

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

September 2020

including COVID-19 Policy Addendum

September 2020

Statement

Summerhill is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment.

We recognise that **all adults** have a full and active part to play in protecting pupils from harm. This protective role is also performed by our students who, as they grow up in the community, naturally recognise that they can make a significant contribution to safeguarding their peers. Thus, as a community of adults and students we all recognise that a child's welfare is our paramount concern. This means that we 'should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.' (*Keeping children safe in education, Sept. 2020, p.5*)

Further, Summerhill's commitment to equality and diversity is absolute. This is reflected in its internationalism and the complete parity of status it gives to all members of the community, adults and children alike.

Definition

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical 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.

Introduction

'Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. Schools should consider this as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.' (*Keeping children safe in education.'* Sept. 2020 p.24)

Safeguarding is to be found at the heart of Summerhill School; a democratic, self-governing community in which adults and students have complete equality and where a clear distinction is made between freedom and licence. Community life teaches everybody about the importance of communication, negotiation and compromise as a means of preventing and resolving issues.

Perhaps the three most important and difficult safeguarding challenges that the school is faced with today are the issues of online safety, sex and relationships and, to a lesser extent, mental health issues including such things as self-harm and eating disorders /

problems. These are issues which any school, and many families, in the United Kingdom confront. However, Summerhill is uniquely positioned to manage these issues because of its democratic nature and structures.

Abuse of any type and of any degree can only occur when there exists some sort of power differential and Summerhill goes further than any other school to reduce, as much as possible, the power differential that can exist between students, and between adults and students, and thus reduce the risk of abuse, reduce the safeguarding risk. Put simply, minimise the power differential and you automatically begin to minimise the safeguarding risk. The reduction in the power differential at Summerhill School is achieved through its unique philosophy of education. Further, this reduction in the power differential ensures that there is a high level of open, honest communication and trust between the adults and students.

'Working together to safeguard children' states:

'... that effective safeguarding is achieved by putting children at the centre of the system....' (Working together to safeguard children', HM Government, July 2018, p.9)

Summerhill School epitomises a child-centred approach to safeguarding. It is a place where the views of the child are constantly being expressed and heard, in particular, in the school meeting.

The daily life of the school is governed by the school meetings, held regularly, in which everybody has an equal vote. The meetings are used to create, confirm and amend all the school laws which form the structure of expectations for the community of adults and students. They are laws which the children and adults feel are right and appropriate; they have the backing of the vast majority of children and adults in the community and that is why the laws are adhered to by the vast majority of the community. Further, every member of the community is aware that he or she can bring a case to the meeting to either have a particular law overturned or, alternatively, to be made an exception to a particular law.

It is our laws and our method of creating and enforcing them which could be described as our 'behaviour policy'.

The school meeting is the forum to bring the whole school's attention to any safeguarding issues and at Summerhill no form of abuse whatsoever is tolerated by the community. Any student or staff can bring any safeguarding incident to the meeting which is both a legislative and judicial body.

Meetings are currently held three times a week but a special meeting can be called (with the permission of the 'chairman' who is almost always a senior student) **by anybody, at any time, day or night**, if required. Should an incident require further investigation, the meeting would decide how to proceed and, in particular, who would conduct the investigation (e.g. ombudsmen, investigation committee). Thus, both students and staff are answerable to the whole community. Nobody in the school is exempt from this, and no subject is beyond the community's discussion. For example, the community has occasionally in its one hundred year history carried proposals in the meeting which demanded the exclusion (temporary or otherwise) of a particular child and even a member of staff.

The openness of the meeting system ensures that, for example, in a case of peer on peer abuse, the victim experiences the whole hearted support of the community whilst the offender is not only 'fined' for his/her actions but also experiences the community's expressions of disapproval, including from his/her peer group, for his or her **actions**. This is an extremely powerful message because, unlike in an ordinary school, the message of disapproval is conveyed by the whole community and not by just one or two adults. Further, the discussion becomes an important safeguarding learning experience for everybody. All incidents discussed in the school meeting are recorded in the meeting minutes.

A variety of 'fines' can be imposed depending on the case. The community tries to find a 'fine' that is most appropriate to the offence and to the individual offender. Further, there is an appeal process available in every meeting, that is, a time is set aside whereby a person can appeal his or her fine. In addition, it is also possible for a fine (for example, a screen ban given by a beddies officer) to be 'postponed' by an ombudsman. This means that the fine does not take effect until it has been ratified by the meeting.

