

STEPHENSON STUDIO SCHOOL



CHILD & VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY

CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY

Policy Statement

Stephenson Studio School fully recognises its responsibility for child and vulnerable adult protection and for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people.

The School aims to create and maintain a safe environment for young people and similarly for students who are over eighteen, staff, volunteers, and visitors.

Coverage

The policy applies to all governors, staff, agency workers, contractors, visitors and volunteers working in the School.

Definitions

For the purposes of the Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

- a 'young person' means any person under the age of 18 (i.e. those who have not yet reached their 18th birthday).
- a 'vulnerable adult' means any person " who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation because of mental or other disability, age or illness."
- 'staff' means all employees, full-time and fractional, and all agency, franchise, contract and volunteer staff working for the School.

Aims of Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

The aims of the policy are

- To promote an environment that is safe, where staff and students treat each other with mutual respect and develop good relationships built on trust.
- To raise the awareness of all staff, teaching and non-teaching, of the need to safeguard young people and vulnerable adults and of their rights and responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- **To ensure all stakeholders are aware that safeguarding incidents could happen anywhere and staff should be alert to possible concerns being raised in our school.**
- To provide a systematic means of supporting young people and vulnerable adults known or thought to be at risk of harm.
- To ensure that relevant information about a young person or vulnerable adult at risk of harm is disseminated to appropriate staff within the School on a 'need to know' basis.
- To develop a structured school procedure which will be followed by all members of the School staff in cases of suspected abuse.

- To support the development of effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Children's Services.
- To ensure all staff are aware they may raise concerns directly with Children's Social Care services.
- To ensure that all staff who have access to young people or vulnerable adults have been subject to an enhanced DBS check for their suitability (including volunteers and Trustees).
- To ensure that all relevant policies and procedures within the School are linked to, and comply with, the Stephenson Studio School Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Procedures.
- To support young people's and vulnerable adults' development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.

Key Safeguarding Principles

Stephenson Studio School is committed to follow the key safeguarding principles outlined by the Local Safeguarding Children Boards and the guidance of the Department for Education.

- The needs of the young person are paramount and underpin all child protection work and resolve any conflict of interests
- All young people have the right to be safeguarded from harm and exploitation
- Schools have a responsibility to provide a safe environment and minimise risks of harm to young people's welfare
- Staff have a responsibility to identify young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and take appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and at college
- Responsibility for protection of young people must be shared because young people are safeguarded only when all relevant agencies and individuals accept responsibility and co-operate with one another
- Statements about or allegations of abuse or neglect made by young people must be taken seriously

Stephenson Studio School is further committed to applying these safeguarding principles to vulnerable adults

Responsibility for Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection

A nominated governor (see Annex D) will be responsible for the oversight of child and vulnerable adult protection policy and procedures.

A Designated Senior Person (see Annex D) will take lead responsibility for child and vulnerable adult protection and receive appropriate training and support and adequate resources to carry out this role.

The school will in addition have a Safeguarding and Protection team who will deputise for the Designated Senior Person and will also assist on the implementation of this policy in the school. The Safeguarding and Protection Team are listed in Annex D

All staff are expected to contact either the Designated Senior Person, or one of the Safeguarding and Protection Team for advice, when necessary, or to make referrals.

Staff and Governor Appointments

Stephenson Studio School will ensure that all school staff have been checked for their suitability before taking up their appointment

All applicants will be scrutinised by.

- Verifying identity and any academic or vocational qualifications.
- Obtaining professional and character references.
- Checking previous employment history.
- Checking that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job.
- Holding face to face interviews.
- Carrying out the mandatory check of List 99 or through the Vetting and Barring Scheme
- An enhanced De Barring Service check before the candidate takes up the post.

All Governors will be enhanced DBS checked on appointment.

Work Experience

Stephenson Studio School will ensure that:

- Appropriate health and safety checks are in place prior to establishing work internships.
- Employers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and the protection of children or vulnerable adults.
- Staff are aware of the action to be taken, and by whom, should a child or vulnerable adult protection issue be raised before, during or after the internship.
- Additional safeguards, will be made when there are certain risk factors present. The risk factors include:
 - A young person or vulnerable adult likely to be or will be alone with an adult as part of the work internship. (NB. This does not apply to short periods alone, for example, a solicitor taking a student to and from court in a properly insured car).
 - The student who is vulnerable. The School will identify to the Business Links Manager any student who may be vulnerable, for example, because of special needs, immaturity, abuse or neglect, substance misuse, etc, and who may therefore require additional safeguards.

Staff Training on Stephenson Studio School Procedures

Stephenson Studio School will ensure that

- The Designated Senior Person responsible for Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection will receive training in inter-agency procedures which gives them the knowledge and skills needed to fulfil their responsibilities and will undertake refresher training at 2 yearly intervals.
- All new members of staff and governors will be made aware of the Stephenson Studio School child and vulnerable adult protection policy and procedures during their induction into the School.
- All staff and governors will receive initial training on the School's child and vulnerable adult protection policy and procedures and undertake suitable refresher training at 3 yearly intervals.

The initial training will ensure that all staff.

- Know who to contact if they have a concern that a young person or vulnerable adult is at risk of serious harm.
- Know where to go for advice in relation to safeguarding or protection issues or when they are uncertain about whether to refer a concern about a child or vulnerable adult.
- Know the School procedure for referrals on child and vulnerable adult protection issues.
- Understand that they have the right to contact the appropriate agencies if they feel that concerns are not being passed on appropriately by designated school staff.
- Are aware of the requirement to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of any referrals or concerns.
- Are able to recognise and respond to safeguarding and welfare concerns.
- Understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and in particular the additional vulnerability of Looked After children.
- Know how to respond to a student who discloses abuse or is at risk of self harm.
- Know the School's policy and procedures on Confidentiality and Disclosure in Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection cases.
- Understand that there is a need to take special care when working with young people with special needs or vulnerable adults to be alert to signs of abuse as these members of the school may not be able to raise concerns themselves.
- Are aware and are vigilant of updated safeguarding and child protection guidance in line with Leicestershire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and central Government policies, most recently Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and child sexual exploitation.
- Are aware of appropriate approaches to confidentiality and disclosure of information.

