

ENGLISH IN CHESTER

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Policy statement and context:

- English in Chester delivers English language courses to students both over and under the age of 18.
- English in Chester fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection (protecting children from direct harmful behaviour) and safeguarding (doing all we can to look after students and others under the age of 18 and that they are safe in all aspects of their interactions with the school).
- Our policy applies to all staff working in the school setting, and to people who have unsupervised access to children in the home setting.
- For the purposes of this policy, “children” refers to any students, staff (including apprentices), visitors or volunteers under the age of 18 for whom the school has primary responsibility.
- This policy will be made known to all adults in contact with under 18s through their role with English in Chester (including employees, homestays, group leaders and sub-contracted workers such as drivers doing airport transfers and excursions). It is expected that all these adults will understand and apply this policy as appropriate to their area of activity, and in particular will report any child protection or concerns immediately to the school’s designated safeguarding officer as set out in the procedures below.
- We practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff to work with children. We have developed and implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse. We aim to establish and maintain a safe environment in which children can learn, develop and enjoy all aspects of their stay in the school.
- This policy will be reviewed annually in January, led by the Principal but with contributions from the key personnel below and other staff and stakeholders.

Associated policies

The following policies and procedures contain sections which are directly relevant to safeguarding in the school:

Equality, Relationships, Harassment and Abuse Policy and Procedures

ICT Policy and Procedures

Recruitment Policy and Appointments Procedure

Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedures

DBS Disclosure Policy

Policy on Disruption to International Travel

Discipline & Exclusions Policy

Fire Safety Policy

Key personnel (all trained to at least English UK Safeguarding level 2) and responsibilities:

Senior managers (joint DSL/DSP) with overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection:

Nigel Paramor (Principal) and Mandy Peatfield (also trained to level 3 Multi-agency working together (LSCB training) and EUK level 3)

Other staff trained to level 2 who can substitute on child protection issues in the absence of the above:

Jenny Rush, Groups Coordinator (leads on groups with under 18s in them)
Alice Morgan, Social Programme and Student Engagement Organiser
Jo Whittick, Academic Manager
Kerry Rimmer, Course Director
Laura Beresford (teacher and Centre Manager (Academic) Teens Vacation course)
Liann Bedford, Student Services Assistant
Katie Watkins, Student Services Assistant
Gareth Leonard, Teacher

This team meets regularly (at least annually) to review safeguarding issues and procedures.

Codes of conduct

There are 4 different versions of the code of conducts aimed at staff, homestays, contractors and transport providers. These guidelines summarise the overall content.

Overview and principles

This code of conduct is written to give clear and formalised guidance to school staff on creating a safe school culture for under 18s. This includes protecting both adults and students under 18 from behaviours or actions that might be misconstrued, and to ensure that staff do everything reasonable in their power to ensure the safety and well-being of under 18s studying at the school.

In all we do, the yardstick we will use is that of adopting behaviours that we would expect a responsible parent to adopt, and treating students under the age of 18 in the way we would wish our own family members under the age of 18 to be treated in a foreign environment in which they are likely to be more vulnerable and lacking in awareness. Young people may well look up to staff and look to them for clues about how to behave in a new environment: hence it is important that staff consider this in their behaviour and provide an appropriate role model for them where appropriate. This might include how they talk to others, which subjects are appropriate to talk (or joke) about, and how they dress and the way this might be read by younger students. The school's Prevent policy and procedures are also relevant to under 18s, who are particularly vulnerable in this regard (please see the separate Prevent policy and Procedures document)

Interaction with under 18s

The school expects staff to behave with common sense to ensure the safety and well-being of young people under the age of 18, but for the purposes of this code of conduct, here are a few particular areas to consider:

- 1) Staff should avoid situations where they are left alone in an enclosed space with a child. If a confidential meeting is necessary, it should be undertaken with a door open close to other staff or adults.
- 2) Staff should be as positive and even-handed with under 18s as possible, using praise where appropriate and ensuring that all of the students are treated equally and fairly.
- 3) Staff should as far as possible avoid any physical contact with students under the age of 18, particularly contact which might be misconstrued by the under 18 or by someone else witnessing it. Physical chastisement is not acceptable in any circumstances and is likely to be considered gross misconduct and to lead to immediate dismissal and probable referral to the police.
- 4) Staff should be especially careful in any dealings with under 18s they might have in a social setting outside of the school, particularly when alone. These might easily be misconstrued by the under 18 year old(s) or by others.

