



THE FOREST FEDERATION  
SAFEGUARDING / CHILD PROTECTION

**Child Protection Officer: Mrs Charlene Gethin**

**RANGEMORE**

**Deputy child Protection Officer: Mrs Julie Smith**

**(FROM SEPTEMBER 2017 A NEW MEMBER OF STAFF WILL BE TRAINED.  
SECURESUPPORT FROM NEEDWOOD CPO AND NEEDWOOD STAFF IN THE INTERIM.**

**NEEDWOOD**

**Deputy child Protection Officer: Mrs Jane Maia**

**Deputy child Protection Officer: Mrs Kelly Ellis**

**Introduction**

The Forest Federation recognises its legal duty under s175 Education Act 2002 and the 1989 Children Act and takes seriously its responsibilities to protect and safeguard the interests of all pupils. This Forest Federation recognises that effective child protection work requires sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and a workforce that is competent and confident in responding to child protection situations.

These procedures aim to provide a framework which ensures that all practice in regard to safeguarding children is consistent with stated values and procedures that underpin all work with children and young people. Statutory guidance defines a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday

This policy has regard to the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015' (KCSIE) - updated September 2016. The Policy is in keeping with Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board's (SSCB) policies, procedures and their training strategy and reflects what Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board considers to be safe and professional practice in this context. Child Protection has to be considered within professionals' wider "safeguarding" responsibilities that include a duty to co-operate under the Children Act 2004 and takes account of the need for children to 'be healthy' and 'stay safe'.

This document also seeks to make the professional responsibilities clear to all staff (teaching and non-teaching, including temporary and supply), governors and volunteers, to ensure that statutory and other duties are met. All staff and volunteers need to have read and be familiar with this Policy, and our internal procedures around referral, including contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (referred to as DSL(s) in subsequent paragraphs).

This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body.

**Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children**

The definition for Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 is:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

## **Underpinning values**

Where there is a safeguarding issue, The Forest Federation will work in accordance with the principles outlined in the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board Inter-agency Child Protection procedures:

- A child's welfare is paramount. Each child has a right to be protected from harm and exploitation and to have their welfare safeguarded
- Each child is unique. Action taken by child welfare organisations should be child-centred, taking account of a child's cultural, ethnic and religious background, their gender, their sexual orientation, their individual ability and any special needs
- Children, parents and other carers should be made aware of their responsibilities and their rights, together with advice about the power of professionals to intervene in their family circumstances
- Parents will be advised about The Forest Federation Safeguarding Policy in the school prospectus and on admission to the school (e.g. in 'welcome' meetings). A copy of the Policy is available on the school's website.
- Individual family members must be involved in decisions affecting them. They must be treated with courtesy and respect and with due regard given to working with them in a spirit of partnership in safeguarding children's welfare. However, it may not be appropriate to advise parents/carers immediately about a referral depending on circumstances and the advice given by Children's Social Care. The welfare of the child is paramount in such situations
- Each child has a right to be consulted about actions taken by others on his/her behalf in an age appropriate way. The concerns of children and their families should be listened to and due consideration given to their understanding, wishes and feelings. However, it may not always be possible to respect a child/carer's request for confidentiality. If a child may be at risk of significant harm, there is a duty on The Forest Federation to share information with Children's Social Care. This will be explained to the child or family member and appropriate reassurance given.
- Personal information is usually confidential. It should only be shared with the permission of the individual concerned (and/or those with parental responsibility) **unless** the disclosure of confidential personal information is necessary in order to protect a child or promote their welfare (see also section on confidentiality below). In all circumstances, information must be confined to those people directly involved in the professional network of each individual child and on a strict "need to know" basis.
- Professionals should be aware of the effects of outside intervention upon children, upon family life and the impact and implications of what they say and do.
- Explanations by professionals to children, their families and other carers should be plainly stated and jargon-free. Unavoidable technical and professional terminology should be explained in simple terms
- Sound professional practice is based upon positive inter-agency collaboration, evidence-based research and effective supervision and evaluation
- Providing early support is an important principle of practice in inter-agency arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of children and enshrined in legislation and statutory guidance (Children's Act 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015)

## **Thresholds for Intervention:**

### **Early Support: Early Help Assessment**

Practitioners should complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA) when:

- Age appropriate progress is not being made and the causes are unclear or
- The support of more than one additional agency is needed to meet the child or young person's needs.

