



CL Cheerleaders

Safeguarding Students - Child protection policy

Statement of intent

Our troop wants to work with students, parents and the community to ensure the safety of students and to give them the very best start in life.

Aims

Our aims are to:

- create an environment in our troop which encourages students to develop a positive self image, regardless of race, language, religion, culture or home background;
- help students to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults;
- encourage students to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
- enable students to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches – they are encouraged to talk to any member of the committee about any concerns; and
- work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all our students.

The legal framework for this work is:

- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- The Students Act 1989
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1984
- The Protection of Students Act 1999
- The Students (NI) Order
- The Students (Scotland) Order

Liaison with other bodies

- We work within the Area Child Protection Committee guidelines.
- We have a copy of Area Child Protection Guidelines available for staff and parents to see.
- We report any changes in our arrangements which affect the wellbeing of students.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the troop and social services to work well together.
- Records of the local NSPCC contacts are also kept.
- We record incident and accidents and action taken, in separate media to allow for those that should be accessible for all to see and those that may only be for privy persons, i.e. child protection officer, police, social services etc
- If a report is to be made to the authorities, we act within the Area Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

Methods

Staffing and volunteering

- Our named persons (i.e, a member of staff or a committee member) who coordinates child protection issues are Christine Thorley and Lorraine Crowder.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of students.
- Applicants for posts within the troop are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- All staff are CRB checked, any committee member or parent/guardian who wishes to help out with the troop and who are not checked will not be left alone with any students. These persons will be supervised at all times.
- We abide by the Protection of Children Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have lead to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the troop.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the troop so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the students.

Disciplinary Action

Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the troop or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

Training

We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the troop to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals. We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the troop.

Planning

The layout of the room allows for constant supervision. Where students need to spend time away from the rest of the group, the door is left ajar.

Training

- We introduce child protection into our troops rules, by instilling confidence and respect and allowing each student the knowledge that they can confide in us if they wish to.
- We create within the troop a culture of value and respect for the individual.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is appropriate for the ages and stages of our students.

Complaints

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the troop, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the Area Child Protection Committee when investigating any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
- We follow all the disclosure and recording procedures when investigating an allegation that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child as if it were an allegation of abuse by any other person.
- Responding to suspicions of abuse
- We acknowledge that abuse of students can take different forms - physical, emotional, sexual and neglect.
- When students are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, this may be demonstrated through changes in their behaviour, or in their play. Where such changes in behaviour occur, or where student's play gives cause for concern, the troop investigates.
- We allow investigation to be carried out with sensitivity. Staff in the troop take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to students or ask questions of students.
- Where a child shows signs and symptoms of 'failure to thrive' or neglect, we make appropriate referrals.

Disclosures

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- offers reassurance to the child;
- listens to the child; and
- gives reassurance that she or he will take action.

The member of staff does not question the child

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff make a record of:

- The child's name;
- The child's address;
- The age of the child;
- The date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- An objective record of the observation or disclosure;
- The exact words spoken by the child;
- The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
- The names of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

All members of staff know the procedures for recording and reporting.

Informing Parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the local Area Child Protection Committee does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

Confidentiality

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Area Child Protection Committee.

Support to families

- The troop takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The troop continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child only if appropriate under the guidance of the Area Child Protection Committee.
- With the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount, we do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

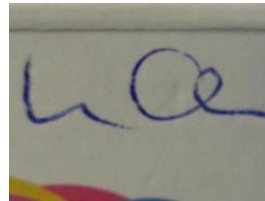
This policy was adopted at a meeting of CL Cheerleaders Troop

Held on (date)

7/11/07

Signed on behalf of the troop

L Crowder

A photograph of a handwritten signature in blue ink on a white background. The signature appears to be 'L. Crowder'.