Guidance on relationships with students

Stephenson Studio School will:

- Provide staff with guidance on appropriate relationships with students (Annex B).
- Have procedures in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers (Annex E)
- Have procedures in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of student body (Annex E)
- Provide all stakeholders are provided with the school's adopted Social Media Policy which ensures that staff members keep their personal and professional lives separate when using any form of Social media. (Annex F)

Confidentiality, Reporting and Disclosure

The School recognises the need to comply with relevant legislation and guidance in relation to data protection and confidentiality.

It is also recognised that, where there are concerns about abuse or safeguarding, data sharing with appropriate agencies may be necessary even when it is contrary to the wishes of an individual.

The circumstances when data should or should not be shared are outlined in a flow chart at Annex C.

The following issues will inform decisions about sharing data:

- Stephenson Studio School will ensure that as part of the child and vulnerable adult protection training for staff, the issue of confidentiality is clarified so that staff know they cannot promise confidentiality in all cases as they may have to pass on information to other professionals to keep the young person or vulnerable adult safe.
- The principle of 'proportionality' applies to sharing confidential information, i.e. when disclosing information without consent the member of staff limits the extent of the disclosure to that which is absolutely necessary to protect the young person or vulnerable adult.
- Stephenson Studio School recognises that young people aged 16-18 years will have the understanding to make decisions about their own lives and their views and wishes will be respected unless they are deemed to be at risk of harm which is a serious threat to their personal safety or they are the victim of a crime.
- Young people under 16 may be sufficiently mature to understand and consent to the disclosure of information. The young person's ability to make such decisions should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- Referrals to other agencies such as Children's Social Care should be made with the young person's agreement where practicable. However, it may not be practicable to seek their agreement where, for example, seeking permission might place them or another person at risk of serious harm or where they are not mentally competent to give their agreement. There may also be cases where the young person's agreement is sought but they refuse to give that agreement.
- Disclosure of information can take place without consent in cases where this is justifiable in the overriding public interest – e.g. to protect the young person from significant harm.

- In the context of child protection the welfare of the young person outweighs the family's right to privacy.
- Vulnerable adults may choose to remain at risk in dangerous situations. Professional staff may find they have no statutory powers in cases where the adult is judged to have sufficient capacity to make his or her own choices and refuses the help which staff feel is needed and where public interest considerations do not apply.
- In these cases, where a member of the school staff considers that the decisions of the vulnerable adult should be respected they must immediately seek advice from the School's Senior Manager responsible for Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection.
- Decisions about the capacity and the ability of the vulnerable adult to give informed consent are a matter of medical judgement and multi-disciplinary assessment. There should be no abandonment of the duty to care.

Reporting

The school will routinely report to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LSCB) in any case involving concerns of malpractice, abuse or poor professional practice by:

- A local authority
- A school employee
- A volunteer
- A paid or unpaid carer, relative or friend
- An employee of a private care agency
- An employee of another organisation providing care to the vulnerable adult

Record Keeping

An accurate record should be made whenever there is a concern about a child or vulnerable adult in terms of risk of harm or safeguarding.

The record should include:

- Appropriate personal details of the child or vulnerable adult.
- The nature of the concern.
- The source(s) of information about the concern.
- Any advice given.
- Whether confidentiality has been discussed with the child or vulnerable adult.
- Names of staff with whom discussed
- Details of action taken or any referral to an external agency
- Date and name of the person making the record

Raising awareness of safeguarding and protection issues

Parents/carers of students under eighteen will be made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures by publicising this on the school website.

All students will be supported to understand safeguarding and protection issues through:

- A Personal Coaching programme that will support young people's and vulnerable adults' development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- The creation of a climate in which responsible behaviour is encouraged and where students feel safe to ask for help if threatened or at risk of abuse.
- The promotion of a healthy lifestyle that includes consideration of diet, sexual relationships, alcohol and drug abuse.

Monitoring and Review of the Policy

Stephenson Studio School will review its policies and procedures to ensure that they comply with the relevant legislation and the agreed procedures. The Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy will be reviewed annually and updated to remedy any deficiencies or weakness in regard to child and vulnerable adult protection arrangements that are identified without delay.

Annex A

Definitions of Abuse

Physical abuse

This may take many forms e.g. hitting, shaking or poisoning a young person or vulnerable adult. It may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a young person or vulnerable adult.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Indicators in the child:

Bruising

It is often possible to differentiate between accidental and inflicted bruises. The following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence or an adequate explanation provided:

Bruising in or around the mouth

Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive)

Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally, for example the back, mouth, cheek, ear, stomach, chest, under the arm, neck, genital and rectal areas

Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times

The outline of an object used, e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush

Linear bruising at any site, particularly on the buttocks, back or face

Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting

Bruising around the face

Grasp marks to the upper arms, forearms or leg

Petechiae haemorrhages (pinpoint blood spots under the skin), commonly associated with slapping, smothering/suffocation, strangling and squeezing

Fractures

Fractures may cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint. It is unlikely that a child will have had a fracture without the carers being aware of the child's distress.

If the child is not using a limb, has pain on movement and/or swelling of the limb, there may be a fracture.

There are grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent or inconsistent
- There are associated old fractures
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement

Rib fractures are only caused in major trauma such as in a road traffic accident, a severe shaking injury or a direct injury such as a kick.

Skull fractures are uncommon in ordinary falls, i.e. from three feet or less. The injury is usually witnessed, the child will cry, and if there is a fracture, there is likely to be swelling on the skull developing over 2 to 3 hours. All fractures of the skull should be taken seriously.

