



**Huntington
Community Primary School**

**Allegations of Abuse against Staff
2022**

Extract from Safeguarding Policy (2021)

12 Safe Staff

Checks will be undertaken corresponding to Safer Recruitment procedures on all adults working in the school to establish their suitability to work with children.

All school staff will take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted with or in view of other adults.

If an allegation is made against another member of staff, supply staff or volunteer, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Head Teacher or the most senior teacher if the Head Teacher is not present. The Head Teacher or most senior teacher will then consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (DO).

Allegations against the Head Teacher are reported to the Chair and referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (DO) via the DO referral form, found at: <https://www.cheshirewestscp.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/allegations-referral-form-lado.doc>

The Head Teacher can be contacted via head@huntington.cheshire.sch.uk
The Chair of Governors can be contacted via chair@huntington.cheshire.sch.uk

13 Conduct of Staff

"Absolutely without fail - challenge poor practice or performance. If you ignore or collude with poor practice it makes it harder to sound the alarm when things go wrong"

"Sounding the Alarm" (Barnardo's)

The school has a duty to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between staff and children, and that all members of staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.

Staff will have access to *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021* on appointment/induction and have read Part 1 as a minimum.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/912592/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_Sep_2020.pdf

All staff should be aware of the dangers inherent in:

- Working alone with a child
- Physical interventions
- Cultural and gender stereotyping
- Dealing with sensitive information
- Giving gifts to, and receiving gifts from, children and parents
- Contacting children through private telephones (including texting), e-mail, MSN or social networking websites
- Disclosing personal details inappropriately
- Meeting pupils outside school hours or school duties
- Making inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one to one attention beyond the normal requirements of the role; or inappropriate sharing of images

If any member of staff has reasonable suspicion that a child is suffering harm, and fails to act in accordance with this policy and Cheshire West's Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures, this will be viewed as misconduct, and appropriate action will be taken.

13.1 Allegations (see separate Whistleblowing/Allegations of Abuse against Staff policies)

Where an allegation is made against any person working in or on behalf of the school that he or she has:

- a. Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- b. Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or
- c. Has behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.
- d. Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

we will apply the same principles as in the rest of this document and will always follow Cheshire West's Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures. Detailed records will be made to include decisions, actions taken, and reasons for these. All records will be retained securely within an envelope marked confidential within the staff member's personnel file.

Whilst we acknowledge such allegations (as all others) may be false, malicious or misplaced, we also acknowledge they may be with foundation. It is, therefore, essential that all allegations are investigated properly and in line with agreed procedures.

Initial action to be taken:

- The person who has received an allegation or witnessed an event will immediately inform the Head Teacher and make a record
- In the event that an allegation is made against the Head Teacher the matter will be reported to the Chair of Governors who will proceed as the 'Head teacher'
- The Head teacher will take steps, where necessary, to secure the immediate safety of children and any urgent medical needs
- The member of staff will not be approached at this stage unless it is necessary to address the immediate safety of children
- The Head Teacher may need to clarify any information regarding the allegation; however, no person will be interviewed at this stage
- The Head Teacher will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (DO - see *Essential Contacts*, **Appendix 2**) in order to determine if it is appropriate for the allegation to be dealt with by school or if there needs to be a referral to i-ART and/or the police for investigation
- Consideration will be given throughout to the support and information needs of pupils, parents and staff
- The Head Teacher will inform the Chair of Governors of any allegation
- If consideration needs to be given to the individual's employment, advice will be sought from HR (see *Essential Contacts*, **Appendix 2**).

14 Supporting staff

It is important not to underestimate the difficulty for both staff and managers in confronting what appear to be poor professional standards or unacceptable conduct by a colleague in an environment, which of necessity is dependent on close working relationships. It must also be recognised that it is very rare for a teacher to commit offences in the manner of Teacher A. However some of the allegations were of such a serious nature, particularly those from children themselves, that they constituted matters that should have been investigated under the child protection procedures.

North Somerset SCR – The Sexual Abuse of Children in a First School February 2012

We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or who appears likely to suffer harm, may find this situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through anxieties with the Head Teacher (the Designated Safeguarding Lead) and to seek further support, if necessary.

The Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Leads can seek personal support from the SCiE Team (0151 356 6843 - scie@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk), CWAPH Chair or other appropriate services.

The document *Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings* (see link below) provides advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and the circumstances that should be avoided in order to limit complaints against staff of the abuse of trust and/or allegations of abuse.
<https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20Oct%202015.pdf>