All staff receive EHA awareness training. Staff should discuss children who appear to have additional needs with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Early Help assessment lead (in our case both the Executive Headteacher) the child and parents. Our schools will need to obtain parental/pupil consent for an EHA to be completed. .

The Forest Federation EHA lead may need to make a referral directly to other agencies, or request the support of Staffordshire County Council Local Support Team (LST). Staff will follow the guidance of the SSCB Threshold Document - accessing the right help at the right time ([www.staffsscb.org.uk](http://www.staffsscb.org.uk) – procedure 1E). The Forest Federation will inform the LST Co-ordinator when an EHA is started, and when it is closed, irrespective of whether or not there is an LST worker involved with the family.

### **Child in Need - S17 of the Children Act 1989:**

A 'Child in Need' referral should be considered where the needs of the child are unlikely to be met under an EHA, such as a child with complex disabilities, when a social work led assessment is required.

Section 17 of the Children Act says that an assessment for services should be undertaken by the Local Authority in the following circumstances:

- Child(ren) are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development, without the provision of services by a local authority.
- Their health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired without the provision of such services.
- They are disabled.

If the DSL considers that the welfare concerns indicate that a 'Child in Need' referral is appropriate, he/she will speak with parents / young person and obtain their consent for referral to the First Response Team (FRT) or the appropriate social care team if a different authority, to request an assessment. If parents refuse to give consent, but the child's needs are not being met, the DSL will discuss the issues with the FRT.

Appropriate school staff should be invited to participate in Child in Need (CIN) meetings convened by Children's Social Care when children are deemed to require section 17 services.

Some children in 'acute need' (see SSCB Threshold guidance) may require Child in Need. This could include children who self-harm or disclose an intent to commit suicide (SSCB procedure 4U).

### **Child Protection (S47 Children Act 1989)**

S47 of the Children Act 1989 says the Local Authority has a statutory duty to investigate when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm due to the actions or inactions of others. Staff from this organisation do not investigate whether a child has been abused. This is the duty of Social workers from the Safeguarding team and the police. Education staff refer reasonable concerns which indicate that a child may be at risk of significant harm.

It is the 'significant harm' threshold that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A professional making a child protection referral under S.47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines the likelihood that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. It is not possible to rely on one absolute criterion when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the extent of the harm suffered, the context within which it occurred and its duration. Significant harm may also arise from a

combination of significant events which are both acute and long standing and which may impair the child's physical, psychological and social development.

In order to understand and evidence 'significant harm', it is necessary to consider the family context, together with the child's development within their wider social and cultural environment. It is also necessary to consider any special needs, e.g. medical condition, communication difficulties or disability that may affect the child's development and care within the family. The nature of harm, in terms of ill-treatment or failure to provide adequate care also needs consideration alongside the impact on the child's health and development.

**If staff have significant concerns about any child they must make them known to the Designated or Deputy DSLs without delay in accordance with reporting and recording procedures Concern forms are found in the staffroom and front office. These concerns may include:**

**Physical abuse:**

This 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 (*Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2015*).

**Emotional abuse:**

Is the persistent emotional maltreatment 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 insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including Cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone (*Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2015*).

**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 occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs (*Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2015*).

**Sexual abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The

activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing, They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children (*Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2015*).