It is important to note that a 'fine' is not given as a punishment but as a way in which the offender can make amends to the community for their offence to the community. Further, the 'fine' serves to give the victim a sense that justice has been done. Once the 'fine' has been 'paid', the whole community, including the offender, 'moves on' and the community disapproves very strongly of any harassment, any continuation of the argument, after the case has been brought to the meeting.

It must be emphasised that the vast majority of 'peer on peer' abuse cases brought to the meeting are low level harassment cases such as name calling etc. Further, it is important to note that there are very few specifically 'gender related' incidents, where it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys offenders, which is a particular cause for concern in many schools throughout the UK.

The risk of abuse, the risk of any safeguarding incident, is further minimised by the use of elected ombudsmen (boys and girls) and beddies officers (boys and girls). Ombudsmen are usually ten older students, (though sometimes an adult stands and is elected), whose job is to respond to any immediate problems that may arise between students and, far more rarely, between students and adults. If an ombudsman is unable to successfully mediate between the two parties, then he or she will bring the matter to the meeting. It is also possible for the ombudsman to bring the matter to the meeting irrespective of whether the issue has been resolved or not and thus alert the whole community to a particular issue. Further, ombudsmen can represent students in the school meeting, if requested to do so.

Beddies Officers are older students (again, sometimes an adult stands and is elected) whose job is to put students to bed at night and to wake them up in the morning. Beddies officers work in pairs and there is a different pair of beddies officers for each day of the week.

However, the school meeting and the use of ombudsmen and beddies officers are not the only safeguarding mechanisms employed. Safeguarding is lived out and taught in a variety of formal and informal settings. Some examples include the regular, 'formal', age-appropriate discussions on sex and relationships, online safety and on topics such as smoking, drugs and alcohol. In addition, numerous 'informal', small group, or one-on-one conversations on these and many other subjects can occur, day or night, in almost any area of the school.

The result is that the Summerhill experience leads the students to develop an inner self-confidence, which, amongst other things, empowers the students to raise safeguarding issues themselves, either publicly, or privately with appropriate individuals. There is an expectation on all community members to safeguard each other and even if there is some hesitancy among certain students to initiate a discussion or express some concern, the very nature of the place (the 'panopticon'*) ensures that the adults in the community know what is happening and can, if necessary, initiate a discussion.

Stated in simple language, we all know (the adults and the students) when somebody is spending too much time on the internet. We all know when a student is doing something on the internet that might be considered unsafe. We all know when students are engaging, or are likely to engage, in an under-age sexual relationship. We all know if a student is experimenting with self-harm or is not eating very much. This knowledge enables the adults to act in a way that is appropriate to each individual circumstance.

The Summerhill experience also enables pupils, from diverse cultural backgrounds, to grow in a family environment, free from the usual social prejudices found in many other schools, in particular, gender based prejudices. This in turn creates, throughout the school, a marked confidence and friendship between the sexes, and between all age groups. Central to this experience is the accommodation arrangements where the presence of girls on the same corridor as boys brings a greater equilibrium to the whole area and contributes significantly to the lack of gender related safeguarding incidents. As A. S. Neill wrote: 'One sex will not grow up with any illusions or delusions about the other sex.' (*'Summerhill'* A.S. Neill. Pelican Books. 1968, p.62/63)

To conclude, safeguarding at Summerhill is not an abstract, adult driven concept but something which is not only very real and robust but also something the students and adults at Summerhill actually **live** on a daily basis.

* For further information on the 'panopticon' in relation to Summerhill, please see '*Can Liberal Education Make a Comeback? The case of 'Relational Touch' at Summerhill School.* Ian Stronach & Heather Piper. *American Educational Research Journal.* March 2008. Vol 45 No. 1 pp.6-37.

For more information on the school's 'behaviour policy', see *Summerhill Laws*.

This policy is informed, first and foremost, by the educational philosophy of the school's founder, A.S. Neill, who acted 'in the **best interests** of the child' (ibid.) when he first started the school with '..... one main idea: to '*make the school fit the child* – instead of making the child fit the school.' (*'Summerhill'* A.S. Neill. Pelican Books. 1968, p.20)

In addition, this policy is informed by a wide range of government documents, both statutory and non-statutory. They include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *Keeping children safe in education (September 2020)*
- *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (September 2018) which is incorporated in the above named document.*
- *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - Advice for practitioners (March 2015)*
- *Working together to safeguard children (July 2018, updated Feb. 2019)*
- *Information Sharing – Advice for practitioners providing services to children, young people, parents and carers (July 2018)*
- *Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (July 2015)*
- *The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (June 2015)*
- *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges. Advice for governing bodies, proprietors, headteachers, principals, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads. (May 2018)*
- *Teaching online safety in school. Guidance supporting schools to teach their pupils how to stay safe online, within new and existing school subjects (June 2019)*
- *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2019)*

