



Colchester County High School for Girls

A3 Child Protection Procedures

COMMITTEE	Curriculum & Student Matters
SLT RESPONSIBLE	Willa Jackson Associate to The Principal
REVIEW	Yearly or following changes to Statutory Guidance
PROCEDURES REVIEWED	September 2021
REVIEW DUE	September 2022
APPROVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY	Curriculum & Student Matters Committee October 2021 LGB November 2021

COLCHESTER COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Safeguarding Key Contacts within the School

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

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Mrs KATH DANIELS From 01 January 2022

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DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS

NAME: DR SUZANNE PARROTT

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MRS DAWN FROST

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MRS KATH DANIELS

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DESIGNATED CCHSG GOVERNOR FOR SAFEGUARDING

NAME: MR BALAJI DONEPUDI

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DESIGNATED CCHSG GOVERNOR FOR WHISTLEBLOWING AND ALPHA TRUST SAFEGUARDING and WHISTLEBLOWING TRUSTEE

NAME: MR ROGER COOKE

CONTACT EMAIL: RCooke@cchsg.com

KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

If you need to make a child protection referral, you should contact the Children & Families Hub (FOH) by calling **0345 603 7627** and ask for the **Children & Families Operations Hub**.

You must specify whether you want:

1. The Priority Referral line (for urgent referrals – if a child needs ‘immediate protection’) or
2. The Consultation line (for non-urgent referrals)

PRIORITY REFERRALS SHOULD ALWAYS BE REFERRED BY TELEPHONE

(if a child needs ‘immediate protection’).

Opening Hours: 08.45 to 17:30 Mon to Thurs; 08:45 to 16:30 Friday

OUT OF HOURS REFERRALS Phone: 0345 606 1212 or POLICE: 999

The Children & Families Request for Support online form should be used to make a referral (unless there is immediate risk) and to confirm a referral made by telephone (send within 48 hrs). This can be accessed through Essex Effective Support Portal www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk. A copy should be printed before sending.

A referral may need to be made to the appropriate agency for the student’s home location.

SAFEGUARDING ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS REGARDING EMPLOYEES:

Essex Children’s Workforce Allegations Management Team (LADO): **0330 139 797**

COLCHESTER COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

A3 CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

1. Introduction

Alpha Trust & CCHSG believes in supporting all aspects of children and young people's development and learning, including keeping children safe. We understand that children and young people can and do experience social, personal and emotional barriers to their learning, over differing periods of time and at different stages of their development, which can have an effect on their academic learning. We recognise that education staff play a crucial role in helping to identify welfare concerns and indicators of possible abuse or neglect at an early stage.

Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education)

The CCHSG Child Protection Procedures are for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers and anyone involved in our community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our schools. It should be read in conjunction with the following:

- AT2 Alpha Trust Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- AT P7 Alpha Trust Whistleblowing Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – DfE
- CCHSG Behaviour, Sanction & Rewards Policy (Colchester County High School for Girls)
- CCHSG Staff Code of Conduct
- CCHSG Harmful Sexual Behaviour & Peer on Peer Abuse Policy
- CCHSG Anti-Bullying Policy
- CCHSG E-Safety Policy
- CCHSG Pastoral Handbook for staff

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (everyone under the age of 18) is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Context of the school

CCHSG is a selective grammar school for girls who are high performing, with a lower than national average number of disadvantaged and SEND students, however a significant proportion of students travel in to school from outside the local area.

Although reported incidents of child protection, peer on peer abuse, bullying and racist incidences are low, CCHSG staff must always assume 'It can happen here' even if students do not always report every safeguarding concern.

2. Expectations

All staff and volunteers must read and agree to these procedures before they start working with us. All children and their families will be provided with these procedures at enrolment. It is important for families to be aware of actions staff may take if there are any concerns for a child's safety, and for them to understand that they might not be consulted before action is taken. Knowing about child protection procedures ahead of time helps parents to engage better in the process, meaning that change is more likely to take place.

All adults working in our school who have contact with students are in positions of trust. Staff and volunteers should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of students.

This means that staff and volunteers:

- are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and must avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions
- must work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way
- must acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded
- must discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern
- must apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief or sexual orientation
- must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for our students
- must be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

3. Early Help

Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.