Mouth Injuries

Tears to the frenulum (tissue attaching upper lip to gum) often indicates force-feeding of a baby or a child with a disability. There is often finger bruising to the cheeks and around the mouth. Rarely, there may also be grazing on the palate.

Poisoning

Ingestion of tablets or domestic poisoning in children under 5 is usually due to the carelessness of a parent or carer, but it may be self-harm even in young children.

Fabricated or Induced Illness

Professionals may be concerned at the possibility of a child suffering significant harm as a result of having illness fabricated or induced by their carer. Possible concerns are:

Discrepancies between reported and observed medical conditions, such as the incidence of fits

Attendance at various hospitals, in different geographical areas

Development of feeding/eating disorders, as a result of unpleasant feeding interactions

The child developing abnormal attitudes to their own health

Non-organic failure to thrive - a child does not put on weight and grow and there is no underlying medical cause

Speech, language or motor developmental delays

Dislike of close physical contact

Attachment disorders

Low self-esteem

Poor quality or no relationships with peers because social interactions are restricted

Poor attendance at school and under-achievement

Bite Marks

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth when seen shortly after the injury has been inflicted. The shape then becomes a more defused ring bruise or oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child.

A medical/dental opinion, preferably within the first 24 hours, should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

Burns and Scalds

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds.

Scalds are the most common intentional burn injury recorded.

Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious, e.g. circular burns from cigarettes, linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements, burns of uniform depth over a large area, scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid.

Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation.

Scalds to the buttocks of a child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

The following points are also worth remembering:

- A responsible adult checks the temperature of the bath before the child gets in.
- A child is unlikely to sit down voluntarily in a hot bath and cannot accidentally scald its bottom without also scalding his or her feet.
- A child getting into too hot water of his or her own accord will struggle to get out and there will be splash marks

Scars

A large number of scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, or unusually shaped, may suggest abuse.

Potential emotional/behavioural presentation of the student:

- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Fear of parents being contacted and fear of returning home
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of medical help
- Aggression towards others
- Frequently absent from school
- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury

Indicators in the parent

- May have injuries themselves that suggest domestic violence
- Not seeking medical help/unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- Reluctant to give information or mention previous injuries
- Absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Disinterested or undisturbed by accident or injury
- Aggressive towards child or others
- Unauthorised attempts to administer medication
- Tries to draw the child into their own illness
- Past history of childhood abuse, self-harm, false allegations of physical or sexual assault

- Parent/carer may be over-involved in participating in medical tests, taking temperatures and measuring bodily fluids
- Observed to be intensely involved with their children, never taking a much needed break, nor allowing anyone else to undertake their child's care
- May appear unusually concerned about the results of investigations which may indicate physical illness in the child
- Wider parenting difficulties may (or may not) be associated with this form of abuse
- Parent/carer has convictions for violent crimes

Indicators in the family/environment

- Marginalised or isolated by the community
- History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence
- History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
- Past history of childhood abuse, self harm, false allegations of physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement

Emotional abuse

This is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a young person or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent effects on their emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in most types of ill treatment of young people or vulnerable adults, though emotional abuse may occur alone.

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Indicators in the child

- Developmental delay
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer, e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or no attachment
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Child scapegoated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children
- Low self esteem and lack of confidence

- Withdrawn or seen as a 'loner' - difficulty relating to others
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)
- Self-harm
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing
- Low self-esteem
- Air of detachment – 'don't care' attitude
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends
- Depression, withdrawal
- Behavioural problems, e.g. aggression, attention seeking, hyperactivity, poor attention
- Low self esteem, lack of confidence, fearful, distressed, anxious
- Poor peer relationships including withdrawn or isolated behaviour

Indicators in the parent

- Domestic abuse, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may be features in families where children are exposed to abuse.
- Abnormal attachment to child, e.g. overly anxious or disinterest in the child
- Scapegoats one child in the family
- Imposes inappropriate expectations on the child, e.g. prevents the child's developmental exploration or learning, or normal social interaction through overprotection.
- Wider parenting difficulties may (or may not) be associated with this form of abuse.

Indicators of in the family/environment

- Lack of support from family or social network.
- Marginalised or isolated by the community.
- History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
- History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
- Past history of childhood abuse, self-harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.

Sexual abuse

This involves forcing or enticing a young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities.

Activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Indicators in the child

- Makes a disclosure
- Demonstrates sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate to age/stage of development, or that is unusually explicit
- Inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Self-harm, e.g. eating disorders, self-mutilation and suicide attempts
- Poor self-image, self-harm, self-hatred
- Reluctant to undress for PE
- Running away from home
- Poor attention or concentration (in a world of their own)
- Sudden changes in school work habits, become a truant
- Withdrawal, isolation or excessive worrying
- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually exploited or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- Wetting or other regressive behaviours, e.g. thumb sucking
- Draws sexually explicit pictures
- Depression

Indicators in the parents

- Comments made by the parent/carer about the child.
- Lack of sexual boundaries
- Wider parenting difficulties or vulnerabilities
- Grooming behaviour
- Parent is a sex offender

Indicators in the family/environment

- Marginalised or isolated by the community.
- History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.

- History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
- Past history of childhood abuse, self-harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement
- Family member is a sex offender

Sexual exploitation

The Department for Education defines child sexual exploitation as a form of child abuse ('child' being defined as anyone under 18 years of age). It can manifest itself in different ways but essentially involves children and young people receiving something - for example, accommodation, drugs, gifts, or affection – as a result of them performing sexual activities, or having others perform sexual activities on them.

An enhanced section of information pertaining to sexual exploitation can be found in annex G

Neglect

Involves the persistent failure to meet a young person's or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health and development.

Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Indicators in the child

Physical presentation

- Failure to thrive or, in older children, short stature
- Underweight
- Frequent hunger
- Dirty, unkempt condition
- Inadequately clothed, clothing in a poor state of repair
- Red/purple mottled skin, particularly on the hands and feet, seen in the winter due to cold
- Swollen limbs with sores that are slow to heal, usually associated with cold injury
- Abnormal voracious appetite
- Dry, sparse hair
- Recurrent/untreated infections or skin conditions, e.g. eczema or persistent head lice, scabies, diarrhoea
- Unmanaged/untreated health or medical conditions, including poor dental health
- Frequent accidents or injuries

Development

- General delay, especially speech and language delay
- Inadequate social skills and poor socialisation

Emotional/behavioural presentation

- Attachment disorders
- Absence of normal social responsiveness
- Indiscriminate behaviour in relationships with adults

- Emotionally needy
- Compulsive stealing
- Constant tiredness
- Frequently absent or late at school
- Poor self-esteem
- Destructive tendencies
- Thrives away from home environment
- Aggressive and impulsive behaviour
- Disturbed peer relationships
- Self-harming behaviour

Indicators in the parent

- Dirty, unkempt presentation
- Inadequately clothed
- Inadequate social skills and poor socialisation
- Abnormal attachment to the child, e.g. anxious
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Failure to meet the basic essential needs, e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene
- Failure to meet the child's health and medical needs, e.g. poor dental health, failure to attend or keep appointments with health visitor, GP or hospital, lack of GP registration, failure to seek or comply with appropriate medical treatment, failure to address parental substance misuse during pregnancy
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods
- Wider parenting difficulties may (or may not) be associated with this form of abuse

Indicators in the family/environment

- History of neglect in the family
- Family marginalised or isolated by the community.
- Family has history of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
- History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
- Family has a past history of childhood abuse, self harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.
- Dangerous or hazardous home environment including failure to use home safety equipment; risk from animals
- Poor state of home environment e.g. unhygienic facilities, lack of appropriate sleeping arrangements, inadequate ventilation (including passive smoking) and lack of adequate heating
- Lack of opportunities for child to play and learn

The Context of Abuse

Family Circumstances:

Domestic Violence

Where there is domestic violence the implications for the vulnerable adult or young person at school and for younger children in the household must be considered. Young people from families with a history of domestic violence often have behavioural difficulties, absenteeism, ill health, bullying, and drug and alcohol misuse.

Drug/alcohol abusing parents

There is an increased risk of violence in families where this occurs. A young person at school may have to take on responsibilities for younger children in the family.

Forced Marriages

Forced marriage is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage. Forced marriage is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic violence. Young people at risk of a forced marriage are usually experiencing physical and/or emotional abuse at home.

Mental Health Issues

Self-harming and suicidal behaviour

Self harm, suicide threats and gestures by a young person or vulnerable adult must always be taken seriously and may be indicative of a serious mental or emotional disturbance. The possibility that self-harm, including a serious eating disorder has been caused or triggered by any form of abuse or chronic neglect should not be overlooked.

Abuse by peer group: bullying, racism and abuse

- i) Bullying is a common form of deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, when it is difficult for the victims to defend themselves.
- ii) It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting); verbal (e.g. threats); and emotional (e.g. isolating the individual).
- iii) It may involve physical, sexual or emotional abuse including homophobic, sexual, racial or religious harassment, or behaviour which is offensive to those with learning or physical disabilities.
- iv) Severe harm may be caused to young people and vulnerable adults by the abusive and bullying behaviour of their peers. The damage inflicted by bullying is often underestimated and can cause considerable distress. In extreme cases it can cause significant harm, including self-harm.

Annex B

Guidance on Relationships with Students

1. The majority of staff who work with young people and vulnerable adults in education settings act professionally and seek to provide a safe and supportive environment for students. It is recognised that achieving this aim is not always straightforward. Much relies on student and staff interactions where tensions and misunderstandings can occur. It is here that staff behaviours can give rise to allegations being made against them. Allegations may be genuine, malicious or misplaced. They may arise from differing perceptions of the same event, but when they occur, they are inevitably distressing and difficult for all concerned.
2. This guidance should not be interpreted to mean that, in order to avoid misplaced allegations, all forms of physical or close contact with students should be avoided. There will be occasions where physical contact is appropriate, e.g. in situations where a degree of physical intervention is required. The guidance is concerned with avoiding sexual activity in a relationship of trust and other contact which may be inappropriate.

Relationships of Trust

3. A relationship of trust exists where a coach, member of staff or volunteer is in a position of power or influence over a student by virtue of the work or nature of the activity being undertaken. Those in a position of trust must carry the responsibility of ensuring that they do not abuse their position or put themselves in a position where allegations of abuse of trust, whether justified or unfounded, could be made.
4. It is important to recognize that a variety of circumstances can arise, including a sexual relationship at one end of the scale, through close friendships, to, at the other end of the scale, an innocent situation which has been entirely misconstrued. Staff and volunteers should take steps to minimize the risk of circumstances being misconstrued or misunderstood and relationships with language and conduct which could give rise to comment and speculation.
5. All staff should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their dealings with students. Intimate or sexual relationships between staff and students will be regarded as a grave breach of trust. Where a relationship of trust exists, allowing a relationship to develop in a way that might lead to a sexual relationship is wrong. A sexual relationship will be intrinsically unequal within a relationship of trust and is therefore unacceptable. Abuse of trust involving sexual activity with a young person under 18 or a vulnerable adult who is a student at the School is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.
6. From time to time staff may encounter students who display attention-seeking behaviour, profess to be attracted to them or begin to develop a relationship of emotional dependency. Particular care should be exercised if the student is vulnerable. Staff should aim to deal with those situations sensitively and appropriately, but ensure that their behaviour cannot be misinterpreted. The member of staff or volunteer should inform their line manager if they have any concerns or if there is a concern that a young person is becoming attracted to him or her, or that there is a developing attachment or dependency. If a member of staff or volunteer is concerned that s/he might be developing a relationship with a young person which could have the potential to represent an abuse of trust, the first advice must be to ensure that the relationship does not develop further. Arrangements should be made by the line manager to minimise direct contact between the student and member of staff or volunteer and to prevent all contact if possible. Where contact must take place another member of staff should be present at all times.
7. Staff should be aware that private meetings with individual students might give rise to concern. There will be occasions when a confidential interview or a one-to-one meeting is necessary. Such

interviews should be conducted in a room with visual access or an area which is likely to be frequented by other people. Another student should be present or nearby. Where such conditions cannot apply, staff should ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place.