- 5) Staff should neither explicitly nor implicitly condone the breaking of the law, particularly in regard to drinking alcohol, taking drugs, smoking, or sexual activity. Any concerns in this area should be reported immediately to the school's DSP or the Principal.
- 6) Any sexual relationship between an adult who has a position of care and trust in the school (including temporary summer staff) and an under 18 year old is illegal.
- 7) On excursions and activities organised by the school, due regard should be given to the risk assessment document and in particular to any special measures adopted for under 18s on that trip. In general, it should be ensured that under 18s are always with at least 2 other people at all times, and, if necessary, with the member of staff leading the trip.

IT, the internet, social networks and other technology (see also ICT Policy & Procedures)

While access to the internet and phones are wonderful ways for young people to stay in touch with their friends and family, they also provide darker opportunities for abuse and inappropriate behaviour. In particular, there are risks to young people through cyber bullying (possibly by their peers), grooming by adult sexual predators, and illegal downloading of illegal or copyrighted materials and possibly IT viruses. The school has therefore established the following guidelines:

- 1) Staff should not give out their personal mobile number, email address, Facebook contact details to students, especially those under 18. The exception to this would be homestays providing emergency contact details to a young student.
- 2) Inappropriate access to websites should be reported to the Principal. Inappropriate websites include pornographic sites, excessively violent videos and games, and some age inappropriate social networks and chat rooms. Most inappropriate sites are in fact blocked on the school network, but may be accessed by students in a home setting. Therefore, all staff are asked to be vigilant regarding use of the internet by under 18 year olds, and if there are concerns about content, excessive use or possible grooming or abuse, they should be reported and/or action taken to remove access.
- 3) Where possible, in a homestay access to Wi-Fi should be restricted, particularly after bedtime, to ensure that young students are not distracted and get enough sleep.
- 4) All students are made aware of the school's IT policies at induction and these are displayed prominently in the school and in particular in the computer rooms. Groups of younger learners, for example teens, will have a special session as part of their induction on e-safety.

Accommodation specific issues

In addition to the above guidelines, homestay providers should be aware of the following areas:

- 1) Respect the privacy of the individual in their room (including from other children and pets who may live in the household), and in particular always knock and attempt to gain permission to enter the room before entering a bedroom or bathroom.
- 2) Do not allow adults to be alone in a bedroom or bathroom with a child unless the door is open and other adults are present in the house.

Transport

- 1) All contractors working for the school to transport children will provide annual written evidence that their staff have been properly DBS checked.
- 2) If for any reason a member of staff is required to transport a child in your car or the school minibus:
 - Ensure seatbelts are used, and that children under 16 sit in the back if possible.

- If you are dropping off children after an event, try to keep a pair of students at the same address as your last drop off: avoid being alone in a car with a child as far as possible.
- Ensure you have appropriate insurance cover.

School child protection procedures

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff and homestays are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Ensure that in the absence of the designated DSP, there is someone else appropriately trained available to substitute for her.
- Ensure every member of staff with contact with children (including temporary staff and volunteers) knows the name of the designated person responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers with significant contact with children understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSP. The four areas of abuse are physical, sexual, emotional and neglect, and Appendix 1 outlines some of the possible symptoms.
- Ensure that all staff in the school have regular training at induction and update training both online and face to face to refresh them about signs of abuse, and what to do if they have concerns or are approached by a child with concerns. In-school training will be delivered by Level 2 trained staff.
- The DSP will make reasonably regular contact with the local LSCB to make themselves known and to ensure the school has current contact information.
- The DSP will keep written records of concerns about children on the forms provided (see Appendix 2), even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- The DSP will ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main student files, and in a locked location. These are accessible only to the DSP, the Principal and if necessary an official outside agency. These records are kept for at least 3 years.
- The DSP, in conjunction and after consultation with the Principal or other Level 2 trained staff member, will follow procedures (see Appendix 3) if an allegation is made against a member of staff, homestay or volunteer.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities towards under 18 year olds, and the need for them to both report any concerns immediately, and also to avoid placing themselves in any position which might lead to accusations being made against them as outlined in the Code of Conduct.