CCHSG provides Early Help through

- Form Tutor
- Pastoral Assistant,
- Year Leaders
- Student Wellbeing Ambassadors
- School Nurse services
- School Counsellor
- School Chaplain

- Referral to outside agencies for Early Help and support

This could involve just listening, monitoring or checking in, learning access provision or IHP, academic mentoring, home-school liaison, information sharing with subject teachers while respecting confidentiality.

4. What to look out for (Recognising children who are experiencing or at risk of harm)

Children can be harmed in several ways; abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional or it can take the form of neglect (see Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021) and AT2 Alpha Trust Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy). Children sometimes suffer more than one type of abuse at a time. Children as well as adults can be abusers; peer on peer abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up” (see CCHSG Harmful Sexual Behaviour and Peer on Peer Abuse Policy). Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of our wider safeguarding duties: The Prevent Duty is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. Students may show changes in mood, behaviour, attendance or academic progress which could be indicators of a safeguarding concern and therefore need to be recognised and reported when they occur.

5. Reporting a Concern

If you have a concern about a student’s wellbeing, based on:

- A concern or worry a student or their parent has shared with you
- something you have noticed about the student’s behaviour, health, or appearance i.e. something that may indicate abuse, self-harm or neglect
- An allegation is made
- A student displays concerning behaviour or produces concerning school work.

Pass all concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL if they are not available.

Even if you think your concern is minor, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) may have more information that, together with what you know, represents a more serious worry about a student. It is never your decision alone how to respond to concerns – but it is always your responsibility to share concerns, no matter how small.

Do not investigate but decide whether you need to clarify your concerns by asking the student or parent open questions (beginning with words like who, how, why, what, where and when) and being careful not to lead them.

Clarify concerns using, if necessary, **TED: Tell, Explain, Describe**. Do **not** ask leading questions or make judgements.

Do not promise confidentiality or to keep a secret. Do not discuss your concerns with the parent(s) if this may increase the risk to the student.

If you have heard a disclosure of abuse or are talking with a student or parent about your concerns, let them know what you will do next. For example, ‘I am worried about and I need to tell so that they can help us think about how to keep you safe.’

Inform the DSL immediately. If the DSL is not available, inform a Deputy DSL. Names and Photos are given at the start of these procedures. If none of the Designated Safeguarding staff or Principal are available, you must make the referral yourself. Details of how to do this are at the end of these procedures and on the sticker on the back of staff ID cards.

As soon as possible after the event, make a written record using the Orange Safeguarding Cause for Concern forms or CPOMS once this is operational. Use the body map to record signs or indicators of abuse or self harm if appropriate.

The Orange forms are available in the staff room, all pastoral offices and staff working areas. If there was a disclosure, record the words of the student or parent rather than your interpretation. Record what you saw or heard and why it is a cause for concern.

Although we encourage all staff to report safeguarding concerns via the DSL, any member of staff is entitled to report a safeguarding concern directly to the local authority if they do not feel able to refer the matter to the DSL or are unable to contact the DSL e.g. on a trip or out of hours. Details of how to do this are at the end of these procedures and on the sticker on the back of staff ID cards.

For all safeguarding concerns staff must without delay inform the DSL in person or by telephone, or one of the Deputy DSLs if DSL not available, as well as completing an Orange Cause for Concern Form.

6. Responding to a concern

On receipt of the concern the DSL will:

- Consider whether the child is at immediate risk of harm, e.g., mental health crisis, unsafe to go home.
- Speak to the student concerned – the voice of the student is important
- Speak to other students, staff, parents if appropriate
- Formulate a plan or strategy for in-school support, if appropriate
- Consult with and refer to other agencies, e.g., Local Authority Children's Social Care, Mental Health Services, LADO, etc., and formulate an agreed course of action and support plan.
- Feedback to the person reporting the concern

The DSL will feedback to the person reporting the concern when they are able to do so, whilst maintaining confidentiality. The DSL will record all decision-making (including who confidential information has been shared with and why) and record actions taken in the student's safeguarding file. Pastoral Leaders and Pastoral Assistants may also be asked to complete and record follow up actions. All follow ups, meeting notes and any further concerns including about the procedure, raised by staff, students or parents will also be recorded, with any subsequent actions.

7. If you are unhappy with the response

Staff:

- Consult with DSL, Principal, Senior Leader
- Follow the school's escalation procedures including reporting the concern yourself to the Local Authority
- Follow the Whistleblowing Procedures.

DSL:

- Review actions taken
- Re-refer and request further agency support
- Review any other intervention strategies e.g. parents accessing mental health services
- Consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer for further advice.

