

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

We, the staff and governors, aspire to ensure that all our students, irrespective of ability and regardless of anyone's doubts, achieve their potential in full; and we aspire in this way to make Thomas Mills High School the best in the country.

Thomas Mills High School is committed to the education, welfare, protection and safety of its pupils.

Staff members should always act in the best interests of the child.

The child's best interests come first always.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children are everyone's responsibility.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 It is the Governors' policy that the School should do all it can to protect children from harm.
- 1.2 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined 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; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. (DfE September 2018)
- 1.3 The policy applies to all staff, parents, governors, volunteers, visitors and pupils.
- 1.4 The School aims to promote the protection and welfare of children in partnership with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies and will endeavour to work in an open and honest way with any parent whose child has been referred to Children and Young People's Services.
- 1.5 Parents are informed of the safeguarding policy through the School Prospectus. It is also available on the website.
- 1.6 The Governing Body receives a report on Safeguarding Issues each term. It also reviews the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy annually. There is a Named Governor (Mrs Sue Preston) for safeguarding, nominated from the Governing Body. The Alternative Named Governor is Ms Kate Archer.

2. Staff Responsibilities

- 2.1 When staff join Thomas Mills High School they are given a copy of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and told who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mr Mark Wheeler, Deputy Headteacher). A file containing safeguarding procedures is held in the school office for regular visitors and volunteers to the school to read and sign.
- 2.2 All staff should read Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff of the Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance, issued as a coloured booklet separately from this policy.
- 2.3 Child Protection training is provided in school every two years for staff, volunteers and governors. The need for additional training is monitored. The Designated Safeguarding Lead undertakes annual training. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (Miss Louise Armes, Assistant Headteacher and Mr Matthew Ward, Assistant Headteacher) undertake training biannually. The Nominated Governor undertakes training at least every two years and reports back to the governors.
- 2.4 Staff are reminded at least annually (for example, on the first Staff Professional Day of the school year) of their duties regarding safeguarding. Up to date information is available from the safeguarding children website (www.suffolkscb.org.uk) and from www.teachernet.com. The T4T (Trainer for Teachers, Mr Wheeler, DSL) takes the lead in updating staff.
- 2.5 All staff have access to and are expected to know the school policy on Reasonable Force (Section 5.8 of the Behaviour Policy) and know what to do if some form of physical contact with a child is inevitable in the interests of safety.
- 2.6 All staff are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct. For example, anyone working alone with a child will, wherever possible, be visible to other members of staff. Most office doors and the medical rooms have glass panels. If the room being used does not have a glass panel the door should be kept open.
- 2.7 All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. (Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges.)
- 2.8 In particular, staff should be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who is disabled and has specific additional needs; has special educational needs; is a young carer; is showing signs of being drawn to anti-social or criminal behaviour; is frequently missing or goes missing from care or home; is misusing drugs or alcohol; is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation.
- 2.9 All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify children who may need help or protection. Indicators of abuse and neglect and examples of safeguarding issues are included in Appendix 1.
- 2.10 If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare they should act on them immediately.
- 2.11 Any child who leaves the school is reported on a 'Missing in Education' form by the Administrative Officer (Pupils) to ensure that no child's removal from the roll remains unaccounted for. All absences from school are monitored and pursued by the Administrative Officer (Attendance).

3. Reporting Child Protection Concerns

- 3.1 The Deputy Headteacher (Mr Mark Wheeler) is the Designated Safeguarding Lead to whom all matters concerning child protection should be referred.
- 3.2 Normally, any report to parents, carers, police or social services will be made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead or, in their absence, the Headteacher. (The procedures of the Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board are followed.) However, everyone has a responsibility to act in the best interests of the child and to take appropriate action. Heads of Year and tutors are also particularly responsible for monitoring pupil welfare and contacting parents and outside agencies as needed e.g. making a referral to Early Help.
- 3.3 If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made to Customer First and/or the police immediately.
- 3.4 Staff have a duty to report any knowledge or genuine suspicion of abuse without delay either to the Deputy Headteacher or, in his absence, to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (Miss Louise Armes and Mr Matthew Ward).
- 3.5 The DSL will seek advice from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub whenever clarification of procedures or actions is needed.
- 3.6 The duty to report any knowledge or genuine suspicion of abuse applies regardless of who the suspected person may be. Failure to comply with that duty will be treated as misconduct for the purposes of the School Disciplinary Procedure, and in relation to an allegation against another member of staff, loyalty to a colleague would not provide an excuse.

