

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Guidelines for Staff

Section 1. Our Policy Defined

Mackenzie School recognises its duties as follows;

- to ensure children and young people are safeguarded against abuse
- to protect staff from unfounded allegations of abuse
- to ensure that relevant checks are carried out on individuals who work with children and young people
- to refer any relevant information to the Independent Safeguarding Authority ('ISA') if they have moved or dismissed an individual because of harm or risk of harm to a child or young person
- to follow the correct procedures for reporting any suspicions of abuse of under 18s to the relevant bodies

Mackenzie School is committed to –

- increasing awareness of issues relating to children and young people
- promoting good practice and assisting members of staff in making informed and confident responses in relation to safeguarding issues for children and young people
- ensuring that there are clear guidelines and procedures for identifying risk and reporting concerns
- enabling all children and young people equal opportunities to develop their full academic, social and emotional potential regardless of their culture, disability, ethnic origin, religion or gender
- taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children or young people through the School's actions or inactions are minimised
- addressing in the appropriate manner any concerns raised about the welfare of children and young people in connection with School business

This commitment extends to all members of the School and particularly to staff working with children and young people including volunteers, students and contract workers.

The School will adhere to this policy of safeguarding children and young people in line with best practice, statutory requirements (where applicable) and the common law.

Designated Officer

The School will have a 'Designated Officer' responsible for ensuring the policy standards are met.

Any concerns regarding the welfare of children or young people should be reported to the Designated Officer.

Our Designated Officer is:

<p>Laura Hutchinson (SLG3 – Bookings & Accommodation Manager – based in School Office)</p>
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Section 2. Relevance to our School

What do we mean by 'Children and Young People'?

A child is 'a person under the age of 18' as legally defined in the Children Act 1989.

Once people reach the age of 18 the law assumes them to have full legal capacity. Before that point, assumptions about their ability to take decisions on their own behalves will depend on the circumstances, though generally speaking, the older they are, the stronger the assumption that they have the capacity to make decisions for themselves. Our Policy applies to all individuals under the age of 18.

Situations where the Policy is relevant

The School recognises that within the School community, the following situations occur which may directly involve children and vulnerable adults and therefore a policy must be implemented;

academic provision;

short-term work experience placements;

sporting activities;

cultural visits;

and accommodation services.

Section 3. Individual Responsibilities (Guidelines for Staff)

General Guidance for Staff

All children and young people should be treated with dignity and respect

All staff should understand their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding persons under the age of 18 and should contact the Designated Officer for advice and training if there's anything they don't understand

Situations where there is only one staff member present with a child should be avoided. On those occasions where a confidential interview or a one-to-one meeting is necessary, these should be conducted in a room where the exit is clearly visible and, where possible, the door to the room is left open.

Meetings with any student under the age of 18 outside the normal teaching environment should be avoided. Where such meetings cannot be avoided, inform another staff member that they are taking place.

Intimate or sexual relationships between staff and students under the age of 18 are an abuse of trust which in the former instance may constitute a criminal offence.

In situations where a young person may be providing information of a particularly sensitive nature, for example to staff with pastoral responsibility, staff should be careful not to probe for details which could be misconstrued as unjustified intrusion.

Unnecessary physical contact with under 18s should be avoided, for example, gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm. Whilst these gestures may be well intentioned, such acts could be misinterpreted.

In situations where it is necessary for staff to restrain a young person in order to prevent self-injury, injury to others or damage to property, only the minimum force necessary may be used and any action taken must be to restrain.

Staff required to administer first aid (normally a trained first aider) should ensure, wherever possible, that another member of staff is present if they are in any doubt as to whether necessary physical contact may be misconstrued.

Staff should be careful in their use of language/terminology and not make unnecessary comments which could be interpreted as having a sexual connotation.

The personal telephone number, personal email or home address of any staff member should not be given.

In the case of an individual making a disclosure or where there is cause for concern, explain that this information will have to be referred. Do not attempt to resolve any complaints alone and report all allegations or suspicions of abuse to the Designated Officer.

Any allegations or suspicions of abuse should be reported immediately to the Designated Officer.

If a member of staff feels that they or other members of the School may be at risk from being the subject of, or exposed to, unwarranted accusations in connection with younger or vulnerable students, they should alert the Designated Officer.

Any misunderstanding or argument should be discussed with a colleague at the earliest opportunity in case of repercussions.

Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary or criminal action being taken against them.

The possession of indecent images of children in any format is a serious criminal offence.

Managing and Reporting Concerns Regarding the Welfare of Under 18s

The procedures for managing such concerns aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse and the need to protect staff, students and volunteers from false or unfounded accusations.

Records will be kept of all such complaints or allegations and their outcomes and held securely by the Designated Officer in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

When an appropriate external organisation e.g. the police or social services contacts the School to ask for information about a member of staff or student in relation to a safeguarding allegation, the Designated Officer will provide information on the behalf of the School.

What is Abuse?

- Inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm which is physical, verbal, psychological, financial or sexual, including neglect.
- Many cases of abuse are also criminal offences.

Possible Indicators of Abuse

- Changes in a young person's behaviour
- A young person's behaviour towards other adults raises concern
- A young person's behaviour towards their peers raises concern
- The behaviour of an adult or member staff towards a young person raises concern
- Unexplained injury which does not seem to be accidental
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour
- Mistrust of other people
- Neglect of personal hygiene

Guidelines for Dealing with Reports of Abuse:

DO

- Be supportive
- Take the report seriously
- Remain calm
- Reassure them they were right to tell someone
- Use language they will understand
- Explain to the young person what will happen next
- Write down immediately afterwards what was said, including the time, place and any other observations: sign and date the record
- Pass the report to the Designated Officer
- Seek support in dealing with your own emotions or angst

DON'T

- Panic
- Delay
- Promise to keep secrets
- Ask leading questions
- Ask them to repeat the story unnecessarily
- Express any opinions about what you are told
- Discuss the disclosure with anyone other than the Designated Officer and other relevant personnel
- Start to investigate it yourself

Any allegations or concerns relating to staff, students or others in contact with the School should be reported to the Designated Officer. This includes direct allegations from an individual, allegations from a third party (e.g. member of staff or student) or allegations from an external organisation. In some cases an investigation may invoke staff Disciplinary Procedures.