Students and Parents

- Speak to the DSL
- Inform the Principal
- Raise a concern following the Concern and Complaints Procedures (on school website).

8. Anonymous reporting

The school has a never acceptable anonymous reporting portal through the Whisper platform, accessed via the school website. <https://www.cchsg.com/neveracceptable/>

Although we always encourage students to come and speak to a member of school staff in person, by providing an anonymous link students can report any issue which is of concern to them to the school and if an email address is provided (which the school cannot see), a response with sources of advice and help can be given.

9. Safeguarding Concerns About Another Adult in the School

Safeguarding concerns about another adult in the school must be referred to the Principal (or whoever is fulfilling the role in their absence), without delay. If the concerns are about the Principal they must be referred to the Alpha Trust Whistleblowing Trustee (see below).

They will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer within one working day in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with students has:

- 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 student in a way that indicates they pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.
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If you feel your concern has not been responded to appropriately, please contact the Alpha Trust Safeguarding and Whistleblowing Trustee Roger Cooke (rcooke@cchsg.com)

10. Whistleblowing

If you are concerned about poor or unsafe practice or potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime, these should be raised with the Principal or the Chair of the Local Governing Body, in the first instance. Please refer to ATP7 Alpha Trust Whistleblowing Policy.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for those who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. The contact number is 0800 028 0285. This line is available from 8:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

11. Contact Details for Local Authority

Essex Children & Families Hub 0345 603 7627

Out of Hours 0345 606 1212

For advice before making a referral request the consultation line.

For an urgent referral i.e. for a child needing immediate protection request a priority referral. The Children & Families Request for Support online form should be used to make a referral (unless there is an immediate risk) and to confirm a referral made by telephone via the Essex Effective Support Portal www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk

A referral may need to be made to the appropriate agency for the student's home location (contact details are available from the DSL)

12. Reviewing these procedures

These procedures are reviewed at least annually and approved by the Local Governing Board. Copies of these procedures and supporting materials, such as Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education, September 2021), are available on the staff drive, in the Staff Quiet Room and on the school website. Hard copies may be requested from the school office.

Safeguarding - What to do in school

Why are you concerned?

- A child shares a concern or worry
- An allegation is made
- You see Indicators of abuse, including self-harm, or neglect
- The child displays concerning behaviour or produces concerning school work

When speaking with a child and reporting:

- Reassure if necessary
- Clarify concerns using TED: Tell, Explain, Describe. Do not ask leading questions or make judgements. Do not promise confidentiality or to keep a secret
- Use child's own words

Immediately follow CCHSG's procedure:

- record on **orange** form and give to DSL
- **AND**
- immediately inform the DSL, or deputy DSL if not available, by phone or in person

Informing the DSL: Willa Jackson (Kath Daniels from 01/01/2022) via **phone or in person**, or one of the Deputy DSLs if DSL is not available.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Consider whether the child is at immediate risk of harm, e.g., mental health crisis, unsafe to go home
- Formulate a plan or strategy for in-school support, if appropriate
- Consult with and refer to other agencies, e.g., Local Authority Children's Social Care, Mental Health Services, LADO, etc., and formulate an agreed support plan and course of action
- Feedback to person raising the concern

If you are unhappy with the response

DSL & Pastoral Team

- Review actions taken
- **Re-REFER and request further agency support.**
- Review any other intervention options, e.g., via parents

Staff

- Consult with DSL, or:
- Consult with Principal or appropriate senior leader
- Follow school's escalation procedures
- Follow Whistleblowing process

Students & Parents

- Inform school's Principal
- Raise a concern using the Concerns and Complaints procedures – on website

DSL & Pastoral Team

Record all decision-making (including who CONFIDENTIAL information has been shared with and why) and **record actions taken** in the child's pastoral/child protection/safeguarding file, as appropriate.

Record and follow up any further concerns, including about procedure, raised by staff, parents or students

Be clear about:

Everyone:

- What **action(s) you have taken** at the time of reporting the concerns, e.g., when you informed the DSL, how and where you recorded the concern, if the child needed reassuring, that you did not promise the child confidentiality, etc.

Staff involved in monitoring the child (pastoral team/form tutors/subject teachers):

- What you are monitoring, e.g., behaviour trends, appearance, emotional well-being
- How long the monitoring will continue
- Where, how and to whom you will feedback
- How you will record

Review

At all stages, the child's circumstances will be kept under review. **THE CHILD'S SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT;** the DSL and/or delegated staff will request further support, if necessary.