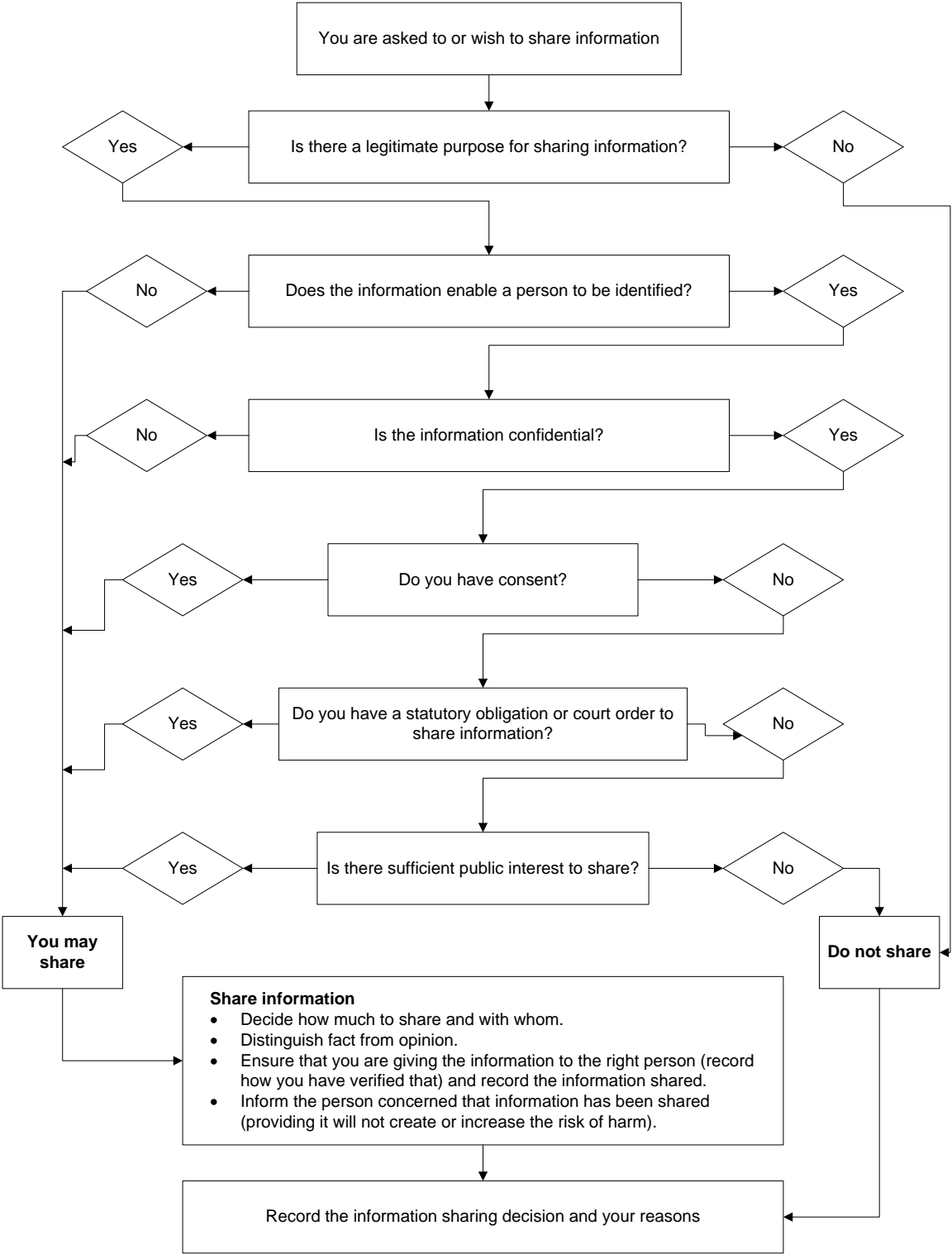
8. Students should not be asked or encouraged to visit the home of a member of staff or socialise informally outside school. These contacts or visits can place staff in a vulnerable position and can in some case lead to allegations being made against staff. Additional tuition for students should be conducted on school premises.
9. The following are examples of actions, albeit not overtly abusive, that could be interpreted as a member of staff 'grooming' a student or allowing a dependent relationship to begin or continue.
 1. Inviting students to their home.
 2. Visiting students at their home.
 3. Giving students gifts.
 4. Offering students lifts outside normal duties.
 5. Singling individual students out for special attention.
 6. Seeing students socially.
 7. Giving students their mobile or home telephone number
 8. Befriending of students on social networking sites

The frequency, nature and degree of such behaviour may justify the need for further investigation.

Physical Contact

10. Physical contact may be misconstrued by a student, parent or observer. Touching students, including well-intentioned gestures such as putting a hand on a shoulder, can, if repeated regularly, lead to serious questions being raised, particularly if this occurs when a member of staff is alone with a student. As a general principle, staff must not make gratuitous physical contact with their students. It is particularly unwise to attribute touching to their teaching style or as a way of relating to students.
11. There may also be occasions where a distressed student needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comforting such as caring parent would give. Staff should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same student over a period of time. Where a member of staff has particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should seek the advice of the Director.
12. Some staff are also likely to come into physical contact with students from time to time in the course of their duties. Examples of this could include sports coaching which may involve non-sexual physical contact. Contact of this type should not take place when a member of staff is alone with a student.
13. In care situations where a student may require assistance with personal care such as toileting. Staff should respect the student's right to dignity and the level of support needed agreed with the student. Staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted. Staff should inform their line manager of the level of support they have agreed with the student.