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following five Summerhill policy documents: *Code of Conduct, Online Safety Policy, Managing allegations of abuse against members of staff or volunteers/interns, Sex and Relationships Guidelines/Policy and Whistle blowing Policy*

and

the following government documents: *Keeping children safe in education Part 1 & Annex A (Sept. 2020)* and *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (March 2015)*

Should parents wish to obtain copies of the aforementioned policies, please email the office at office@summerhillschool.co.uk.

Wherever the word 'staff' is used, it covers ALL staff, including domestic/kitchen staff, peripatetics, interns etc.

Safeguarding Aims:

- To provide an environment where all members of the community feel safe, secure, valued and respected.
- To raise awareness of **all staff** to the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To ensure **all staff** know how to respond to a disclosure from a child and will take action in accordance with government guidance and the locally agreed inter-agency safeguarding procedures put in place by the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership (SSP), that is the three safeguarding partners, the local authority, police and health who 'have a shared and equal duty to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.' (*Keeping children safe in education, Sept. 2020, p. 21*)
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm. We will contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children. This might include attendance at child protection conferences or core group meetings. The school is committed to providing as much relevant, up-to-date information about a child as possible, including submitting reports for child protection conferences in accordance with SSP procedures and timescales.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies.
- To recognise and protect those who may be vulnerable to radicalisation or exposed to extremist views.

Key roles and responsibilities

Proprietor

Zoe, as a proprietor and as school principal, takes '**leadership** responsibility for the [school's] safeguarding arrangements.' (*Keeping children safe in education, Sept. 2020, p.18*)

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Andrew, a senior member of staff, is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and he takes '**lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety).' (*Keeping children safe in education, Sept. 2020, p.97*).

Further, the DSL is given the time, funding, training, resources and support to fully carry out the role.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Henry is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) and he is 'trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead ...' (*Keeping children safe in education, Sept. 2020, p. 97*)

Their **contact details** are:

Zoe – Proprietor and School Principal

Mobile: 07903938188 Email: zoe@summerhillschool.co.uk

Andrew – Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Mobile: 07730672659 Email: andrew.s@summerhillschool.co.uk

Henry - Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Mobile: 07984144598 Email: henry.r@summerhillschool.co.uk

The role and responsibilities of the DSL and the DDSL

Manage referrals

The designated safeguarding lead (and / or the DDSL) is expected to:

- refer cases of suspected abuse to children's social care (Customer First) as required;
- refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;

All referrals of concerns about children will be reported within one working day. If necessary, **anyone** can make a referral and they will inform the DSL as soon as possible that a referral has been made. Parents/Carers will be contacted in line with the following guidance: *'You MUST inform those with parental responsibility of your referral, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of significant harm.'* (SSP Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF)). However, a referral to children's social care and / or the police in order to obtain statutory services does **not** require parental **consent**.

- support staff who make referrals to children's social care and/or referrals to the Channel programme;
- refer cases to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The school has a statutory duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or has been removed from working in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. Referrals should be made as soon as possible and no later than one month;
- refer cases to the Teacher Regulation Agency. If, on conclusion of the case, the person is dismissed or the employer ceases to use the person's services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide his or her services, the school will consider whether to refer the matter to the TRA to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching. The reasons a prohibition order would be considered are for 'unacceptable professional conduct', for 'conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute' or a 'conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence'. Referrals should be made as soon as possible and no later than one month;
- refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.

Finally, the **designated safeguarding lead** is expected to:

- contact the Local Authority Designated Officer(s) (LADO) on any matter that the DSL considers cannot be properly dealt with internally.

Work with others

The designated safeguarding lead (and / or the DDSL) is expected to:

- liaise with Zoe, as principal, on all safeguarding matters.
- as required, liaise with the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership and work with other agencies in line with *Working together to safeguard children (July 2018)*. The DSL/DDSL will work with relevant agencies to seek advice, support and guidance, drawing on multi-agency expertise, knowledge and experience.

This is particularly important for children who need a social worker. Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker and the DSL should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

- liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and act as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns if they feel unable to take concerns to the school meeting, the staff meeting or special attention meeting. Andrew, Henry and Zoe are available **at all times, day or night**, for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns (including concerns relating to radicalisation) and to act as a source of support, advice and expertise.

