

Children and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

DCS recognise that we have an explicit duty to safeguard and protect children from abuse as defined in the Children Act 2004 and the Education Act 2002.

Everyone at DCS shares an objective to help keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe by:

- Providing a safe environment to learn in
- Identifying and responding to children, young people and vulnerable adults in need or support and / or protection
- Supporting children's development in ways which will foster a sense of self-esteem and independence
- Fostering a learning environment in which every pupil feels valued and able to articulate their wishes and feelings in their preferred method of communication in an atmosphere of acceptance and trust.

DCS will endeavour to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected from harm while they visit or are attending classes on our property. We will do this by:

- Making sure our staff are carefully selected
- Providing appropriate training for staff in issues of child protection
- Ensure all staff (including teaching staff, administrators and ancillary staff) undergo an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure (DBS check)
- To establish and maintain an ethos where children and young people feel secure and are encourage to talk, and are listened to
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of any child or vulnerable adult in contact with us
- Not physically, emotionally or sexually abusing any child or vulnerable adult in contact with us
- Taking all reasonable steps to prevent any staff member, persons working for us or member of the public from putting any child or vulnerable adult in a situation in which there is an unreasonable risk to their health and safety
- Taking all reasonable steps to prevent any staff member, persons working for us or member of the public from physically, emotionally or sexually abusing any child or vulnerable adult
- Reporting to the Principal, Manager or other designated officer any evidence or reasonable suspicion that a child or vulnerable adult has been physically, emotionally or sexually abused in contact with us or anyone in our organisation
- Referring to statutory authorities all incidents reported to the Principal, Manager or Designated Safety Officers
- Implementing this policy in conjunction with our Health and Safety guidelines already in place.

Everyone working or applying to work for this organisation is to be made aware of our policy for children's welfare. Furthermore, this document should be issued to all staff and other people who are likely to have contact with children as part of their work with us. Copies of the policy will be held by the Principal or Manager of the organisation.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALL STAFF

These guidelines apply to:

- A situation involving children and young people up to age 18, whether or not accompanied by adults. We also recognise that vulnerable people of any age will benefit from similar safeguards. Wherever guidelines refer to children, this broader meaning applies
- All staff, contractors, freelance staff, volunteers and consultants working DCS or on our premises. In the case of contractors and consultants it is incumbent upon the Principal, Manager or other Designated Safety Officers to ensure that they are made aware of these guidelines

GENERAL DUTIES FOR ALL STAFF

In regard to the safety and welfare of children and similarly vulnerable people all staff are required to:

- Undergo an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau/ Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from hazards
- Strictly observe the code of behaviour in this document
- Take appropriate action if an accident occurs
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent abuse of children in contact with anyone within the organisation
- Report any incident or suspicion of abuse

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALL STAFF

- Safety of participants and staff is of prime consideration at all times
- All accidents involving anyone should be recorded in the organisation's accident book immediately or as soon as practicably possible
- Staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with building/facility safety issues, such as, fire procedures, location of emergency exits, location of emergency telephones and first aid equipment
- Staff are responsible for reporting suspected cases of child abuse to the named responsible person and/or agencies
- Appropriate staff should have access to any parent consent/emergency consent forms for all children taking part in any activities [this information should be confidential]
- Staff should ensure that their activities start and end on time
- Staff are expected to promote, demonstrate and incorporate the values of fair play, trust and ethics throughout their activities
- Staff should ensure that they are adequately insured, to protect against claims of negligence, through their organisation or their own personal insurance if acting as a self-employed agent

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

A register of names, addresses, next of kin and contact addresses and telephone numbers for emergencies will be kept.

Parents or carers, and where appropriate older children, will be given a copy of a written statement which specifies the action which will be taken in the event of a child becoming ill or being injured and which indicates that any information which suggests that a child has been abused will be passed on to the Social Services Department and/or the police.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR ALL STAFF

People working at DCS must always observe the following requirements where children, young people or similarly vulnerable people are concerned.

Do's and Don'ts for Working with Children

DO:

- Behave professionally
- Listen to children
- Treat everyone with respect
- Communicate at an appropriate level
- Be aware of policy and procedures
- Report any suspicions within our guidelines
- Be aware, approachable and understanding

DO NOT:

- Harm a child or frighten a child
- Touch inappropriately
- Use inappropriate language
- Threaten, shout or be aggressive
- Force a child to do something they do not want to do
- Mistreat, demean, ignore, or make fun of
- Show favouritism to any one individual or groups of individuals
- Let a child expose themselves to danger
- Make racist, sexist or any other remark which upsets or humiliates
- Take photos of children without permission

Do's and Don'ts for Working with Vulnerable Adults

DO:

- Be respectful, responsible and professional
- Act in an appropriate manner
- Listen and communicate
- Use common sense; be caring, attentive and aware
- Be sympathetic to their needs
- Be aware of your responsibility
- Be aware of policy and procedures as outlined in this document

DO NOT:

- Treat vulnerable adults as children

- Engage in inappropriate behaviour
- Be aggressive or physically restrain
- Do anything of a personal nature they can do for themselves
- Place yourself in a vulnerable position

You have a strict duty never to subject any child to any form of harm or abuse. Failure to adhere to these procedures will be treated as gross misconduct.