### **Concerns about children who abuse other children**

Abuse is not always due to the actions of adults. Sometimes children abuse other children. Emotional abuse may involve serious bullying, including isolating a particular child, derogatory name calling and / or making threats, and may include online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones. Bullying behaviour can include physical assault. Children may also sexually abuse and exploit other children.

The Forest Federation works with children, parents and staff to create to an ethos of mutual respect and will robustly address concerns that children are suffering abuse due to the behaviour of other pupils. Pupils are encouraged to talk to staff if they have worries and concerns, and there are processes where they can report any problems confidentially and anonymously, children have a questions box, a suggestions box or can leave a note for a teacher. They are reminded of procedures regularly. Parents and carers are also encouraged to talk to staff if they have concerns, and should refer the matter to the DSLs in the setting if they feel that the matter is not being addressed or the situation is not improving. The Forest Federation will follow our bullying policy (found online) when this is appropriate to the circumstances, and follow the Behaviour and Discipline Policy should sanctions be necessary.

If the concerns are in respect to an allegation of a criminal nature, the school may share information with the police without reference to the parents, carers or the children e.g. physical assault, sexual assault, sexting (see e.safety section of policy below). In regards to allegations or concerns that a child has demonstrated harmful sexual behaviour, we will follow the SSCB procedure in this regard (procedure 4i) and also share information about the child or children involved with children's social care. In order to protect all children at the school, we may need to impose disciplinary sanctions in regards to a child who has harmed, or may pose a risk to, another child, or implement risk management procedures which may restrict movement of the child in our setting, or restrict activities.

If there are concerns that a child attending this school may have been seriously harmed, or at risk, due to the actions of children within the community, but not attending the school, we will share information appropriately with other agencies to safeguard and promote their welfare

### **Making referrals**

Where a child is registered at All Saints or Needwood, consultation must take place with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or our named deputy who will be the most appropriate person to initiate any referral. A written record of concerns should be made using the schools internal recording form. This should then be given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy if DSL unavailable) who will then make the decision whether a referral is needed to the First Response Team or the child's existing social worker. If the child lives in an authority outside of Staffordshire, the matter will be referred by the Designated Safeguarding Lead to the relevant Children's Social Care team in that area.

As per statutory government guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', anybody **can** make a referral. However, due to the role of the DSL this member of staff may be party to additional and pertinent information and therefore is best placed to do so. If it is not possible to speak to the Designated or Deputy DSL, or there would be an unwarranted delay by doing so, the member of

staff should contact the First Response Team to discuss concerns. In these circumstances, the DSL must be informed about the referral as soon as possible.

For referral to First Response phone 0800 1313126. The phone call will be followed up with written confirmation on the Multi-agency referral form (MARF) within 48 hours. The multi-agency form is available from the SSCB website (procedure 3B): [www.staffssc.org.uk](http://www.staffssc.org.uk)

## **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is an issue that needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of safeguarding children and child protection. This is a complex area and involves consideration of a number of pieces of legislation.

You can never guarantee confidentiality to a child as some kinds of information may need to be shared with others. A suggested form of words that may help when talking to children is as follows:

“I will keep our conversation confidential and agree with you what information I can share, unless you tell me something that will affect your personal safety or that is illegal, but I will tell you if I am going to pass information on and who to.”

Professionals can only work together to safeguard children if there is an exchange of relevant information between them. This has been recognised in principle by the courts. However, any disclosure of personal information to others, including children’s social care departments, must always have regard to both common and statute law.

Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (Data Protection Act 1998, European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8). However, the welfare of the child is paramount (The Children Act 1989) and there may be reasons for not sharing the concerns with the child, their parents or carers prior to making a referral to children’s social care. Information may also be shared without consent in order to prevent or detect a crime, prevent serious harm to a child or adult, or due to a public interest concern. The Forest Federation follow the information sharing guidance provided by the government and the SSCB in considering the sharing of personal information when there are safeguarding concerns.