Training

The designated safeguarding lead (and the DDSL) undertakes training to obtain the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training includes *Working Together to Safeguard Children* inter-agency training and *Prevent* awareness training.

All training is updated at least every two years.

In addition to the formal training set out above, the DSL's (and the DDSL's) knowledge and skills are refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to ensure the DSL (and the DDSL) understands and keeps up with any developments relevant to the role so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and the SSP children's social care referral arrangements.
- have a working knowledge of how the SSP conducts a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- ensure each member of staff (especially new and part-time staff) has access to, and has read and understood, the school's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* and all other relevant documents, including Part 1 and Annex A of *Keeping children safe in education (Sept. 2020)*.

- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
- understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR;
- understand the importance of sharing information, both within the school and with the three safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners;
- are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the *Prevent Duty* and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school;
- can recognise the additional risks that SEND children face online and are confident they have the capability to support them to stay safe online;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses;

Raise Awareness

The designated safeguarding lead (and / or the DDSL) should:

- ensure the school's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* is known, understood and used appropriately;

Staff need to be aware that safeguarding incidents can happen at any time or place and of the need to 'maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned.' (*Keeping children safe in education, Sept 2020, p.12*)

- ensure the school's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly;

The safeguarding and child protection policy review is undertaken firstly by Zoe, Will and Henry and then by all the full-time staff to ensure the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements.

In addition, the 175/157 safeguarding self-review assessment is completed annually and is used to demonstrate that the school is effective in safeguarding and promoting its students' welfare.

- ensure the school's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* is available publicly and all parents /carers are made aware, through the Summerhill Parents' Guide, of

staff responsibilities, in particular, with regard to the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made. Further, parents/carers can ask the office for a copy of any school policy at any time.

- link with the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school staff.

The **designated safeguarding lead** should:

- provide Zoe, as principal, with a termly safeguarding action plan outlining, for example, safeguarding training to be undertaken by the DSL and others, policies to be reviewed etc.

Child protection files

The designated safeguarding lead (and / or the DDSL) will keep individual child protection files if required and where children leave the school (including for in-year transfers) ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. The child protection file will be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt will be obtained.

In addition, the designated safeguarding lead (and / or the DDSL) will consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school in advance of the child leaving.

Child Protection

Definition

Child Protection is:

- part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- **an activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.**
- all agencies should aim to pro-actively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

Indicators of abuse and neglect (*Keeping children safe in education, Sept. 2020, p.8/9*)

‘All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues overlap with one another.’ Further, all staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can arise in a range of different social environments where children spend their time and not just in the home or at school.

- **‘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 adults or another child or children.
- **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.
- **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 from 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.
- **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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. 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 in education.
- **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, for example, 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.’

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Summerhill seeks to empower all its students to take a full part in its community, its life, decision-making and learning, as equals. We do not label children but will assess their needs and support them appropriately to ensure their wellbeing. Further, staff are aware that it can be more difficult to recognize abuse and neglect in this group of children because:

- of 'assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;'
- children with SEN and disabilities 'are more prone to peer group isolation than other children' and
- they can be 'disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- of communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.' (*Keeping children safe in education' September 2020. Part 2 p.31*)

Our whole school culture of safeguarding, together with our school meetings, staff meetings and, in particular, our special attention meetings ensures that this group of children are safeguarded both online and off.

For more information on children at Summerhill with special educational needs and disabilities, see *Special Educational Needs Policy*.

Categories - Signs and Indicators. What to look for.

NEGLECT

- Tired/listless.
- Unkempt.
- Poor hygiene.
- Untreated medical conditions.
- Hungry.
- Overeats when food is available.
- Poor growth.
- Poor/late attendance.

EMOTIONAL

- Clingy.
- Attention seeking.
- Over ready to relate to others.
- Low self-esteem.
- Apathy.
- Fearful/withdrawn.
- Sleep disorders.
- Depression/self-harm
- Drink/drug/solvent abuse.

PHYSICAL

- Unexplained injuries.
- Injuries on certain parts of the body.
- Injuries in various stages of healing.
- Injuries that reflect an article used.
- Flinching when approached.
- Reluctant to change.
- Crying/instability.
- Afraid of home.
- Behavioural extremes.
- Apathy/Depression.

SEXUAL

- Age inappropriate behaviour/knowledge.
- Promiscuity.
- Wary of adults.
- Running away from home.
- Eating disorders.
- Depression.
- Self-harm.
- Unexplained gifts/money.
- Smearing.