Photographs of children should only be used if written consent has been obtained from a parent, guardian or, if referring to school groups, relevant school authority. General group photographs may be used if no individual can be identified by reason of any attached data. Permission should be obtained firstly to take the photograph and secondly for permission from the parent if the photograph is to be reproduced.

WHAT TO DO IF AN ACCIDENT HAPPENS

Depending on your judgment of the situation, go to the scene immediately if possible and/or summon First Aid assistance and/or contact the emergency services. With children it can be hard to assess whether they have been injured or the extent of the seriousness of an injury. If you have any doubt about this, you should err on the side of caution and contact the emergency services. Even if a child is accompanied and you think an accident is not being treated seriously enough, get medical assistance on your own initiative if necessary. All accidents should be reported in the Health and Safety manual.

Unless there is good reason, First Aid should not be administered without the permission of the child's parent or accompanying adult. A child cannot give consent. If the parent is not present, obtain their phone number and try and make contact. However, if a child is alone and seriously injured or unconscious, the situation will need to be dealt with immediately. If at all possible, treatment should only be given by a trained First Aider.

Provided this does not in itself put the child at risk, always try to administer First Aid with another adult present. Always tell the child exactly what you are doing and why. Unless it is irrelevant, ask the child if they use medication (e.g. for asthma, diabetes, epilepsy) or have any allergies. Some children have allergic reactions to stings. For minor injuries, you may not offer any medication, including antiseptics or pills of any kind. If you have any doubts about helping someone to use their own medication, phone NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or the emergency services.

Any treatment should be as little as necessary without threatening the child's wellbeing. If a child comes to you for comfort because of a minor accident or fright, it is acceptable with the Code of Behaviour to hold their hand or put your arm around them. Just ensure:

- You know about any injury and do nothing to make it worse
- Physical contact is what the child wants, and the kind of contact between you is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- You do your best to stay in sight of other adults

If a child needs a doctor or hospital, call the emergency services. It is always best to stay with them and wait for the ambulance. You should only take the risk of bringing in the child yourself if the emergency services ask you to do so.

CHILD ABUSE GUIDELINES

The NSPCC has a written document which outlines the requirements for professionals reporting child abuse in the United Kingdom. To read this information, please follow the link below:
www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/questions/reporting_child_abuse_wda74908.html

The Department of Health web-site www.doh.gov.uk contains a practical guide to the law relating to child protection, particularly The Protection of Children Act 1999. The site also provides a publication entitled: "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused". This publication has been developed to assist practitioners to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It sets out the process for safeguarding children. It is aimed at those who come into contact with children and families in their everyday work

The Role of the Principal

The principal will have the following functions. Namely to:

- Be an advisor to all organization and freelance staff on best practice in regard to the child protection policy.
- Agree incident reporting procedures.
- Keep record of incidents and reports, together with any other relevant information.
- Report major incidents to Statutory authorities.
- Ensure that individual case records are maintained of any complaint, injury or action taken by the organization.
- The Principal; Nicola Thompson

ENHANCED CRB/DBS DISCLOSURE

All staff including teachers, freelance teachers, contractors, volunteers, administrative and ancillary staff will undertake an Enhanced CRB/DBS disclosure which will be kept up-to-date. It is the Principal's responsibility to view the contents of the Enhanced CRB/DBS disclosure and make a decision about whether that staff member should be excluded from working with young people within their organisation.

SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

The booklet 'Safe from Harm': Code of Practice for safeguarding the welfare of Children in Voluntary Organisations in England and Wales' is available from the Home Office web-site
www.homeoffice.gov.uk

All Social Services Departments have an Area Child Protection Committee, (ACPC). This is the key inter-agency forum for child protection, comprising representatives from all the relevant statutory organisations and representing the voluntary sector.

The NSPCC is a registered charity established to prevent cruelty to children. Help line for concerns about a child's welfare. 0808 800 5000 [24 hours], website www.nspcc.org.uk. Links to specific information about Children and Vulnerable Adult Policy can be found by visiting: www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/questions/answers_wda48954.htm