The law also requires the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 statutory agencies have a duty to co-operate with the Local Authority if a child may be at risk of significant harm. Therefore, if the Police or Children’s Social Care are conducting a Section 47 investigation under the 1989 Children Act, staff must share requested information relevant to the investigation. Legal advice should be sought if in doubt from the County Legal Services Department

When children transfer to a new school or college at any time other than key transition points (e.g. move to primary or high school), it may be necessary to inform other partners. For example, a process is in place for informing the school nurse team in these circumstances.

## **Talking to and listening to children**

If a child chooses to disclose, you SHOULD:

- be accessible and receptive
- listen carefully and uncritically at the child’s pace
- take what is said seriously
- reassure the child that they are right to tell
- tell the child that you must pass this information on
- make a careful record of what was said.

You should NEVER:

- take photographs of injuries
- examine marks/ injuries solely to assess whether they may have been caused by abuse (there may be a need to give appropriate first aid)
- investigate or probe, aiming to prove or disprove possible abuse – never ask leading questions
- make promises to children about confidentiality or keeping ‘secrets’
- assume that someone else will take the necessary action
- jump to conclusions or react with shock, anger or horror
- speculate or accuse anybody
- confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved
- offer opinions about what is being said or about people allegedly involved
- forget to record what you have been told
- fail to pass the information on to the correct person
- ask a child to sign a written copy of the disclosure or a ‘statement’.

In regard to children with communication difficulties or those who use alternative/augmented communication systems, staff may need to take extra care to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are identified and interpreted correctly, but concerns should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children.

### **Record keeping**

Well kept records are essential in situations where it is suspected or believed that a child may be at risk from harm. This will include any unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect. In our Early years foundation stage (EYFS) staff will record existing injuries, staff will also aim to do this across the school and are always vigilant.

Records should:

- state who was present, time, date and place
- use the child’s words wherever possible
- be factual/state exactly what was said
- differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation
- be written in ink and signed by the recorder.

Records about child protection or pertaining to welfare concerns or issues, including EHA paperwork, will be retained securely and separately to the curriculum records of the child. If the child moves to another school or education setting, these records will be suitably redacted in regard to the identification of other children or adults and sent in a timely and secure manner to the DSL of the receiving school or college; we always aim to hand over in person from safeguarding lead to safeguarding lead, but in the event of distance or convenient time, recorded delivery is used.

### **Attendance at Child Protection Conferences**

The DSL or their deputy will be expected to attend the initial Child Protection Conference and Reviews, and provide a written report. Parents should be informed of what is in the report as there should be no surprises about the information shared at a Child Protection Conference.

If a child is made subject to a Child Protection Plan it may be more relevant for the class teacher or head of year to attend the subsequent core group meetings and they will be given appropriate support around safeguarding issues by the DSL.

## **Safer Recruitment**

When recruiting new members of staff, the Forest Federation follows the government guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2015 and safer recruitment principles, and has due regard to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

We note that in Section 3-The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements it states that providers **must** meet their responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and must consider how staff have access to this legislation and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Inductions and annual staff reminders, available documentation and agenda items ensure information is current.

Both Federation schools have an Early Years Foundation Stage consider how we meet this responsibility, taking into account the changes brought about by The Protection of Freedoms Act. The Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage Pg.19 – 3.15- states a registered provider or a childcare worker may also be disqualified because they live in the same household as another person who is disqualified).

The Forest Federation follow Staffordshire County council's recruitment and selection procedures in place (written procedures a requirement of KCSIE 2015) and ensures that enhanced DBS checks are undertaken in line with government guidance, that appropriate references are obtained, qualifications are verified, and that successful applicants for qualified teacher posts are checked against the 'prohibition of teachers' list. In accordance with regulations and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2015, the school retain a 'single central record' of when the appropriate checks are undertaken in regard to relevant staff.