4. Records and Monitoring

- 4.1 Any adult in the school who is concerned about the welfare or safety of a child records his/her concern and gives this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Any information so recorded is kept securely, in a separate file, apart from the child's Pupil Educational Record (school file). Such information is highly confidential and will only be shared on a need to know basis for the protection of the child.
- 4.2 Concerns, handwritten and preferably on the green 'Safeguarding Concern Referral Form' (available in the staff room), must be signed and dated. If necessary, a simple sketch should be made of any marks or apparent injury.

5. Allegations against Staff

- 5.1 The School has regard to Suffolk County Council's guidance regarding allegations made against adults who come into contact with children. Neither the Headteacher nor any other member of school staff will investigate these matters but will seek, and then work with, appropriate advice from the (Local Authority) Designated Officer for Safeguarding ("LADO" – Rennie Everett and Dian Campbell 0300 1232044 LADOCentral@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk). Should an allegation be made against the Headteacher, this will be reported to the Chairman of Governors who will liaise with the LADO.

6. Child Protection Conferences

- 6.1 Usually the person attending from this school is the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. Other staff may be required to attend child protection

conferences or core group meetings to represent the school. Reports for the former are prepared in advance using the Education Report to Child Protection Conference form.

7. Selection and Recruitment

- 7.1 Job advertisements include the words: “This School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment”.
- 7.2 This Safeguarding Policy Statement is sent as part of the pack of information to job applicants.
- 7.3 The invitation to interview includes a statement that the interview may include a question on safeguarding children.
- 7.4 The reference request pro-forma includes questions on the candidate’s suitability to work with children. It asks about the candidate’s: performance history and conduct, disciplinary investigations, proven disciplinary offences, specific concerns regarding working with children, suitability for the post and behaviour management expertise
- 7.5 The Interviewing Panel always includes someone with Safer Recruitment Training e.g. Richard
- 7.6 Candidates called to interview are asked to bring with them original photographic ID (passport, new driving licence) plus documentary proof of qualifications. These items will be checked as part of the interview process. All pre-appointment checks, required in the statutory guidance will be made, instituted by the Headteacher’s PA.

8. Induction

- 8.1 The Code of Conduct defines the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for members of staff.
- 8.2 Newly appointed staff are asked to read the school’s Code of Conduct and to indicate that they are familiar with the Safeguarding and Behaviour Policies. They are asked to sign a statement, which is filed, to confirm this and that they have read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- 8.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead goes through these policies with each new member of staff.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

- 9.1 The Headteacher is responsible for identifying a senior member of staff to be the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 9.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead liaises with Children and Young People’s Services and other agencies where necessary, and make referrals to Children and Young People’s Services.
- 9.3 Any concern for a child’s safety or welfare is recorded in writing and given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 9.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or other appropriate member of staff) represents the school at Child Protection Conferences and Core Group meetings and is responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of this policy and the procedures they need to follow.
- 9.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead ensures that all staff, volunteers and regular visitors have received appropriate child protection information during induction and organises appropriate training for staff.

9.6 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is kept up to date with current Safeguarding issues through the Safeguarding in Education Team and has available sources of further information and guidance (e.g. regarding Trafficked Children, Children Missing Education, Domestic Abuse, Female Genital Mutilation etc.)

9.7 All staff are given 'Prevent' training in line with current Home Office policy.

10. Role of the Governing Body

10.1 The Governing Body of Thomas Mills High School ensures that the safeguarding policy is in place and is reviewed annually. The policy is referred to in our school prospectus. The content of the policy has been written using advice given by the Local Authority and Safeguarding Children Board and particularly with regard to the statutory guidance issued September 2018 "Keeping Children Safe in Education". A Summary of this guidance is given to all staff.

10.2 The Governing Body receives a safeguarding report termly covering such things as training and numbers involved, and any developments with regard to safeguarding. No individual pupil will be identified.

10.3 Should an allegation be made against the Headteacher, the Chairman of Governors will be responsible for liaising with the LADO.

10.4 At all times the Headteacher and Governing Body ensure that safe recruitment practices are followed. At Thomas Mills High School evidence is required of original academic certificates. Testimonials are not accepted and references are taken up prior to interview if possible. No appointment is made without satisfactory references being obtained first. Questions are asked about the content of application forms if there is any lack of clarity. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are undertaken and every means available is used to ensure that the most suitable people are recruited and selected to work with children.

Appendix 1

Types of abuse and neglect

1. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or by another child or children. (Peer on peer abuse.)
2. **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which 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.

