New Forest Language School

Where English doesn't stop in the classroom!

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

New Forest Language School believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people. We seek to maintain a safe and supportive environment and all employees and volunteers involved with New Forest Language School accept and recognise these responsibilities.

The Purpose of this policy is:

- to provide protection for the children and young people who receive New Forest Language School's services,
- to provide staff, host families and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm,
- to avoid making ourselves vulnerable to suspicion of any form of abuse.

This policy applies to all staff, including directors, volunteers and all members of host families working or volunteering on behalf of New Forest Language School.

We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- ensuring that all applicants who work within New Forest Language School, whether paid or voluntary, are interviewed and asked to provide at least one reference. All such references will be followed up,
- carrying out Criminal Records Bureau checks on all personnel and volunteers, including all members of Host Families over the age of 16. It will be made clear to applicants that the work, either paid or voluntary, involves working with children and is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. New Forest Language School excludes known abusers,
- ensuring that all personnel and volunteers are registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) when this comes into effect,
- ensuring that all appointments both paid and voluntary are subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless New Forest Language School is confident, and relevant CRB checks are proven, that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children,
- ensuring that staff and volunteers are given training opportunities to ensure that they recognise the symptoms of possible abuse (physical, sexual, emotional and neglect) and how they should respond to suspicions of abuse,
- adopting Safeguarding Children guidelines and accepted procedures including a Code of Conduct for staff, volunteers and host families,
- providing children with expected codes of behaviour and ensuring that they understand what those are, especially bullying,
- sharing information and acting promptly and professionally to any concerns.

We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice on an annual basis. In the event of a child suspected of being at risk, there is a designated Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator within the New Forest Language School setting.

Acts

This policy has been formulated in accordance with the provisions of:

- The Children Act 1989
- Human Rights Act 1989
- Data Protection Act 1989
- The Protection of Children Act 1999

Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator's Duties:

- to be familiar with the Safeguarding Children Policy and the procedures followed by New Forest Language School,
- to obtain appropriate training on Safeguarding Children,
- to have responsibility for safeguarding children within New Forest Language School,
- to inform and train all members of staff and volunteers in the procedures to follow with regards to the safeguarding of children and welfare issues,
- to inform and train staff and volunteers on how to respond to suspicions or allegations against a child or young person or against themselves,
- to inform the Police of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living or working with, or looking after children.

New Forest Language School Staff, Host Family and Volunteer Duties:

- to be familiar with New Forest Language School's policies and procedures as set out in the Safeguarding Children Training Manual and the Code of Conduct,
- to protect themselves from allegations of abuse by following New Forest Language School procedures.

Child Abuse

Child Abuse is most often used to describe ways in which children are harmed with damage to their physical or mental health. There are 4 broad categories of abuse as follows:

- physical: through hitting, shaking, squeezing, kicking, punching etc.
- sexual: through inappropriate physical contact, the taking of indecent images of children, or the encouragement of sexual activity by children for the purpose of adult gratification.
- emotional: through persistent lack of affection, unrealistic adult demands, verbal bullying including cyber-bullying.
- neglect: persistent lack of appropriate care of children, including safety, nourishment, warmth, education and medical attention.

Identifying child abuse

It can be difficult to identify child abuse as it has various forms. Below are some typical indicators to watch for:

- unexplained injuries,
- a child describing an abusive act that has happened to them,
- another child telling you of their concern about a friend / fellow student,
- sexually explicit behaviour in games / activities,
- serious distrust of adults,
- difficulty in making friends / socialising with other children.

A full description of what constitutes child abuse and how to recognise it is given in New Forest Language School's Safeguarding Children Training Manual and all staff and volunteers are expected to familiarise themselves with this.

How to react if you suspect child abuse

- remain calm, accessible and receptive,
- listen carefully without interrupting,
- communicate with the child in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference – this is especially important for disabled children and for children whose preferred language is not English,
- be aware of the non-verbal messages you are giving,
- make it clear that you are taking them seriously,
- acknowledge their courage and reassure them that they are right to tell,
- reassure them that they should not feel guilty
- let them know that you are going to do everything you can to help them and what may happen as a result,
- do not promise to keep the information a secret.

Procedure to follow if abuse is suspected

- inform the New Forest Language School Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator if you notice any significant physical and behavioural changes,
- if you suspect that an adult is a threat to a child in some way inform the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator and continue to monitor the situation,
- if a child makes any comment that gives cause for concern or there is any deterioration in the child's general well being, react calmly as described in the guidelines above and inform the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator,
- make a note of what was said and who was present and report this information immediately to the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator,
- contact numbers can be found in the Safeguarding Children Training Manual.

The Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator will take appropriate actions which may involve external agencies and contacting parents/guardians.

Safe Working practices for Staff and Host Families

All members of staff, volunteers and host families should ensure that they avoid making ourselves vulnerable to suspicion of any form of abuse by following the guidelines and procedures set out in New Forest Language School's Code of Conduct.

Procedure to follow if staff or volunteers are accused of abuse

- if a member of staff, member of a host family or volunteer is accused of any form of child abuse, such suspicions will be reported to the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator,
- the person against whom the allegation is made will be informed of the allegation and interviewed immediately. Following the interview, if there is any potential substance to the allegation, they will be suspended from their duties pending further investigation,
- confidential records will be kept of the allegation and all subsequent proceedings,
- unfounded allegations will result in all rights being re-instated. Founded allegations will be passed on to the police and will result in a termination of employment/voluntary services. New Forest Language School will also inform the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) to ensure their records are correct.

Confidentiality
New Forest Language School endeavours to uphold the confidentiality of children, parents/guardians, staff and volunteers at all times. This will be achieved by:

- storing confidential information in a locked filing system at the company registered office,
- information about children, staff, volunteers and families only being shared on a need to know basis.

The Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator is Kate Pursglove.

Kate Pursglove
New Forest Language School

Dec 2010