Recruitment (see also Recruitment Policy and Appointments Procedures)

- The school is committed to safe recruitment practices for all staff who are likely to have unsupervised contact with under 18 year olds. This includes school staff, the main carer in a homestay and other adults in the household, group leaders and other providers such as transport companies.
- All teaching and administrative staff, homestay providers and service providers (taxi and bus companies, for example) are subject to the school's DBS disclosure policy, which is set out in a separate document.
- In homestays accommodating under 18 year olds, as advised by Accreditation UK, all adults normally resident in the household are required to have a satisfactory DBS check undertaken in the previous 3 years and/or to be registered with the update service.

- The school will require agents/schools or group leaders accompanying groups with students under the age of 18 to provide confirmation or evidence that the group leaders have current police good conduct certificates or similar from their country of origin.
- Any teaching staff returning directly from a lengthy period based abroad to work at the school will normally be required to produce a current police good conduct certificate from the country where they have been working.
- Where a member of staff, group leader or adult member of a homestay household is not able to provide a satisfactory check (including where the check is delayed or has not arrived in time), the school will ensure that the unchecked person is not allowed to supervise under 18s unsupervised. Appropriate measures will be agreed to ensure the safety of the young people on a risk assessed basis by the DSL and DSP.
- The school recognises that DBS and police checks are not the only safeguarding measure that organisations should apply at the point of selecting an individual to work closely with children. Therefore, for staff roles, the school always takes up references and checks and individual's employment history and will check any gaps in an applicant's CV. References for any person likely to have contact with under 18 year olds will include a question about their suitability to work with young people under the age of 18.
- In addition, after recruitment, safe practice will also be followed, with procedures for acting if any concerns arise

Other school safeguarding procedures

General

- School publicity, quotations and other relevant documents will clearly state special measures in place for the safeguarding of under 18s on all courses. The school will not accept students under the age of 10, and will normally only accept students under the age of 16 in closed groups or on the Teens Vacation course.
- All students under the age of 18 will have a meeting or session early in their course where the key elements of the safeguarding policy are explained to them.

Risk assessments

- The school makes use of risk assessments for all external activities. The Social Programmes Organiser is responsible for writing these assessments and for receiving and acting on any feedback from staff.
- Where appropriate, risk assessments will address any particular measures in place for students under 18. There is also a separate Minors Contingency Plan which includes specific information relevant to under 18s (for example, what to do if an under 18 student goes missing).
- All staff accompanying excursions will sign to confirm they have received, read and understood the risk assessment for the activity they are leading.

Staff student supervision ratios for students under 18

- Appropriate adult staffing supervision ratios are considered and set according to course and activity type and the age, gender, interests and needs of the students. The minimum agreed ratios will be adhered to at all times. Provision will be made for these minimum supervision ratios to be exceeded as appropriate in order to ensure the safety and welfare of the students. Risk assessments for adult excursions including students under the age of 18 will address any supervision concerns.
- Group Leaders who form part of the supervision ratio will be fully briefed and clear of their responsibilities. Group leaders will receive induction at the start of their course and regular support throughout their stay. Group Leaders can only be responsible for children in their **own group**, and may be included in staff supervision ratios only on that basis.

16 and 17 year olds on General English courses and in closed groups

In general a ratio of 1:15 will apply. These will be risk assessed and if necessary the ratio will be higher if the welfare needs of learners are considered to be at risk.

Teens Vacation Course and Closed groups under 14 to 16

ON -SITE (In school + regular local facilities)

Supervision ratios at any one time **1: 15**

OFF –SITE EXCURSIONS

Supervision ratios at any one time **from 1: 10 to 1: 15**

At least two supervisory adults (including where appropriate group leader supervising his or her own students) will participate on any off-site school-organised activity

For groups of students under the age of 14 in closed groups

For students enrolled on a **Closed Group** under the age 14, the following guidelines apply:

ON - SITE (In school + regular local facilities)

Supervision ratios **1: 15**

OFF –SITE EXCURSIONS Supervision ratios at any one time **1: 8 to 1: 15**

Students aged 12-14 1:10 to 1:15

Students under 12, 1:8

At least two supervisory adults (including where appropriate group leader supervising his or her own students) will participate on any off-site school-organised activity

For groups with students from different categories the requirements of the youngest age category will normally be applied to the supervision ratio for the group as a whole.