**Child Protection and the Protection of Vulnerable Adults
Principles for information sharing**



CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY**Nominated Governor for Safeguarding**

Name	Job Title	Telephone Ext No
Gordon Tacey	Trustee	

Designated Senior Person

Name	Job Title	Telephone Ext No
Phillip Clooney	Business Links and Lead Personal Coach	386

Safeguarding and Child Protection Officers

Name	Job Title	Telephone Ext No
Gill Laird	Headteacher	384
Andy Allsop	Health & Safety Officer	237

REPORTING AND DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST MEMBERS OF STAFF

This procedure has been drawn up in consultation with staff, unions and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

The procedures apply to all staff, whether coaching, administrative, management or support, as well as to volunteers. The word “staff” is used for ease of description.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In rare instances, staff of education institutions have been found responsible for child abuse. Because of their frequent contact with children and young people, staff may have allegations of child abuse made against them. The School recognises that an allegation of child abuse made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and that investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.
- 1.2 The School recognises that the Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of the child is the paramount concern. It is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual’s reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within the School will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way.

2 Receiving an Allegation

- 2.1 A member of staff who receives an allegation about another member of staff should follow the guidelines in Part C for dealing with disclosure
- 2.2 The allegation should be reported immediately to the Headteacher, unless the Headteacher is the person against whom the allegation is made, in which case the report should be made to the Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility [or the Designated Governor]. The Headteacher (or designated person if the allegation is against the Headteacher) should:
 - 2.2.1 Obtain written details of the allegation from the person who received it, that are signed and dated. The written details should be countersigned and dated by the Headteacher (or designated person).
 - 2.2.2 Record information about times, dates, locations and names of potential witnesses

3 Initial Assessment by The Headteacher (or designated person)

- 3.1 The Headteacher (or designated person) should make an initial assessment of the allegation, consulting with the Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility, the Designated Governor and the local social services department or agency as determined by local arrangements as appropriate. Where the allegation is considered to be either a potential criminal act or indicates that the child has

suffered, is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the matter should be reported immediately to the local social services department.

3.2 It is important that the Headteacher (or designated person) does not investigate the allegation. The initial assessment should be on the basis of the information received and is a decision whether or not the allegation warrants further investigation.

3.3 Other potential outcomes are:

3.3.1 The allegation represents inappropriate behaviour or poor practice by the member of staff and is neither potentially a crime nor a cause of significant harm to the child. The matter should be addressed in accordance with the School disciplinary procedures.

3.3.2 The allegation can be shown to be false because the facts alleged could not possibly be true.

4 Enquiries and Investigations

4.1 Child protection enquiries by social care or the police are not to be confused with internal, disciplinary enquiries by the School. The School may be able to use the outcome of external agency enquiries as part of its own procedures. The child protection agencies, including the police, have no power to direct the School to act in a particular way, however, the School should assist the agencies with their enquiries.

4.2 The School shall hold in abeyance its own internal enquiries while the formal police or social services investigations proceed; to do otherwise may prejudice the investigation. Any internal enquiries shall conform with the existing staff disciplinary procedures.

4.3 If there is an investigation by an external agency, for example the police, the Headteacher (or designated person) should normally be involved in, and contribute to, the inter-agency strategy discussions. The Headteacher (or designated person) is responsible for ensuring that the School gives every assistance with the agency's enquiries. At this stage agreement should be reached that police and/or social services information gathered during their inquiries, including witness statements, will be made available to the school to assist with any internal inquiries. He/she will ensure that appropriate confidentiality is maintained in connection with the enquiries, in the interests of the member of staff about whom the allegation is made. The Headteacher (or designated person) shall advise the member of staff that he/she should consult with a representative, for example, a trade union.

4.4 The Headteacher (or designated person) will consult with the police or other investigating agency (eg social care), particularly in relation to timing and content of the information to be provided, and shall:

4.4.1 inform the young person/vulnerable adult or parent/carer making the allegation that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.

- 4.4.2 Ensure that the parents/carers of the young person/vulnerable adult making the allegation have been informed that the allegation has been made and what the likely process will involve.
 - 4.4.3 Inform the member of staff against whom the allegation was made of the fact that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
 - 4.4.4 Inform the Chair of Governors (and/or the designated governor) of the allegation and the investigation.
- 4.5 The Headteacher (or designated person) shall keep a written record of the action taken in connection with the allegation.

5 Suspension of Staff

- 5.1 Suspension should not be automatic. In respect of staff other than the Headteacher, suspension can only be carried out by the Headteacher. In respect of the Headteacher, suspension can only be carried out by the Chair of Governors (or in his/her absence, the Vice Chair).
- 5.2 Suspension may be considered at any stage of the investigation. It is a neutral, not a disciplinary, act and shall be on full pay. Consideration should be given to alternatives: eg paid leave of absence; agreement to refrain from attending work; change of, or withdrawal from, specified duties.
- 5.3 Suspension should only occur for a good reason. For example:
 - 5.3.1 where a young person or vulnerable adult is at risk.
 - 5.3.2 where the allegations are potentially sufficiently serious to justify dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct.
 - 5.3.3 where necessary for the good and efficient conduct of the investigation.
- 5.4 If suspension is being considered, the member of staff should be encouraged to seek advice, for example from a trade union.
- 5.5 Prior to making the decision to suspend, the Headteacher (or Chair or Vice Chair of Governors) should interview the member of staff. This should occur with the approval of the appropriate agency [identified by the LSCB]. In particular, if the police are engaged in an investigation the officer in charge of the case should be consulted.
- 5.6 The member of staff should be advised to seek the advice and/or assistance of his/her trade union and should be informed that they have the right to be accompanied by a friend. The member of staff should be informed that an allegation has been made and that consideration is being given to suspension. It should be made clear that the interview is not a formal disciplinary hearing, but

solely for raising a serious matter which may lead to suspension and further investigation.