Safer recruitment training has been undertaken by all senior members of staff and appropriate Governors who sit on recruitment panels in accordance with guidance and best practice principles

We always have at least one person on any appointment panel who undertaken safer recruitment training – The School Staffing Regulations (England) 2009). We always act in accordance with these regulations and often have 3 safer recruited members of staff on each panel.

## **Induction and Training**

All staff are encouraged to read the full government guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2015 and have been given a copy of part one of this guidance which they must read (as outlined in pg. 3 of 'KCSIE' 2015).

Newly appointed staff and volunteers have a robust induction into the safeguarding procedures when they join the Forest Federation. They will be made aware of the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board procedures ([www.staffsscb.org.uk](http://www.staffsscb.org.uk)) as part of that induction programme, and be given a copy of part one of 'keeping children safe in education' 2015, the Forest Federation's safeguarding policy and the staff code of conduct . (KCSIE statutory guidance 2015 states that governors will ensure that these policies are effective and are provided to all staff, including temporary and volunteers, on induction). Staff will also attend appropriate child protection / safeguarding training to enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect and respond in a timely and appropriate way, in accordance with the SSCB training strategy, within 6 months of joining the Forest Federation. The child protection and safeguarding training given to each member of the organisation will be refreshed and updated at least every three years. The DSL will retain records of all child protection and safeguarding training accessed by staff and volunteers.

The Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will attend Staffordshire Safeguarding Board Courses at Level Two and above at least every 2 years in order to maintain continuous professional development and comply with statutory guidance and the SSCB training strategy. The DSLs will cascade relevant safeguarding information and training to staff in the school and enable relevant staff to attend specific training events.

## **Professional support**

The Forest Federation recognises the importance of professional reflective support for staff when working with vulnerable children, particularly in relation to child protection cases. Arrangements are in place for the Designated Safeguarding Leads to have regular and scheduled professional support. The Designated Safeguarding Leads offer appropriate support to other staff within the school /college according to need or at their request.

Ensuring there is effective support and supervision for staff working with vulnerable children is highlighted In Working Together 2015 para 56. We offer peer supervision, staff discussion and pastoral support to support the Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Leads.

## **Providing a safe working culture**

The Forest Federation has implemented a staff code of conduct which applies to all permanent and temporary staff, and adult volunteers working in this organisation. Staff and volunteers are in a position of trust. All staff and volunteers must seek to minimise the risk of any situation arising in which children are put at risk, or misunderstandings about their behaviours towards children can occur or be perceived. Staff and volunteers must adhere to the staff code of conduct, are provided with a copy and follow the safer working practice guidance given by this organisation. Our staff code of conduct includes expectations about staff behaviours including outside of the working environment, staff/pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media. Any reason for staff to be having personal, social contact with pupils at the school must be explained to the Executive Headteacher with the rationale and any safeguarding actions required will be recorded.

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is a criminal offence for anyone working in an education setting to have a sexual relationship with a pupil or student, even when the pupil/student is over the age of consent but under 18 years of age.

Staff are advised to use the following sensible precautions when working alone with children:

- Avoid working in isolation with children unless thought has been given to safeguards
- work in a room where there is a glass panel in the door or leave the door open
- Make sure that other adults visit the room occasionally
- Do not give pupils lifts home in your car (unless this has been specifically agreed by senior management)

Any use of physical force or restraint involving pupils/students will be carried out and documented in accordance with the relevant physical intervention policy in the school office and online. If it is necessary to use physical intervention (for example to prevent the child hurting themselves or others), parents will be informed, a form is to be completed (in the staffroom and front office). Children who attend our setting will not be punished by any form of hitting, slapping, shaking or other degrading treatment, including verbal abuse.

Governors at our schools recognise their responsibility to remain vigilant and ensure that all staff and volunteers are, and remain, suitable to work with children.

