

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **Introduction**

**SOUTH LAKES ROCK SCHOOL** has a moral and legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for children all staff, chaperones, parents/legal guardians, volunteers or anyone working on behalf of South Lakes Rock School accept their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse. This means to ensure that everyone follows procedures to protect children and report any concerns about their welfare to appropriate authorities.

### **Aims and Objectives**

Policies and practices must ensure that South Lakes Rock School is the safest place for children that it can reasonably be and that safeguarding must permeate all aspects of the School, safeguarding should be seen as everyone's business and responsibility and that children and staff must know the procedure to report a safeguarding issue.

The purpose of this policy is to protect the children and young people who receive South Lakes Rock School services and also includes the children of adults who use our services. We also provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

South Lakes Rock School believes that a child or young person should never experience any kind of abuse of any kind. We have responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them. The aim of South Lakes Rock School is that every person in the school will have the opportunity to achieve their potential whilst being fully supported and protected. Safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of a child's health and/or development
- Taking action enabling all children to have the best outcomes.

## **Legal Framework**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely the Children Act 1989, the United Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, the Data Protection Act 1998, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Sexual Offences Act 2003, the Children Act 2004, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

South Lakes Rock School recognizes that the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989 and that all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse. We also recognize that some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues and that working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

## **Company's Responsibilities**

South Lakes Rock School recognizes that they are responsible for the following:-

- Assigning a Designated Safeguarding Person and Deputy
- Ensuring all necessary checks are completed to ensure the safety and legality of all South Lakes Rock School staff.
- Ensuring all staff complete a safeguarding training course when they join the company, which must be renewed every two years
- Keeping records of all certificates of completion of the aforementioned course
- Delivering our own in-house training for safeguarding in the specific context of working for South Lakes Rock School
- Ongoing support for all staff on all safeguarding matters

South Lakes Rock School will seek to keep children and young people safe by:-

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Adopting child protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.

There are three elements to our policy: -

- **Prevention** through awareness of each individual child's needs.
- **Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect**
- **Procedures** for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases, of abuse.

The aim of the policy is to promote good practice, providing children and young people with appropriate safety/protection whilst in the care of SOUTH LAKES ROCK SCHOOL and to allow staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

### **Prevention**

We recognise that the "entertainment industry" can be a very "adult" environment and we expect that all staff, chaperones, parent legal guardians, volunteers and anyone else who comes into contact with children behave in an appropriate manner at all times, and remember that "The Welfare of the Child is Paramount".

**SOUTH LAKES ROCK SCHOOL** will therefore:-

- Act within the Children's Act 1989 & 2004
- Act within The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel welcome and familiar with their environment and are informed of personal (toilets, dressing rooms etc.) and emergency arrangements (fire exits, meeting points etc.) and any Health and Safety Procedures (Dangerous equipment, First aid etc.)
- Inform each child who the appropriate person or people are to speak to if they have any questions, problems or concerns
- Ensure that all children are treated with respect and dignity and are treated as individuals and offered equality of opportunities.
- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and unnecessary physical contact with children) and involve/allow parents/chaperones wherever possible, to take responsibility for the child/children they are responsible for. (parents must only have responsibility for their own child)
- Recognising the individual needs of the child e.g. recognising when a child may be tired and may need a break.
- Ensure that children are supervised appropriately.
- Ensure that all Chaperones are registered with the local authority in which they reside and have an enhanced DBS check.
- Ensure all crew and staff coming into close contact with a child are DBS checked.
- Ensure that all staff and crew who don't necessarily have close contact with children but who are assisting in the production are aware of their conduct around children.

## Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect

A child is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm, or fails to act to prevent harm. A child or young person up to the age of 18 years can suffer abuse or neglect and require protection.

- **Physical Abuse**- May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or Carer fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after
- **Sexual Abuse** - Forcing or enticing a child/young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening, may involve: physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts; non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities; 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. It may involve a parent or Carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
- **Emotional Abuse** - The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age and developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, for example witnessing domestic abuse within the home or being bullied, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone

## **Legislation, Policy and Guidance**

**SOUTH LAKES ROCK SCHOOL** will adhere to the relevant legislation when working with children and young people under the age of 18 years as outlined in the following:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015

## **Suspicion of Abuse**

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child, immediately make this known to the designated individual/manager responsible for child protection.

## **Disclosure of Abuse**

If a child tells you that he/she or another child or young person is being abused: -

- Always stop and listen straight away, show that you take their allegations seriously.
- Encourage the child to talk, but do not ask leading questions, interrupt or ask the child to repeat itself.
- Never promise that you will keep what is said confidential or secret — explain that if you are told something of concern that you will need to let someone know but that you will only tell the people who need to know and can help.
- Record what you have been told accurately and as soon as possible. Use the child's own words.
- Make a note of the time, location, whether anyone else present and of the Child's demeanour. Ensure that your concerns are reported immediately to the designated individual/manager Do not confront the alleged abuser.