Other provisions in place for all students under 18:

- All students under 18 will meet with a trained member of staff during their first days at the school to explain the school's safeguarding rules and policies.
- All students under the age of 18 arriving for or leaving a course at the school should normally book an airport transfer with the school unless other satisfactory arrangements are agreed.
- Students under 18 will not be allowed to participate in activities, either organised by the school, in their homestay or organised informally, which by UK law they are not allowed to do. This includes buying or drinking alcohol, taking illegal drugs, buying cigarettes or tobacco, going to age restricted films, nightclubs and bars.
- All students under the age of 18 will be required to produce a signed Parental Consent Form for them to be enrolled at the school.
- The Parental Consent Form will include agreement about the time the student is expected to be home after school, restrictions on unaccompanied travel outside of Chester, and permission for urgent medical treatment if required.
- If a student under 18 is ill or requires medical treatment, the school will arrange for an appropriate person to accompany the student to the doctor.
- All students under 18 are required to have full travel insurance as a condition of acceptance in the school. The school will offer a suitable policy.
- If a student under the age of 18 does not come to school when expected for class, or for an activity, or at their homestay by the agreed time, the school or homestay will follow up immediately until they are satisfied the student is safe.
- If any student under 18 receives a written warning about their behaviour, their parent/guardian will be informed. If a student under 18 is required to leave the school, the school will make appropriate arrangements for their safe return to their country (at their parents' expense).

- The school will carry out special risk assessments for all activities in which under 18 year olds might be involved. Students under 18 will only be allowed to take part in these activities if, in the school's opinion, it is safe and legal for them to do so.
- Where a group makes its own arrangements for activities outside of the school, the school will be made fully aware of the plans and will assess them from a safeguarding perspective.
- Students under 18 are told clearly about where they can go at times during the day when they are not in school. Normally if they are studying at the main school or at the University campus, they can go into the city centre for lunch, to the park or in the area around the school/campus, but they will be advised of any areas to avoid or any other special measures. They are required to go in pairs or small groups. They are expected to return to the school in time for registration for any afternoon session. These periods of the day are subject to a regularly reviewed written risk assessment.
- Students under 18 will only be allowed to leave the Chester bus region if they are accompanied by an appropriate adult approved in writing by both the school and the child's parent or guardian, and when full details of any proposed travel and accommodation arrangements are given to the school and approved by the DSP. The school has developed forms for this purpose.
- Occasionally other arrangements may be made on a case by case basis, but these are always risk assessed and approved by the DSP/Principal and/or the course manager.
- The school's emergency number is +44 7971857841 and will be made known to all students under 18, and the parents or legal guardians of students under the age of 18. The school will obtain a 24 hour emergency number for the parent or legal guardian of any student under the age of 18.

Additional provisions in place for students under 16 (or studying on the Teens Vacation Course)

- For students under the age of 16, or any student studying on the Teens Vacation Course, the cost of any excursion programme offered will be included in the overall course fee.
- Students under 16 or on the Teens Vacation Course would normally be placed in a shared homestay address and travel together to school on public transport, or on foot or a lift from the homestay. If such a student is placed in a single homestay room, he/she will be placed close to other students who can travel back together.
- A responsible adult who has been vetted through the school's DBS procedures will always be present overnight in a homestay accommodating a student aged 16 or under. The school will ensure that students aged 16 and under are not accommodated with other students aged 18 or over.
- Arrangements are in place for ensuring the safe travel of any students aged 16 and under when returning to their homestay after an evening event. They will return either by taxi, homestay, or by being escorted to the bus station by school staff.
- All individual students under 16 are required to use the school's Meet and Greet airport service, which ensures they are assisted with safe arrival and departure, unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the DSP (and documented) that appropriate alternative safe arrangements are in place.
- It is illegal for young people under 16 to smoke in public, and this will be enforced in the school.
- It is accepted that it is difficult to apply different rules to groups containing members from different age groups. Groups containing members who are both under 16 and over 16 will be judged on a case by case basis, but in all cases the DSP/Principal should be satisfied that all arrangements in place do not compromise the safety of any students under 18.

Additional provisions in place for students under 13 (or for groups containing students under 13)

- The school would only accept these groups in exceptional circumstances agreed by the Principal and Director (Marketing). Special supervision arrangements are made for students under the age of 13 during break times: usually the group leader will be expected to monitor and be present with these students outside of class time and in particular if they wish to go into the city centre.
- Any students under 13 are only accepted in the school if it is agreed that they will be escorted to and from the homestay by minibus, taxi or by the homestay. The cost of this will be passed on as part of the course fee.