Whilst we only have an Early Years unit from age 4 up for children of school age, we ask all adults who work in or access our early years setting are required to inform the Executive Head teacher if they have, or during the course of their employment, are convicted for a relevant offence which disqualifies them from working with children. They must also inform the Executive Head teacher if they live in the same household as a person who is, or becomes, disqualified because they have committed a relevant offence against a child or adult. In such cases the worker is required to seek a waiver from Ofsted to allow them to continue to work with this cohort of children. Whilst the application for a waiver is being considered by Ofsted, the school /college will take appropriate measures in regards to staffing, which may include re-deployment or suspension.

(In addition, irrespective of the age group worked with), any staff member, volunteer or governor who becomes the subject of a police investigation in relation to physical or sexual offences against adults or children, or are charged with such a criminal offence, must inform the Executive Head teacher. Staff must disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children whether received before, or during, their employment at the school. (This would not include 'spent' convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act). The Executive Headteacher will discuss any potential safeguarding matters with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and any required action will be agreed.

Any staff member, volunteer or governor whose own children become subject to child protection investigations must inform the Executive Headteacher. The Executive Headteacher will discuss with the LADO in accordance with SSCB procedures for dealing with allegations against adults who work in a position of trust with children (SSCB procedure 4a). Appropriate action will be agreed.

Staff have a professional duty to report concerns about the conduct of other adults working in our schools if there are indications that a child or children could be at risk of harm. Adults working at the Forest Federation are encouraged to raise any concerns about conduct or practice so that this can be addressed appropriately. Allegations of abuse made against adults working at the Forest Federation, whether historical or current, should be reported to the head teacher (or, if the allegation is against the head teacher, it should be reported to the Chair of Governors). Adults working in the school are also able to follow the 'Whistle Blowing Policy' if they feel unable to follow standard procedures relating to an allegation against staff. This can be found online or in the school's front offices. Staff raising genuine concerns, even if, on investigation, these concerns are not substantiated, will be supported by the senior leadership team, and their employment protected.

Staff who fail to follow the school / college policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children may be subject to disciplinary procedures.

### **Allegations of abuse against a person working in a position of trust**

Children can be the victims of abuse by those who work with them in any setting. All allegations of abuse of children in relation to any staff member or volunteer is therefore taken seriously.

In line with government guidance and SSCB procedures, the Head Teacher/ Chair of Governors will contact a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to discuss the allegation if the concerns are that an adult in a position of trust has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children(*Keeping Children Safe in Education April 2015*)

This initial discussion will establish the validity of any allegation under SSCB procedures ([www.staffsscb.org.uk](http://www.staffsscb.org.uk) procedure 4A) and if child protection enquiries may be required due to a child having possibly suffered, or being at risk of suffering, 'significant harm'. If this is the case a referral will be raised with the relevant social care safeguarding team and a section 47 child protection strategy meeting will be convened that the head teacher/ Chair of Governors will attend.

If an individual child is not identified but there are concerns about the behaviour of a person in a position of trust which require consideration by other agencies or organisations, the LADO will convene a Position of Trust Meeting (POT) to consider the issues and any action required.

The fact that a member of staff offers to resign will not prevent the allegation procedure and any necessary disciplinary action reaching a conclusion.

The decision of the strategy/Joint evaluation meeting could be:

- investigation by children's social care
- police investigation if there is a criminal element to the allegation
- single agency investigation completed by the school which should involve the senior HR advisor for the school.

If the matter does not meet the threshold for intervention by other agencies, but concerns remain about the conduct of a person in position of trust working with children, our school's will undertake investigatory and, if appropriate, disciplinary action. Referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will be made by the school when necessary in line with current guidance.

## **Specific Safeguarding Issues**

### **Identifying cases of female genital mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage**

Any indications that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or Forced Marriage are imminent, or have already taken place, will be dealt with under the child protection procedures outlined in this policy. In support of this provision, we will do everything that we can to ensure that:

- The Forest Federation schools are an 'open environment', where students feel able to discuss issues that they may be facing
- the Designated Safeguarding Leads have a good understanding of the issues surrounding FGM and Forced Marriage and access relevant training
- advice and signposting is available for accessing additional help, e.g. the NSPCC's helpline, ChildLine services, Forced Marriage Unit
- awareness raising about FGM is incorporated in the Forest Federation safeguarding training so that all staff and volunteers are able to identify indicators.