Please note that this list of signs and indicators of abuse is to serve as a guide and is not a definitive list and indeed, in some circumstances, could be misleading. What is particularly important is to be alert to, and take note of, any **negative changes** in appearance or behaviour. It is the **changes** that will tell you that something is going wrong in a child's life.

Any concerns about an individual, or individuals, must be reported to Zoe, or Henry, **and** Andrew as soon as possible.

What to do

If a child reports that he/she is being abused, in any way whatever, or neglected, you **must** do the following:

DO

- Stay calm, listen carefully and be supportive. Allow the child to speak without interruption.
- Ask open questions, e.g. 'Tell me when .../ 'Explain what.../ 'Describe what.....')
- Accurately record in writing what was said, using the child's words. **Date, time and sign.**
- Tell the child they have done the right thing by talking to you and tell the child what you will do next.
- Inform Andrew **and** Henry, or Zoe of your concerns immediately.
- Seek support for yourself.

DON'T

- Disbelieve what the child is telling you or be judgemental.
- Ask any leading questions, or put ideas into the child's head or jump to conclusions.
- Stop or interrupt a child who is recalling significant events.
- Promise the child confidentiality – you must explain that you will need to pass on information to keep them safe.
- Express an opinion about the alleged perpetrator of the abuse.
- Use your own words to describe events.
- Investigate.
- View or forward possible illegal images of a child (if relevant).

Remember:

- **Make a clear and accurate record of what has been reported to you.**
- **If the report involves sexting, do not view or forward any possible illegal images.**
- **Use the school's 'Recording Form for Safeguarding Concerns'. Sign it and put the date and time. You should be aware that your record of what was said could become part of a statutory assessment by children's social care and/or part of a criminal investigation.**

For more information on sexting, see *Online Safety Policy*

For more information on illegal items, see *Searching and Confiscation below*

Allegations against a child

- We understand that a child can make an allegation against another child.
- Any allegation against another child must be immediately reported to Zoe, or Henry, **and** to Andrew. If appropriate, they will, within one working day, contact Customer First on 0808 800 4005 and the Police will be contacted if it is suspected a crime has been committed.
- In the event of a disclosure, all children involved, whether offender or victim, will be treated as being 'at risk'.
- Any child under suspicion will be suspended until further notice if there is no other reasonable alternative. Advice will be taken from Customer First in making this decision. The child will receive as much help from the school as we are able to offer.

For information on when to call the police, see *'When to call the Police – Guidance for schools and colleges'* in *Safeguarding Reference Documents on the Summerhill Drive*.

Allegations against staff

- We understand that a child can make an allegation against **any** member of staff.
- Any safeguarding concerns about, or allegations against, a member of staff (including the DSL, any supply staff and any volunteers) must be immediately reported to Zoë, or Will, or Henry. If appropriate, that is, if the allegations might indicate the member of staff would pose a risk of harm to children, they will, within one working day, contact the Local Authority Designated Officer(s) (LADO) on 0300 123 2044 and/or the Police on 01473 613500 if it is suspected a crime has been committed. In the case of a supply teacher, the employment agency will also be contacted.
- The LADO should make a decision within one working day of a referral being made about what course of action is being taken and should inform the referrer of the outcome.
- In exceptional circumstances, such as an emergency or a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, staff members can contact the LADO.
- If the allegation is against Zoe, Will or Henry, contact the LADO.
- Parents will be contacted in line with the following guidance: *'You MUST inform those with parental responsibility of your referral, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of significant harm.'* (SSP Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF)).
- No investigation will be carried out before the LADO is informed of the allegation.
- Any adult under suspicion will be suspended until further notice if there is no other reasonable alternative. Advice will be taken from the LADO in making this decision. The school will also discuss the matter of suspension with the employment agency if the adult under suspicion is a supply teacher.
- Any adult under suspicion, who is employed by the school, will receive as much help from the school as we are able to offer both financially and personally.
- Records concerning allegations of abuse will be preserved at least until the accused has reached normal retirement age or for a period ten years from the date of the allegation if it is longer.

For more information, see *Managing allegations of abuse against members of staff or volunteers/interns*.