Private fostering

Cheshire West and Cheshire requires notification if any person under the age of 16 is placed with a local family for more than 27 nights, and for the homestay family to be registered as a private fosterer. The school has a policy of not providing accommodation for any student under the age of 16 for more than 27 nights. The school does not offer courses to under 16 year olds that last more than 27 nights.

Training

- The Principal is responsible for ensuring that all staff working in the school are trained appropriately in matters relating to safeguarding and child protection.
- All staff working in the school will complete the online Basic level 1 Child Protection Training as soon as they start work in the school and then again at least every 24 months.
- All staff working in the school will also complete the school specific level 1 training within at most 2 months of starting work at the school. This training can be delivered by any of the level 2 trained staff in the school. This should be renewed approximately every two years .
- The Principal and the DSP will maintain regular contact with the LSCB and attend training and update sessions as appropriate.
- The Principal will ensure that there is an appropriate cohort of level 2 trained staff in the school.

Child Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation

Young people under 18 entering the UK might be at risk of trafficking and possible sexual exploitation.

There are a number of precautionary measures that school staff will undertake to assist in preventing this:

- The school will be wary of any unusual circumstances in the application process which raises suspicions that a child might be being trafficked into the UK.
- When a child is met at the airport, the school will not allow the child to be met by anyone else unless this has been fully agreed and vetted in advance. If a young person under 18 does not appear for their transfer on arrival, or does not turn at their homestay unexpectedly, the school will fully investigate and, if necessary, inform the police.
- If any staff or homestay are suspicious that a young person (especially under the age of 18) is being inappropriately approached during their stay in the school, the police will be notified immediately.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Recognising Abuse

What to watch out for in children. Some signs may vary with age of the child. Not every child will exhibit every symptom. As well as signs, children may tell you of abuse. Always listen.

Sexual abuse

Acting in an inappropriate sexual way with objects or peers
Nightmares, sleeping problems
Becoming withdrawn or clingy
Personality changes, seeming insecure
Unaccountable fear/dread of particular places or people
Changes in eating habits
Physical signs such as unexplained soreness around genitals, sexually transmitted diseases
Becoming secretive

Emotional abuse

Delayed physical or emotional development
Shows extremes of passivity or aggression
Sudden speech disorders
Overreaction to mistakes, or continual self-depreciation
Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)

Physical abuse

Has unexplained bruises, burns, etc. See separate sheet
Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather.
Refusal to undress for sports, or join swimming sessions.

Neglect

Often hungry; may beg or steal food.
Badly dressed in clothes that need washing
Poor appearance and personal hygiene; unwashed, hair not brushed
Lacks needed medical or dental care
Often tired
Might abuse alcohol or other drugs

Appendix 2

Proformas for recording concerns and allegations

ENGLISH IN CHESTER

Concern (& Disclosure/Allegation) Form

Please complete if you have any (Safeguarding) concerns about an under 18 student. You must complete the boxes in bold; the other information can be filled in by DSP later if you do not know

Date	
Student first name	
Student family name	
Gender	
Date of birth	
Nationality	
Group / individual	
Student ID	
Name of person noting concern	
Role/connection with school	
Date and time concern noted	
Location	
Concern <i>(please provide as much detail as possible)</i> NB: If reporting a disclosure / allegation made by a student, please use this space to describe verbatim (or as close as you can remember) the conversation. Use the other side to write more.	
Signed	

Response to concern. This section to be filled in by the DSP.

Do parents / group leader / agent / homestay / other need to be informed?

Response	By whom <i>(full name)</i>	When <i>(date & time)</i>

ENGLISH IN CHESTER

Referral Form - (information to be sent to LADO)

Date & time (form submitted)	
Name of School	
Referrer's name and contact details	

Details of Staff / Other Adult or Student involved

Full name	
Date of birth	
Gender	
Nationality	
Any disability?	
Role/connection with school	
Home address	

Details of Student under 18 involved

Full name	
Date of birth	
Gender	
Nationality	
Any disability?	
Home address	
Parents name	
Is student known to be at risk?	

Details of Alleged Incident

Date and time of incident	
Place of incident	
Brief circumstances of incident	
Names of Potential Witnesses	
Any other information?	