If there is a disclosure of abuse of this kind, or staff are concerned for any other reason, they are advised:

- to alert the DSL to their concerns. This member of staff will then refer concerns to children's social care, who will inform the police if they need assistance. If a pupil has disclosed that they are at risk in this way, the case will still be referred to social care even if it is against the pupil's wishes.
- **not** to consult or discuss with the pupil's parents or family, or others within the community.

## **E-Safety**

The growth of different electronic media in everyday life and an ever developing variety of devices including PC's, tablets, laptops, mobile phones, webcams, gaming consoles etc. place an additional risk on our children.

Internet chat rooms, discussion forums or social networks can all be used as a means of contacting children and young people with a view to grooming them for inappropriate or abusive relationships. The anonymity of the internet allows adults, often pretending to be children, to have conversations with children and in some cases arranging to meet them.

Access to abusive images is not a 'victimless' act as it has already involved the abuse of children. The internet has become a significant tool in the distribution of indecent photographs of children and should be a concern to all those working with pupils in the Forest Federation.

Pupils can engage in or be a target of cyberbullying using a range of methods including text and instant messaging to reach their target. Mobile phones are also used to capture violent assaults of other children for circulation (happy slapping), or distributing indecent images of children (e.g. sexting).

The Forest Federation utilise the curriculum (particularly PSHE, and sex and relationship education) to raise awareness of safeguarding issues so that children are able to recognise the indicators of, for example, grooming behaviours, so that the risks of being drawn into sexual exploitation, or being subjected to abuse, are minimised.

Further, in order to help protect our pupils

- Software is in place to minimise access and to highlight any one accessing inappropriate sites or information
- Pupils are encouraged to discuss openly their use of technology and anything which makes them feel uncomfortable. (If this results in child protection concerns the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed immediately)
- Pupils / students should not give out their personal details, phone numbers, schools, home address, computer passwords etc.
- Pupils and staff should adhere to the school policy on mobile phones.

The police will be involved if there is any criminal element to misuse of the internet, phones or any other form of electronic media.

Storage of Mobile Phone, Images of children (Early Years Framework 2014). Mobile phones belonging to EYFS staff are secured in the unit cupboard. Any visitors to the unit have their telephones locked in the school safe after being collected by office staff, or are secured in bags in the main office. School staff have their mobile telephones in staff cupboards, they are aware that they are not to be used in school other than designated areas (see induction booklet).

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

Sexual exploitation of children involves situations where young people receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common.

Children do not become entrenched in CSE without first being subjected to targeted grooming or opportunistic abuse. Systemic sexual abuse is the final stage in a process. The Forest Federation recognises that pupils may be targeted for sexual exploitation, and staff will be vigilant for the indicators and report concerns to the DSL. All staff receive awareness training about CSE. The DSL is conversant with the SSCB procedure (4H) and will share information with parents and carers, and the police and social care in appropriate circumstances. We will work with other agencies on plans to protect children who are deemed to be at risk of exploitation.

The Forest Federation believes that children need to understand how perpetrators groom children for exploitation. We will use appropriate resources in a sensitive and responsible way to educate young people about grooming behaviours, the risk of being drawn into exploitation, possible consequences, and ways of protecting themselves from the risk of sexual exploitation.

### **Children missing education (CME)**

The Forest Federation is aware of, and implements in full, the requirements of the statutory guidance for children and young people who are missing from home and/or from education. Local procedures for notifying the local authority and parents are available, understood and followed. Comprehensive records are held and shared between the relevant agencies to help and protect children.