Child abuse should be suspected in the following circumstances:

- when an injury is unexplained or the explanation is inconsistent with the injury;
 - when injuries are frequent or when there is evidence of previous unreported injuries such as multiple bruises of varying ages;
 - where there has been some delay in seeking help following an injury, or where help was only sought after prompting by someone outside the family;
 - where there is evidence of “finger-tip bruising”, i.e., caused by gripping part of a child’s body tightly to shake it;
 - where there is bruising in unusual places, a ruptured frenulum of the upper lip, burns which could have been caused by cigarettes or scalds on the buttocks.
3. **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child 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 a 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 cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Symptoms that could indicate emotional abuse include:

- Excessively attention seeking.
 - Very low self-esteem or excessive self-criticism.
 - Withdrawn behaviour or fearfulness.
 - Lack of appropriate boundaries with strangers; too eager to please.
 - Eating disorders or self-harm.
4. **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The 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. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue.

5. **Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, 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.

6. **Specific safeguarding issues:**

These include:

- bullying including cyberbullying
- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- children as witnesses in court
- children missing education
- children missing from home or care
- children with family members in prison
- 'county lines'
- domestic abuse (incl. violence)
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM) – it is mandatory that teachers personally report this to the police
- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- hate
- homelessness
- mental health
- missing children and adults
- peer on peer abuse
- preventing radicalisation
- private fostering
- relationship abuse
- sexting
- sexual violence and sexual harassment (including 'upskirting')
- so called 'honour-based' violence
- trafficking

Adults need to be alert to:

- safeguarding issues which manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse;

- the need to refer for early help when concerned about a child;
- previous history of child abuse in the family – abuse of parents themselves as children or of the child or its siblings;
- family stress, housing difficulties, unemployment, financial problems, drunkenness, inadequacy, marital stress, isolation from the extended family;
- warning signs of children being left alone, deterioration in school attendance and the failure of professionals such as Health Visitors and Social Workers to gain access to the home;
- in cases of suspected sexual abuse, specific patterns such as over-sexual play or drawings, poor self-esteem, masturbation, changes in behaviour, wetting, soiling, disruptive or withdrawn behaviour, depression, promiscuous behaviour.

7. Allegations of abuse made against other children:

Any allegation of peer on peer abuse, for example, bullying (including cyberbullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting, will be followed up seriously and never tolerated or passed off as ‘banter’ or ‘part of growing up’.

The DSL will follow up allegations, working with Heads of Year, contacting parents, arranging sanctions and also support from school staff, counsellor or nurse as necessary, and taking advice from the MASH consultation line if needed.

8. Online Safety

The school seeks to safeguard pupils from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material and to educate them in safe and appropriate use of such technology. This includes a filtering system and appropriate monitoring of use. (See also Policy on Information and Communication Technology.) Any pupil or member of staff accessing illegal, inappropriate or offensive material will be disciplined. Advice will be taken, as necessary, from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and Police.

FIVE THINGS TO TELL A CHILD WHO DECIDES TO CONFIDE IN YOU:

“I believe you”

“I’m glad you told me”

“It’s not your fault”

“I’m going to help you”

“I’m sorry this has happened to you”

NEVER PROMISE A CHILD TO KEEP A SECRET BEFORE YOU HAVE
HEARD WHAT IT IS

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE CONCERNED:

If a child makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or other child or young person, it is important that you:

- **Do** stay calm and listen carefully.
- **Do** reassure the child that he/she has done the right thing in telling you.
- **Do not** investigate or ask leading questions.
- **Do** let the child know that you will need to tell someone else.
- **Do not** promise to keep what you have been told by the child, a secret.
- **Do** inform your Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.
- **Do** make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident which you must sign and date.
- **Do not** include your opinion without stating it is your opinion.
- **Do** refer without delay.

If you are concerned that a member of staff or adult in a position of trust poses a danger to a child or young person or that they might be abusing a child or young person you should report your concerns to the Headteacher. Where those concerns relate to the Headteacher, however, this should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

(Adapted advice from the Safeguarding in Education Team, Suffolk)

Appendix 2

Thomas Mills High School

Safeguarding Children

Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Disciplinary, Capability, Harassment and Grievance Policy

Extract from A Charter of Values

“We, the staff, pupils and Governors of Thomas Mills High School, agree the following... as central to our purpose...

Equal value accorded to all persons

Courtesy, self-discipline and respect for others

Honesty, moral courage and integrity

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Code of Conduct sets out standards of conduct which staff are expected to follow when within, or representing the School. This code is not exhaustive but is written to assist staff and it is important that staff should take advice and guidance if necessary from the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.

1.2 The underlying purpose is to ensure that the School serves its community well and promotes public confidence in the integrity of the School.

