impact on attendance has been an issue which reflects the national picture. All attendance intervention is in line with that outlined in the Attendance Policy, the Trust Attendance Strategy and the attendance section of the main Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, including the section entitled children Missing Education. The policies take into account recent national guidance for improving attendance.
- **Risk assessments for locations.** While the school has instigated Risk Assessments consistently for a number of years to help minimise safeguarding risks in school and on visits, the school is developing its analysis of location risk and its use of risk assessment to minimise risks of issues such as bullying and child on child abuse on school site. Regular reviews of bullying logs will occur, usually immediately following specific incidents, to analyse where instances of bullying are reported in specific locations and action any changes necessary to safeguard students more effectively. Recent investments into refurbishing and increasing staffing on student toilet areas has taken place as a direct response to student feedback following reports of some instances of poorer behaviour in these areas. Students' response to these changes has been very positive.