Nature of Allegation

Category (physical / sexual)	
Was technology involved?	
If Yes, what type?	
Signed (by person submitting referral)	

Appendix 3

Procedures for reporting suspected abuse

These procedures relate to concerns about the welfare of children and young people up to the age of 18 years. They specifically concern suspected abuse either in the school or home setting. Any concerns about suspected abuse by strangers to the child, outside of these settings, are matters for criminal investigation and should be referred directly to the police.

Guidance for anyone who may have concerns about a child (under the age of 18) (adapted from advice from Chester West and Cheshire Council). *These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the school's **Equality, Relationship, Harassment and Abuse Policies and Procedures***

This section of the procedures is for everybody who has direct or indirect involvement with children. These are people who work with, or have actual contact with, children or work with family members or others who have contact with children.

These people should be able to recognise, and know how to act upon, evidence that a child's welfare may be a cause for concern. The leaflet "**Child Abuse? How to recognise the signs and what to do next**" is available from the school's DSP, and outlines the key signs.

The first things to do if there are concerns about a child:

It is not unusual to have concerns about children for all sorts of reasons. Staff should therefore discuss any concerns they have with a senior colleague, a manager, or the school's DSP to clarify their understanding of the child's circumstances.

If there are still unresolved concerns or specific allegations that may be of a child protection nature, discussions should then take place - without identifying the child in question if necessary - with the front line staff in Children's Social Care or the Safeguarding Unit. These allegations might include information that indicates that an adult may have behaved in a way that may have harmed a child, has committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or has behaved in a way that indicates s/he would pose a risk of harm if working closely or regularly with a child. Should child protection concerns then be established, it will be necessary to identify the child at that point.

Whatever discussions take place, the DSP and/or Principal involved must:

- never delay emergency action to protect a child from harm, ensuring that they take any necessary action on the same working day
- always record in writing concerns or discussions (signed and dated) using the standard form, whether or not further action is then taken

If the concerns remain after discussions, the information may be shared with the appropriate people: these might include the Principal, the student's parents or guardians and, where appropriate the agent, to decide on the best course of action with the student's best interests in mind.

At the close of discussions, there should always be a clear and explicit recorded agreement about who will be taking what action, or that no further action will be taken.

Making a referral to LSCB/LADO

In the case of allegations of suspected abuse or other serious concerns, the case will be referred to the LSCB/LADO for advice, normally by the DSP and/or the Principal. Such referrals must be made as soon as abuse or neglect is suspected, by a telephone call to, or a meeting with, staff from the LSCB and followed up with confirmation in writing within 48 hours.

Our local contacts are the Children's Social Care Contact and Referral Team (CART) or the Emergency Duty Team (EDT). They are able to offer help and advice. Any referral will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Office hours: 01606 275 099

- 8.30am-5pm (Mon-Thu)

8.30am-4.30pm (Friday)

EDT Out of hours: 01244 977 277

- 4.30pm-8.30am (Mon-Thu)

- From 4pm (Friday)

24 hours weekends and bank holidays

or Cheshire Police: 0845 458 0000 (999 or 101 in an emergency)

The following information may also be clarified:

- the nature of the concerns, including detailed information regarding any specific injuries
- how and why they have arisen, including the explanations given by the those who were caring for the child at the time when any when abuse is suspected as having taken place
- any suspected impact on other children who may be at risk
- what appear to be the needs of the child
- any action the referrer has already taken
- what, if anything, has been said by the child and/or carers about the concerns
- dates, times and location of any specific incidents
- details (names/addresses/telephone numbers) of any witnesses
- whether any further urgent action is needed to make the child safe

Other action in the school following a referral

- Ensure the child concerned is safe and supported and that no other children are at risk of harm. The child should be returned to their normal routine if it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- After initial discussion with the LADO, other immediate action will be agreed, including action to protect the child, informing parents, and what should be said to the adult(s) facing the allegation and whether they should be suspended.

Appendix 4

Procedures for dealing with an allegation made against a member of staff or volunteer working in the school

The new procedures in Cheshire for Managing Allegations or Concerns about Adults Working with Children are designed to provide an independent service which will ensure that all referrals are appropriately investigated or monitored by the Allegations Officers. This service will cater for concerns/allegations of "significant harm" and other concerns which would render an adult unsuitable to work with children. The key principles of this service is that children are appropriately safeguarded, and that the process is proportionate, consistent, transparent and timely. The process of any investigation can be very difficult and stressful for those involved, and it is therefore crucial that support for both the child/ren and adult/s involved is provided.