- 5.7 During the interview, the member of staff should be given as much information as possible, in particular the reasons for any proposed suspension, provided that doing so would not interfere with the investigation into the allegation. The interview is not intended to establish the member of staff's innocence or guilt, but give the opportunity for the member of staff to make representations about possible suspension. The member of staff should be given the opportunity to consider any information given to him/her at the meeting and prepare a response, although that adjournment may be brief.
- 5.8 If the Headteacher (or Chair, or Vice Chair, of Governors) considers that suspension is necessary, the member of staff shall be informed that he/she is suspended from duty. Written confirmation of the suspension, with reasons, shall be despatched as soon as possible, and ideally within one working day.
- 5.9 Where a member of staff is suspended, the Headteacher (or Chair, or Vice Chair, of Governors) should address the following issues:
 - 5.9.1 the Chair of Governors should be informed of the suspension in writing.
 - 5.9.2 the Governing Body should receive a report that a member of staff has been suspended pending investigation, the detail given to the governing body should be minimal
 - 5.9.3 where the Headteacher has been suspended, the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors will need to take action to address the management of the College
 - 5.9.4 the parents/carers of the young person or vulnerable adult making the allegation should be informed of the suspension. They should be asked to treat the information as confidential. Consideration should be given to informing the young person or vulnerable adult making the allegation of the suspension
 - 5.9.5 senior staff who need to know of the reason for the suspension should be informed
 - 5.9.6 depending on the nature of the allegation, the Headteacher should consider [with the nominated Governor] whether a statement to the students of the School and/or parents/carers should be made, taking due regard of the need to avoid unwelcome publicity
- 5.10 The Headteacher shall consider carefully and review the decisions as to who is informed of the suspension and investigation. The LSCB and external investigating authorities should be consulted.

5.11 The suspended member of staff should be given appropriate support during the period of suspension. He/she should also be provided with information on progress and developments in the case at regular intervals.

5.12 The suspension should remain under review in accordance with the School disciplinary procedures.

6 The Disciplinary Investigation

6.1 The disciplinary investigation should be conducted in accordance with the existing staff disciplinary procedures.

6.2 The member of staff should be informed of:

6.2.1 the disciplinary charge against him/her.

6.2.2 his/her entitlement to be accompanied or represented by a trade union representative or friend.

A senior member of staff will be appointed to conduct the investigation or an independent investigation may be commissioned. Where there has been police and/or social services inquiries, information from these should be sought to prevent the need to re-interview the complainant or witnesses.

The senior member of staff/independent investigator should assess the information available and determine how the matter should be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedures.

The outcome of police inquiries should inform, but should not determine the approach to be taken. It is important to bear in mind the difference between a criminal investigation and trial, where the proof must be 'beyond reasonable doubt' and a civil process such as the discipline procedures, where the college's primary duty is to safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. In such processes decisions are reached on the balance of probabilities. It should be remembered that there are many reasons why a prosecution may not be pursued or may fail, while there is sufficient evidence to indicate that there are continuing risks.

Advice about such situations should be sought from the Child Protection and Review Unit at Leicestershire Social Services

The outcome of the investigation and/or formal consideration of the information could be:

- no disciplinary action
- oral warning
- written warning
- final written warning
- dismissal

6.3 Where the member of staff has been suspended and no disciplinary action is to be taken, the suspension should be lifted immediately and arrangements made for the member of staff to return to work. It may be appropriate to offer counselling.

6.4 The child/children or vulnerable adult(s) making the allegation and/or their parents should be informed of the outcome of the investigation and proceedings. This should occur prior to the return to School of the member of staff (if suspended).

6.5 The Headteacher (or designated person) should give consideration to what information should be made available to the general population of the School.

7 Allegations which are considered not proven

7.1 False allegations are extremely rare. There are many reasons why a young person or vulnerable adult may withdraw an allegation once made. They may also have misinterpreted actions by the member of staff. Investigators should be cautious in assuming that an allegation is false or malicious. Obviously false allegations may be indicative of problems of abuse elsewhere. A record should be kept and consideration given to a referral to the local social services department or agency as determined by local arrangements in order that other agencies may act upon the information.

7.2 In consultation with the designated senior member of staff [and/or the designated Governor], the Headteacher shall:

7.2.1 inform the member of staff against whom the allegation is made orally and in writing that no further disciplinary or child protection action will be taken. Consideration should be given to offering counselling/support;

7.2.2 inform the parents/carers of the alleged victim that the allegation has been made and of the outcome;

7.2.3 where the allegation was made by a child or vulnerable adult other than the alleged victim, consideration to be given to informing the parents/carers of that child or vulnerable adult;

7.2.4 prepare a report outlining the allegation and giving reasons for the conclusion that it had no foundation and confirming that the above action had been taken.

8 Records

8.1 It is important that documents relating to an investigation are retained in a secure place, together with a written record of the outcome and, if disciplinary action is taken, details retained on the member of staff's personal and confidential file. Where the allegation is found to be without foundation, a record of the allegation, investigation and outcome should be retained.

8.2 If a member of staff is dismissed or resigns before the disciplinary process is completed, he/she should be informed about the School's statutory duty to inform the Secretary of State for Education under the "List 99" procedures.

9 Monitoring Effectiveness

Where an allegation has been made against a member of staff, the nominated Governor, together with the senior staff member with lead responsibility should, at the conclusion of the investigation and any disciplinary procedures, consider whether there are any matters arising from it that could lead to the improvement of the School's procedures and/or policies and/or which should be drawn to the attention of the LSCB.

E-safety and Use of Personal Social Media Networks

It is recognised that the use of new technologies presents particular challenges and risks to children both inside and outside of school. Stephenson Studio School will ensure a comprehensive curriculum response to enable all students/students to learn about and manage the associated risks effectively and will support parents and the school community (including all members of staff) to become aware and alert to the needs of keeping children safe online.

