

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PROCEDURES

As a visitor to Woodford Valley, either as a helper, supply teacher or someone who has come to work with our children in any other capacity, it is important that you are aware of our Child Protection Procedures.

Our Child Protection Officers are Mrs Rebecca Carson (headteacher) and Mrs Donna Young (deputy headteacher). If you cannot locate any of these people you should refer your concerns to any other member of the Senior Leadership Team; Mrs Donna Young, Mr Dave Reavill, Mrs Katherine Higham and Mrs Rachel Martin.

There are five categories of abuse:

- *Physical abuse*
- *Sexual abuse*
- *Emotional abuse – psychological*
- *Neglect – failure to thrive*
- *Computer based/Cyber abuse*

It may be that you are approached by a child who wants to talk to you about something that has or is happening to them. They will tend to choose someone whom they trust or know well and this will not always be their own class teacher or mentor. It may be someone whom they have formed a good relationship.

There may however be occasions when you have cause for concern either about marks or bruises on a child, about something they say of the condition they are in at school, e.g. dirty, smelly or hungry.

Disclosure of abuse by a child

If you are approached by a child wanting to talk, you should listen positively and reassure the child. If you can, try to ensure a degree of privacy but this may not always be possible.

Whilst this can be an alarming situation to find yourself in it is important not to let the moment pass – for every child who does finally disclose information, evidence shows that they have usually tried up to 12 times before.

Helping the child when abuse is disclosed:

- Be prepared to listen
- Do not show revulsion or distress, however distasteful the events are.
- Stay calm and controlled
- **Do not make false promises, i.e. that you will keep the abuse secret or that the police will not be involved**
- **Do not promise confidentiality**
- Let the child know at once it was not his/her fault and keep stating this
- Be aware of your own feelings about abuse and find someone you can share those thoughts with once the procedures have been completed
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell, even though the abuse may have happened a long time ago.
- Reassure the child that you still care for them and that what they have said does not make you care for them less.
- As soon as possible write a first-hand account of what was said and done.
- Make them aware that their disclosure will be reported only to those who need to know and can help.
- **Do not question a child; try to limit your involvement to listening.**

A child may only be interviewed once.

It is also important to remember that it is not your responsibility to investigate suspected cases of abuse, only to report them to a designated officer.

If you have concerns about a child's welfare:

- It may be that you might have concerns about a child's wellbeing but they have not actually said anything to you. If such a situation arises, you should speak to the designated Child Protection Officer.
- Abuse or neglect can have a damaging effect on a child's health, educational attainment and emotional well-being. If you have worked with a group of children over many weeks you may see changes in their behaviour. Such changes may not necessarily indicate that a child is suffering abuse or neglect. In some cases those changes may be symptoms of a hidden disability or undiagnosed medical condition and the need to distinguish those cases reinforces the need for a careful and thorough assessment of the child and his/her needs when concerns are passed on.
- **It is important you do not feel afraid about passing on their concerns. The information may be a small piece in a bigger jigsaw and may help to obtain a better understanding of a child's predicament. Any concerns, however seemingly trivial, should be passed on to a designated Child Protection Officer.**
- Once again, you should put your concerns in writing as well as talking to the designated Child Protection Officer.

Guidance for recording information:

You should record your concerns as soon as possible and any notes should include the following:

- The nature of your concern;
- What the evidence is that led to the concern;
- What the child said (if a discussion has taken place);
- Your name, the date and time of disclosure;
- What you did or said in response (if a discussion has taken place).

It may be that you have a concern which feels very vague and would simply like to discuss your concerns with a designated Child Protection Officer. Please feel free to do so.

ALWAYS PASS IT ON

Dealing with issues of child abuse can be distressing for the adult to whom the abuse has been disclosed or who has concerns. It is terribly important that you talk about your feelings after the event. **However, it is also very important to remember that children's details and names must remain confidential and any discussion that you feel you need to undertake does not allow the child to be identified to anyone else.**

All students in Woodford Valley are made aware of the Academy's responsibilities and their responsibilities as friends/peers. Safeguarding information is set out in assemblies and through the curriculum.

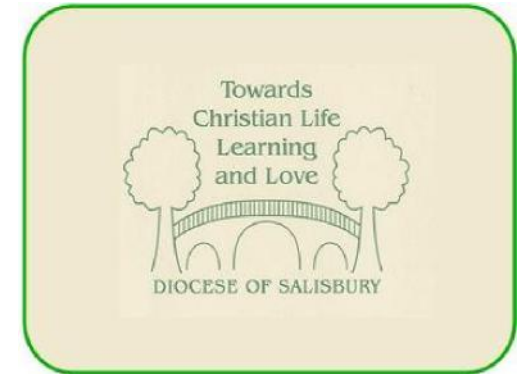
Each year Woodford Valley completes the Wiltshire Safeguarding Audit and sets up an action plan to improve our processes. The governing Body of Woodford Valley receives an annual safeguarding report and monitors the actions of the Academy.

If you have any queries regarding the information contained in this leaflet or require further clarification of any points, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Carson or Mrs Young

Our designated Child Protection Governors are Mrs Caroline Holt.

The academy has a Child Protection Policy supported by clear procedures. This is available on our academy website. Hardcopies are available on request

WOODFORD VALLEY CE PRIMARY ACADEMY



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An information leaflet for staff, volunteers and visitors to Woodford Valley.

September 2022