REFERRAL PROCESS (please also refer to Flow Chart)

If you have a concern or an allegation is made about a person who works with children, whether a professional, staff member or volunteer and they may have:-

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicated s/he is unsuitable to work with children, should then follow the process outlined below:-
 1. Your member of staff should first discuss this matter with the Principal. This will not necessarily be the Line Manager for the staff member. The Principal will liaise with the Allegations Officers within the Safeguarding Unit, who carry out some of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) functions. If, however the concern/allegation concerns the Principal, then the concern/allegation should be notified to another Senior Officer within the organisation, who would then liaise with the Allegation Officers.
 2. If the concern/allegation meets the criteria set out in Cheshire's Local Safeguarding Board Procedures <http://www.cheshirewestlscb.org.uk> then the Principal or other Senior Manager must make contact within one working day with one of the two Allegations Officers, based within the Children's Safeguarding Unit in Cheshire West and Chester Council. Their contact details are: Allegations Officers - 01606 271967. An initial discussion will take place as to how the matter will be progressed.
 3. If it is agreed that it is an appropriate referral to the Allegations Officers, then a referral form, (available on the LSCB website) should be completed by the referrer and sent within three working days to the Allegations Officers.
 4. If a Strategy Meeting or Discussion is required, it will normally be chaired by the Safeguarding and Child Protection Manager, or a Child Protection Coordinator from the Children's Safeguarding Unit.
 5. There are four possible outcomes to a referral being made:
 - The referral does meet the threshold for investigation
 - Referring agency undertakes their own investigation within agreed timescales and advises Allegations Officers of the outcome
 - Allegations officer assists the referring agency with investigation (ie in the voluntary sector or for the purpose of independence) within agreed timescales.
 - Allegations Officer or Social Worker from Assessment and Care Management Team undertakes investigation regarding "significant harm" as defined in Section 47 of the Children Act (1989) within agreed timescales.

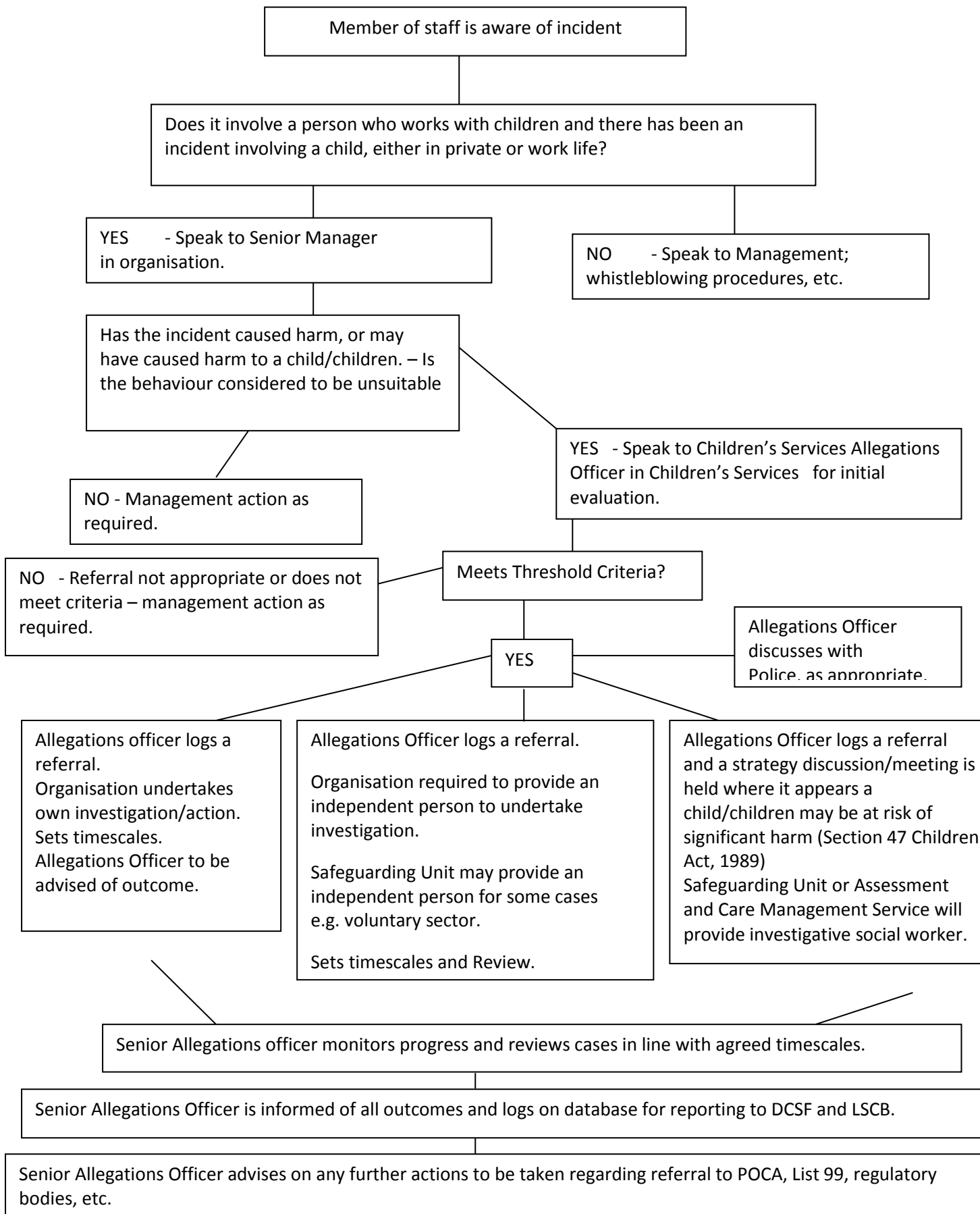
6. Each case will be reviewed in accordance with the Procedures at least monthly by either the Senior Allegations Officer or the Safeguarding and Child Protection Manager.
7. The Principal can expect to be clear whether a referral has been accepted, if so, be kept informed of the progress of the investigation and a representative of your organisation would be invited to participate in the Strategy Meeting/Discussion. On completion of the investigation you can expect to know the outcome of the investigation.