Confidentiality

- We recognise matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- All staff are made aware that they cannot promise to keep secrets that could compromise the safety or welfare of a child.
- Where a child seeks to raise concerns confidentially with a member of staff and expressly withholds their agreement to their personal data being disclosed to their **parents or guardian**, the school will maintain confidentiality unless it has reasonable grounds to believe that the child does not fully understand the consequences of withholding their consent, or where the school believes disclosure will be in the best interests of the child or other children.
- All staff are made aware that they have a legal responsibility to share information with other agencies in a timely and effective manner. **The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety of children**, which must always be the paramount concern.
- All staff are made aware that in the event of allegations being made against a member of staff, the school must make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity whilst an allegation is being considered or investigated.

For more information, see *Managing allegations of abuse against members of staff or volunteers/interns*.

Also, see *Data Protection Policy* and *'Information Sharing – Advice for practitioners providing services to children, young people, parents and carers'* (July 2018)

Record keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions are recorded in writing.

Prevention

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in prevention of harm to our students. The school has an ethos that children are always listened to and they have a selection of trusted adults and good friends who they can talk to.

The Health, Safety and Welfare of Staff

The welfare of all the people who work or learn at Summerhill is of fundamental importance and we aim to provide a safe, secure and pleasant working and living environment for everyone. The school takes very seriously the need to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of all staff, indeed staff wellbeing is a crucial part of a school's duty of care. Further, we understand that it is stressful and upsetting to be involved with any child who has suffered harm. Zoë, Andrew, or Henry are always available to chat and talk through any anxieties.

Recruitment

Our recruitment and selection policy includes all the required checks (including Later Years Childcare) and it is Andrew, Henry and Zoe's responsibility, working with Lynn, to ensure that all adults who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability. Further, there is at least one person on every recruitment panel that has completed Safer Recruitment training. We reserve the right not to accept help from volunteers/interns. All staff and volunteers/interns are required to follow the school's code of conduct.

For more information, see *Recruitment and Selection Policy*, and *Code of Conduct*

Staff Training

'proprietors of independent schools.....should ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities ...' ('Keeping children safe in education', Sept 2020, p.4)

All staff receive relevant safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety and the Prevent Duty) at induction. The safeguarding induction process begins with the new employee being emailed the schools' safeguarding induction pack. The contents of the pack include the following documents:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Summerhill School Code of Conduct
- Online Safety Policy
- Summerhill School Whistle blowing Policy
- Managing allegations of abuse against members of staff or volunteers/interns

The school's safeguarding induction pack also includes the following documents:

- Keeping children safe in education Part 1 and Annex A (Sept. 2020)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (March 2015)

The pack is sent at least two full weeks before the new employee starts work at the school. The new employee is invited to discuss the contents of the induction pack in a meeting / training session with the DSL (or the DDSL), set at a mutually convenient time, before there is any contact with students.

All new employees are reminded of the main safeguarding issues that the school faces and the existence and whereabouts of our disclosure forms. Finally, the new employee is asked to sign a piece of paper stating that they have read and understood the documents they received and are aware that Zoe, Andrew and Henry are available **at any time, day or night**, to answer any questions or concerns they may have about safeguarding children in Summerhill.

The online safety and data protection induction process is conducted by the school's online safety lead. The training includes, among other things, *The Prevent Duty*, an introduction to

Summerhill's 'Screening Laws' and an explanation on how we deal with online safety at Summerhill.

All training is in line with SSP advice and includes how to manage a report by a child of any form of abuse including peer on peer sexual violence and sexual harassment. It is Suffolk Schools' choice (who are endorsed by the SSP) who provide the update training every **two** years for all staff.

In addition, all staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection training updates as required, and at least annually to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. The depth and detail of training needed by different groups of staff varies according to the nature of their role and the extent of their involvement with children.

For full-time staff, the thrice-weekly school meetings and twice-weekly staff meetings can serve, and often do, as safeguarding (including online safety) updates. The special attention meetings, which are usually held twice a term, also serve as safeguarding updates, as does the end of term oral reports. All these meetings are minuted.

Domestic / kitchen staff and part-time teachers are given safeguarding updates as and when required. For example, if there were concerns about a student's dietary habits, this would be passed on to the kitchen staff in order to aid monitoring the student's food intake. The information would normally be passed on orally by the DSL.

Online safety (including the Prevent Duty, and where children are being asked to learn online at home) is a significant element in the school's whole approach to safeguarding. Consequently, all full-time, live-in staff receive annual, 'in-house', online safety training which is now held at the beginning of the academic year. This training is approved by Suffolk Schools' choice. It is a school law that all full-time, live-in staff and all students attend a compulsory, basic, age appropriate, online safety chat/discussion at the beginning of every academic year. No person can continue to use the school's internet, or their mobile data, without attending.