Detailed information can be found in the school's *E-safety policy* which can be found on the website and on the staff drive.

PRINCIPLES – *BE PROFESSIONAL, RESPONSIBLE AND RESPECTFUL*

You must be conscious at all times of the need to keep your personal and professional lives separate.

You should not put yourself in a position where there is a conflict between your work for the school or Stephenson College (the School's sponsor) and your personal interests.

You must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Stephenson Studio School or Stephenson College into disrepute.

You must not represent your personal views as those of Stephenson Studio School or Stephenson College on any social medium.

You must not discuss personal information about students, Stephenson Studio School or Stephenson College staff and other professionals you interact with as part of your job on social media.

You must not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame students, their family members, colleagues, other professionals, other organisations, Stephenson Studio School or Stephenson College.

You must be accurate, fair and transparent when creating or altering online sources of information on behalf of Stephenson Studio School or Stephenson College.

PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Staff members must not identify themselves as employees of Stephenson Studio School or Stephenson College or service providers for the school or Stephenson College in their personal webspace. This is to prevent information on these sites from being linked with the school and the Stephenson College and to safeguard the privacy of staff members, particularly those involved in providing sensitive frontline services.

Staff members must not have contact through any personal social medium with any students, whether from Stephenson Studio School or any other school, unless the students are family members.

Stephenson Studio School does not expect staff members to discontinue contact with their family members via personal social media once the school starts providing services for them. However, any

information staff members obtain in the course of their employment must not be used for personal gain nor be passed on to others who may use it in such a way.

Staff members must not have any contact with students' family members through personal social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their objectivity.

If staff members wish to communicate with students through social media sites or to enable students to keep in touch with one another, they can only do so with the approval of the school and through official school sites

Staff members must decline 'friend requests' from students they receive in their personal social media accounts. Instead, if they receive such requests from students who are not family members, they must discuss these in general terms in class and signpost students to become 'friends' of the official school site.

On leaving Stephenson Studio School service, staff members must not contact Stephenson Studio School students by means of personal social media sites. Similarly, staff members must not contact students from their former schools by means of personal social media.

Information staff members have access to as part of their employment, including personal information about students and their family members, colleagues, and other parties and school or Stephenson College corporate information must not be discussed on their personal webpage.

Photographs, videos or any other types of image of students and their families or images depicting students wearing school uniforms or clothing with the school logo must not be published on personal webpage.

School or Stephenson College email addresses and other official contact details must not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.

Staff members must not edit open access online encyclopaedias such as *Wikipedia* in a personal capacity at work. This is because the source of the correction will be recorded as the employer's IP address and the intervention will, therefore, appear as if it comes from the employer itself.

Stephenson Studio School or Stephenson College corporate, service or team logos or brands must not be used or published on personal webpage.

Stephenson Studio School only permits limited personal use of social media while at work. Access to social media sites for personal reasons is not allowed between 9am and 5pm. There is a daily quota of 30 minutes to access these sites outside these hours. However, staff members are expected to devote their contracted hours of work to their professional duties and, in practice, personal use of the internet should not be on the school's time.

Caution is advised when inviting work colleagues to be 'friends' in personal social networking sites. Social networking sites blur the line between work and personal lives and it may be difficult to maintain professional relationships or it might be just too embarrassing if too much personal information is known in the work place.

Staff members are strongly advised to ensure that they set the privacy levels of their personal sites as strictly as they can and to opt out of public listings on social networking sites to protect their own privacy. Staff members should keep their passwords confidential, change them often and be careful

about what is posted online; it is not safe to reveal home addresses, telephone numbers and other personal information. It is a good idea to use a separate email address just for social networking so that any other contact details are not given away.

Sexual Exploitation

It can occur without physical contact when children are groomed to post sexual images of themselves on the internet. In all cases, those exploiting the child or young person have power over them, perhaps by virtue of their age or physical strength. Exploitative relationships are characterised in the main by the child's limited availability of choices, compounding their vulnerability. This inequality can take many forms, but the most obvious include fear, deception, coercion and violence.

Localised grooming is a model of child sexual exploitation in which a group of abusers target vulnerable children, including, but not confined to, those who are looked after by a local authority. The group typically makes initial contact with victims in a public place such as a park, cinema, on the street or at a friend's house. The children are offered gifts and treats - takeaway food, sweets, cigarettes, alcohol or drugs - in exchange for sex, sometimes with dozens of men on the same occasion. There will often be occasions where they are missing from home although such times may be less than 24 hours. The children sometimes identify one offender as a 'boyfriend', and might regard the sexual abuse by multiple offenders as 'normal'. The gangs sometimes use younger men or boys to make the initial approach, reinforcing the misapprehension that the children are involved in consensual relationships with partners of a similar age. In a number of cases, victims are internally trafficked within the UK, being taken to other towns for the express purpose of being 'given' or 'sold' for sexual exploitation.

Children involved in any form of sexual exploitation should be treated primarily as the victims of abuse and their needs carefully assessed; the aim should be to protect them from further harm and they should not be treated as criminals. The primary law enforcement response should be directed at perpetrators who groom children for sexual exploitation.

Due to the nature of the grooming methods used by their abusers, it is very common for children and young people who are sexually exploited not to recognise that they are being abused. Practitioners should be aware that particularly young people aged 17 and 18 may believe themselves to be acting voluntarily and will need practitioners to work with them so they can recognise that they are being sexually exploited.

Teachers are more likely to see victims on a regular basis than almost any other professional. They will notice recurrent or prolonged absences and significant changes in behaviour.

If any staff member or volunteer has concerns about other staff members or volunteers possibly grooming children, or having poor boundaries with children, the Headteacher or the DSP should be immediately informed. The Headteacher or DSP should then seek consultation with the local authority in line with the allegations management procedure, or directly with the Police if there are very serious immediate concerns.

As much as possible, it is important that the young person is involved in decisions that are made in respect of them.