The Lead Allegations Officer, Catherine Appleton is based in:

**Catherine Appleton
LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)
Children's Safeguarding West Cheshire & Chester
4 Civic Way (Floor 4)
Ellesmere Port
Cheshire CH65 0BE
Tel: 0151 337 4570**

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FLOW CHART FOR REPORTING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ADULTS WORKING WITH CHILDREN



Member of staff is aware of incident

Does it involve a person who works with children and there has been an incident involving a child, either in private or work life?

YES - Speak to Senior Manager in organisation.

NO - Speak to Management; whistleblowing procedures, etc.

Has the incident caused harm, or may have caused harm to a child/children. – Is the behaviour considered to be unsuitable

NO - Management action as required.

YES - Speak to Children's Services Allegations Officer in Children's Services for initial evaluation.

NO - Referral not appropriate or does not meet criteria – management action as required.

Meets Threshold Criteria?

YES

Allegations Officer discusses with Police. as appropriate.

Allegations officer logs a referral.
Organisation undertakes own investigation/action.
Sets timescales.
Allegations Officer to be advised of outcome.

Allegations Officer logs a referral.
Organisation required to provide an independent person to undertake investigation.
Safeguarding Unit may provide an independent person for some cases e.g. voluntary sector.
Sets timescales and Review.

Allegations Officer logs a referral and a strategy discussion/meeting is held where it appears a child/children may be at risk of significant harm (Section 47 Children Act, 1989)
Safeguarding Unit or Assessment and Care Management Service will provide investigative social worker.

Senior Allegations officer monitors progress and reviews cases in line with agreed timescales.

Senior Allegations Officer is informed of all outcomes and logs on database for reporting to DCSF and LSCB.

Senior Allegations Officer advises on any further actions to be taken regarding referral to POCA, List 99, regulatory bodies, etc.

- The school will ensure that anyone facing an allegation is adequately supported and has a named contact if they are suspended. The reason for suspension will be communicated to them within 24 hours. The school will maintain absolute confidentiality regarding the accused person and the identity of the accused will be known only to the people who are directly involved in the investigation (normally the DSP and the Principal). All records will be kept securely away from any other staff records.

Disciplinary Action

If an allegation of abuse is made against someone in the school, please refer to the separate ***Equality, Relationship, Harrassment and Abuse policy*** and procedures and ***Discipline and exclusion policy*** regarding further action to be taken.

Policy and procedures reviewed June 2018