1.3 All staff are strongly advised to read this Code carefully and consider the issues which it raises.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT

2.1 Exclusivity of Service

2.1.1 Each individual's off-duty hours are their personal concern, but they should avoid a position where duty and private interests conflict:

- Staff must not make private online associations/friendships with current pupils (or pupils who have left school in the last three years) via any social networking sites. Communication via staff email and the Alumni Association is acceptable.
- Staff must not communicate with current pupils using personal contact details including private email accounts, personal telephone numbers or addresses

If unsure – staff should seek advice from the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher

2.1.2 The School does not seek to preclude staff unreasonably from undertaking additional employment but you are required to devote your attention and abilities to your duties during your contracted working hours and to act in the best interests of the School at all times.

2.1.3 It follows that, regardless of whether you are employed on a full-time or part-time contract, you are required to notify the Headteacher of any employment or engagement which you intend to

undertake whilst in the employment of the School. (Including any such employment or engagement which commenced before your employment began with the School).

2.1.4 Teaching staff should not engage in additional tutoring activities outside school hours for any pupils they teach in school. This is to avoid issues of potential conflicts of interest and equality for all. If unsure – staff should seek advice from the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.

2.2 Specific Aspects

2.2.1 Safeguarding: All staff in school are required to be professional in all their dealings with young people at all times. All staff are to abide by School Policies, being particularly mindful of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

2.2.2 Health and Safety: Staff must take care of their personal hygiene, safety and welfare; and that of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions. All staff must comply with the requirements of the School Health and Safety policy and relevant legislation and regulations, and also ensure that pupils do likewise.

2.2.3 Fire: Staff must familiarise themselves with the fire precautions, procedures and drill routines. They must regard practice fire drills or building evacuations in a positive and professional manner, and ensure they are perceived by pupils as an essential precaution to prevent risk of injury or fatality.

2.2.4 Business Practice: All staff must maintain an impeccable standard of integrity in all their professional relationships.

2.2.5 Media: Other than on matters of authorised publicity, only the Headteacher is authorised to speak or send any communication on behalf of the School to members of the press or broadcast media. This authorisation may be extended by the Headteacher to other staff.

2.2.6 Copyright: Staff shall observe copyright laws on computer software, audio-visual and printed material. Further advice is available from the Business Manager.

2.2.7 Data Protection Act and GDPR

It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure the School's compliance with the Data Protection Act. Personal data must only be used to assist you to carry out your work; it must not be given to people who have no right to see it. All staff should maintain the security of all computerized databases of information on individuals, whether they are staff, pupils or members of the general public. Further advice is available from the Business Manager.

2.2.8 Photography and video recording

The recording of pupils or students (still images or video) can take place for display, publicity, to celebrate achievement and to provide records of evidence of an activity. Only school equipment should generally be used for this purpose. Mobile phones should not be used. However, staff may use their own equipment if prearranged and agreed with a member of SMT. In such circumstances a school-owned SD card (or equivalent) should be used and all images/recordings will be uploaded to the school server. No recordings should be kept by staff on any other device or location.

2.3 General Points

2.3.1 Staff should display the highest possible standards of professional behaviour.

2.3.2 Staff should wear smart business dress (including suitable footwear) avoiding cords, canvas and denim. Dress and general presentation should be appropriate to a professional workplace and staff should be mindful of the responsibility of working with children and adolescents.

2.3.3 Staff should seek to co-operate with their colleagues, providing support, help and guidance as required by them and their line manager, and enable effective communication throughout the School. The use of emails to raise points of dispute between employees is not acceptable.

2.3.4 Staff should avoid words and deeds that might bring the School into disrepute or might undermine staff in the perception of others (staff/pupils/parents/community).

2.3.5 Staff should retain professional independent objectivity, avoiding the promotion of political and personal beliefs or bias.

2.3.6 Staff should be aware of, and should follow School policies, systems and procedures.

2.3.7 Staff should attend their place of work punctually in accordance with their conditions of service and at the times agreed with their line manager. Those unable to avoid being late or absent should follow the procedure set out in the staff handbook and, whenever possible, give as much notice so that alternative cover arrangements may be made. Staff needing to leave the school site during the working day (Including for lunch) should sign out beforehand.

2.4 Administrative Duties

2.4.1 Teaching staff shall maintain and properly complete a register for all classes.

2.4.2 In order to ensure safeguards both for staff and pupils, staff must follow the school procedures as outlined in the staff handbook before: -

- taking pupils off the School premises;
- giving lifts to pupils and students (insurance and parental consent permitting)
- arranging for any visiting speakers;
- incurring any expenditure on behalf of the School.

2.5 Confidentiality

Staff shall maintain appropriately high levels of confidentiality with respect to student and staff records and other sensitive matters. They should take care not to discuss issues of particularly sensitive matters which could cause distress to School staff, pupils, parents or members of the wider community.

2.6 When in doubt, ask.

If any member of staff is in any doubt with regard to the guidelines of this Code, and how they apply in any particular situation, they must consult the Headteacher.