All full-time, live-in staff undertake First Aid training and refresher training every three years.

All members of staff are encouraged to seek advice and to reflect on their work safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. In addition, the termly chats with Zoe provide a further opportunity to review and assess one's own practice as well as providing an opportunity to address any other issues such as work related stress.

These are just some of the 'mechanisms' put in place to help all staff safeguard children effectively. (*'Keeping children safe in education', Sept 2020, p.4*)

For more information on staff training, see the file **Safeguarding Training – Whole School**.

Staff/Pupil Relationships

Although Summerhill's unique system reduces the power differential between staff and students, it does not eliminate it. Thus, all staff must be aware that as a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, the relationship can never be one of equals and that all staff working with Summerhill students are in positions of trust in relation to them. Particular care should be taken when working in a one-to-one teaching or house-parenting situation.

For more information on staff/pupil relationships, see *Code of Conduct*

Use of 'restraint'

In the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, 'restraint' means using reasonable force or restricting liberty of movement to prevent a student committing an offence, injuring him/herself or other students, or destroying property.

At Summerhill, 'restraint' is never used. However, in the highly unlikely event of 'restraint' having to be used by any member of the community, the incident that caused the use of 'restraint' would be brought to the attention of the school meeting and appropriate action would be taken.

For more information on the use of 'restraint', see '*Use of reasonable force. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies*'. (DfE July 2013) a copy of which can be found in *Safeguarding Reference Documents* on the *Summerhill Drive*.

For more information on the school's 'behaviour policy', see *Introduction* (above) and *Summerhill Laws*.

Searching and Confiscation

Searching and confiscation carried out in the school is done so on the authority of the school meeting and as defined by school laws.

Searching

Searches of individuals and their possessions are carried out by the Investigation Committee. The Investigation Committee, an ongoing, long-term committee, is elected by the school community and, as such, is given the authority to question individuals and then, if necessary, carry out searches and confiscate items. Any member of the community, or the meeting, may request that the Investigation Committee perform an investigation.

The individual under investigation is, whenever possible, informed that there is to be a search of their possessions and they are able to be present. All searches, of possessions, or the person, are conducted by two, or more, members of the investigation committee. A person being searched will be asked to turn out their pockets and remove any outer items of clothing.

Searches are always conducted with sensitivity to the individual and if any party involved in the process feels uncomfortable with how it is being conducted, ombudsmen may become

involved and a case may be brought to the school meeting.

Confiscation

Confiscations may be carried out by the Investigation Committee, Ombudsmen, Beddies Officers (relating to bedtimes), and the Screening Police (if someone breaks a screen ban) and, on occasion, an individual community member who is authorised to do so by the meeting.

Types of confiscation

Short term: This includes items being misused in accordance with the school laws and philosophy, e.g. torches, phones, sticks. These items are kept until the next meeting unless the confiscation is done by a beddies officer who can only confiscate an item (usually a mobile phone) until the next morning. The meeting will decide if a period of confiscation is to be extended, or if the item is to be returned to the owner.

Long term: This includes items not allowed by school law, sometimes age specific, e.g. lighters, penknives, computer games, bb guns. These items are kept in the school office and may be collected at end of term.

Permanent: This includes illegal items and those banned from the school, e.g. alcohol, tobacco, fireworks, drugs. These items are not returned and are disposed of by the school.

Stolen items: These items are returned to their rightful owner.

Under exceptional circumstances, the School Principal may act without the authority of the meeting in relation to suspected possession of illegal items. Any searching and confiscation is done so with regard to the law and to the rights of the individual. The Principal would not search a child and would seek help from the investigation committee if one was required.

Risk Assessments

The welfare of all staff and students is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a risk assessment policy and by taking the appropriate action to reduce any risks that are identified

School Trips

School trips are risk assessed on a case by case basis and the school's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* always forms an important part of any school trip risk assessment. This includes any arrangements made by the school for the care and accommodation of Summerhill students with host families (known as homestays) either in the UK or abroad.

It also includes 'local school trips' in the school vehicles such as a trip with the Half –term, or EOT, Bar Committee to Tesco's in Saxmundham and trips to Ipswich Hospital.

All staff are aware that the school's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* applies at all times, both in and out of school.'

For more information on school trips, risk assessments etc., see *Transport Policy* and *Risk Assessments for Trips* file and the *Risk Assessment Policy*.

Whistle blowing

All staff are made aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of safeguarding children, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. In addition, all staff are made aware of their duty to share information quickly, to reassess any concerns they may have had when situations do not improve and to challenge any perceived inaction.