### **Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation**

(Using SCC March 2015 amended document) Policy updated **June 2016 June 2017**

As part of our safeguarding ethos we encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in the school and where political issues are brought to the attention of the pupils; reasonably practicable steps have been taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views to pupils. We also have a duty under the Counter Terrorism Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by pupils or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Behaviour and Discipline Policy for pupils or the Staff Code of Conduct. We will share information with the First Response Team and/ or the Staffordshire police Prevent team when appropriate. We will also work with Staffordshire's Channel Panel in relevant circumstances. Channel is a key element of the Prevent Strategy. It is a multi-agency approach to protect people at risk of radicalisation. Channel uses existing collaboration between local authorities, statutory partners, the police and the local community to identify individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, assess the nature and extent of that risk and develop the most appropriate support for the individuals concerned.

All staff have received awareness raising and training in regard to preventing extremism and radicalisation.

### **Resources**

Section 175 /157 of the Education Act 2002 puts an explicit duty on governing bodies to ensure their functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils. The governing body will therefore ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable the necessary tasks to be carried out properly under Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board procedures including attending meetings, collating and writing assessment reports, and staff training. The governing body will also ensure that all Governors have an understanding of safeguarding issues and the policies and procedures that are in place in school to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils in the school. Safeguarding awareness will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate to ensure all the pupils understand what is meant by safeguarding and how they can be safe.

### **Key documents referred to and underpinning this policy are:**

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 (DfE)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children>
- Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board Procedures (online)  
[www.staffsscb.org.uk/professionals/procedures/](http://www.staffsscb.org.uk/professionals/procedures/)
- Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board Training Catalogue (online)  
[www.staffsscb.org.uk/professionals/Inter-Agencytraining/events/](http://www.staffsscb.org.uk/professionals/Inter-Agencytraining/events/)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education April 2015 (DFE)  
[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/300309/KCSIE\\_gdn ce\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/300309/KCSIE_gdn ce_FINAL.pdf)
- Disqualification under the Child Care Act 2006  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006>
- Information Sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services HM Gov 2015  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>
- Staffordshire Policy and guidance on the use of Restrictive Physical Interventions (including restraint) in mainstream schools
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Education Act 2002
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – March 2015 - advice for practitioners (HM Gov) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused>

- The Forest Federation Whistle Blowing policy – school website and offices.
- Staffordshire e-safety Tool Kit
- Children Missing from Education Policy  
[www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/welfareservice/missing/CME-Referral/Children-Missing-Education-Policy.pdf](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/welfareservice/missing/CME-Referral/Children-Missing-Education-Policy.pdf)
- Early Years Statutory Framework  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335504/EYFS\\_framework\\_from\\_1\\_September\\_2014\\_with\\_clarification\\_note.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335504/EYFS_framework_from_1_September_2014_with_clarification_note.pdf)

### Links with other school policies

This policy document should also be considered within the context of other policies and documents relating to our work with children and young people.

Drug education  
SRE education  
The PSHE curriculum.  
Early Years policy  
Induction pack  
Whistle blowing policy  
Preventing extremism  
safer recruitment,  
intimate care,  
behaviour and attendance,  
physical intervention,  
Reference should be made to the PSHE curriculum.

**The Chair of Governors is:** Selena Tye

ADOPTED BY GOVERNORS ON; 29<sup>th</sup> June 2015

REVIEW 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017

Further advice on Safeguarding matters can also be obtained from:

Further advice on Safeguarding matters can also be obtained from:  
First Response Team including LADO advice: 0800 1313126.  
Emergency Duty Team (for out of office hours referrals for children) : 0845 6042886.  
Staffordshire Prevent Team  
Tel: 01785 238239 or 01785 233109  
Email: [prevent@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:prevent@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk)

LST 6

Staffordshire County Council - Education Safeguarding Advice Service 01785 895836;  
Email [esas@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:esas@staffordshire.gov.uk)  
Website [Staffordshire Education Safeguarding Advice](#)