## **Handling Allegations**

- If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, it must be reported as a matter of urgency to the designated manager/individual for child protection who will refer to Social Care department for Children's Services. If the allegation is against the designated person, then the information should be reported to another senior manager or directly to Social Care department for Children's Services. (This would generally be referred to the authority in which the alleged incident took place).
- The alleged perpetrator should not be made aware of the allegation at this point.

## Recording

- In all situations the details of allegation or reported incident must be recorded. Make accurate notes of time, dates, incident or disclosure, people involved, what was said and done and by whom, action take to investigate, further action taken e.g. suspension of individual and if relevant: reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency, name of person reporting and to whom it was reported

The record must be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know.

- **DO NOT worry that you might be mistaken; you have a responsibility to pass on your concerns following a disclosure. Never think abuse is impossible, or that an accusation about a person you know well and trust is bound to be wrong.**

## What to do if you are concerned about a child's welfare

Any concerns you might have may not always be of the same nature, and may not require the same course of action. In practical terms, concerns are likely to arise in a number of ways:-

- **Minor Concerns**

If you observe something that is a possible cause for concern, but not an indicator of possible abuse, you should be mindful of this, and speak to the child's teacher to learn about their background. If you start to observe a pattern of repeated incidents, then you should treat this as a safeguarding concern.

- **Safeguarding concerns**

These concerns will go beyond those that are dealt with as above and will usually indicate a member of staff or volunteer's concern about a child's vulnerability, where it is felt that vulnerability needs further assessment and possible action.

## **1. Child protection concerns**

These will arise when staff or volunteers are worried or have evidence that a child has been harmed or is likely to be harmed or where a child makes a disclosure.

All staff have a responsibility to ensure concerns about children, no matter how unclear, are passed on and assessed. Staff should not undertake any investigations. The responsibility of staff is to be vigilant, record and report only. The source of your concern is most likely to stem from either:

- The conduct of a member of the public or a staff member
- A child 'disclosing' abuse
- Bruising or evidence of physical hurt; which may be accompanied by
- Your observations of how the child is behaving, either by themselves or with others

If a child discloses abuse, remember that this may be the beginning of a legal process, as well as of a process of recovery for the child. Legal action against a perpetrator can be seriously damaged by any suggestion that the child's disclosure has been led in any way.

### **Procedure for reporting concerns**

In a situation where a child discloses information to you that is cause for concern, you should:

- Respond in a calm manner
- Listen and be supportive. Do not investigate, e.g. ask to see other bruises.
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events, but don't push the child to tell you more than s/he wishes.
- Never promise to keep secrets. Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – but only those who need to know about it.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Tell the child what you will do next

After the conversations, you should immediately:

- Write an account of the conversation using the “Child Protection Concerns Form” at the end of this document, and send your record in to your DSP. If the disclosure took place in a school, you should also give a copy to the school’s DSP.
- It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral from the Designated Safeguarding Person in the organisation.
- Keep the discussion confidential.
- Any subsequent events/incidents where you or South Lakes Rock School are involved affecting the child need to be recorded.

If you have seen/heard something that concerns you, but a child has not disclosed to you:

- Write an account of your concerns immediately. Put the date and timings on it and mention anyone else who was present. Then sign it, and hand your record in to your DSP and if appropriate, the school’s DSP, who will decide what action to take next
- Do not approach the child and ask questions of them or anyone else involved in the situation.

### **Safeguarding Teachers**

As well as having the right training and information about safeguarding children, music teachers working with individuals or small groups of pupils may also find themselves in vulnerable situations where their professional conduct is questioned and so it is important for them to have the relevant information about being in such a situation.

### **Physical Contact with Pupils**

Any physical contact with pupils can be potentially subject to misinterpretation or even malicious allegations. The best advice is to avoid touching your pupils and to develop strategies for teaching through demonstration and modelling.

### **Communication**

Keep all communication with pupils on a professional level. Be aware of exchanging personal contact details, such as email addresses and mobile numbers, and sharing information on social networking websites. Avoid developing a personal relationship with your pupils

### **Appropriate Language**

Be aware of the language you use when teaching

Swearing, making disparaging or insensitive remarks and using suggestive language or terms of endearment should be avoided. All of these can be misinterpreted in a teaching environment and, therefore, are inappropriate



**DECLARATION**

I have read and understood the Child Protection Policy for South Lakes Rock School.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_