Information, guidance and support can be obtained using the Suffolk MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) Webchat consultation service. The webchat facility allows professionals to access advice about a child at risk of abuse and to discuss the most appropriate and effective way of providing help and support. Advice will be given without recording the name of the child and using the webchat service enables the 'conversation' to be printed out.

The webchat service can be accessed, via the webchat icon which appears in the bottom right hand corner, at:

suffolkscb.org.uk/working-with-children/multi-agency-safeguarding-hub-mash/

OR

Call the Suffolk MASH Professional Consultation Line on 0345 6061499

Alternatively

Call the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285.

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

For more information, see *Whistle blowing Policy*

Specific Safeguarding Issues

At Summerhill, the main safeguarding issues are the following:

Online safety (including sexting)

Online safety is concerned with supporting children and young people to develop safer online behaviours both in and out of school. Online safety is less about restriction and more about making the community aware of the risks as well as the benefits so that everyone can feel confident online.

However, we recognise the dangers of Internet use and further, we are aware that The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on the school to have **'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'**. (*The Prevent Duty*). Consequently, appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place to ensure that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.

Any concerns about an individual, or individuals, in relation to radicalisation, or any other online safety issue, must be reported to Zoe, or Henry, **and** Andrew as soon as possible.

In the case of an individual being identified as being at risk of radicalisation, the school will consider the level of risk in order to identify the most appropriate action, which could include referral to the Channel programme or children's social care (Customer First).

Awareness of online safety issues is raised in various ways, most important of which is the school meeting which brings the whole school's attention to these issues.

Our Online Safety Policy also covers the **use of 'smart' mobile phones / devices** and it is our school 'screening laws' which govern the use of the internet, including the use of 'smart mobile phones / devices in school and when accessing remote learning. The 'screening laws' are our acceptable use policy, copies of which are displayed throughout the school.

Sexting

Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages. Creating or sharing explicit images of a child is illegal even if the person doing it is a child.

Any concerns about an individual, or individuals, must be reported to Zoe, or Henry, **and** Andrew as soon as possible.

For more information on the school's response to incidents of this nature, see *Online Safety Policy*.

For detailed information on sexting, see *Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people (UKCCIS, August 2016)* a copy of which can be found in *Safeguarding Reference Documents* on the *Summerhill Drive*.

For more information on online safety (including sexting), see *Online Safety Policy and Code of Conduct*.

Sex and Relationship Concerns

All staff should be alert to inappropriate pupil relationships and the potential for peer on peer abuse. Any concerns about an individual, or individuals, must be reported to Zoe, or Henry, **and** Andrew as soon as possible.

For more information, see *Sex and Relationships Guidelines/Policy*. It is recommended that all full-time staff read 'Working with Sexually Active Young People under the Age of 18' (SSCB. August 2017). See *Safeguarding Reference Documents on the Summerhill Drive*.

Mental Health Concerns including self-harm and eating disorders / problems

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, **in some cases**, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Should a child's behaviour suggest that they may be experiencing a mental health problem, or be at risk of developing one, it is imperative that this is reported to Zoe, or Henry, **and** Andrew as soon as possible.

For more information on various mental health issues, see *Youth MHFA Course Manual* in the staff room. See also *Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, Nov. 2018)* in *Safeguarding Reference Documents on the Summerhill Drive*.

For more information on self-harm, see also *Safeguarding Reference Documents on the Summerhill Drive*.

Peer on Peer Abuse / Child on Child Abuse

This includes, but is not limited to, such things as:

- bullying (on and offline)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- 'up-skirting', which is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender can be a victim.
- race based violence (physical and verbal)
- sexting/'youth produced sexual imagery'
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

It is recognized that girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk of peer on peer abuse but at Summerhill, no form of abuse whatsoever is tolerated by the community and neither is it ever 'passed off as 'banter', just having a laugh or 'part of growing up' (*Keeping children safe in education, Sept. 2020, p.27*). Further, the risk of peer on peer abuse is minimised by the existence of, amongst other things, the school meeting and the use of elected ombudsmen and our whole school culture of safeguarding each

other. (See the introduction above).

For more information on online bullying and sexting, see *Online Safety Policy*.

For more information on sexual violence and sexual harassment, see *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges. Advice for governing bodies, proprietors, headteachers, principals, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads. (DfE May 2018)*. See *Safeguarding Reference Documents on the Summerhill Drive*.

Please note, a summary of the above document is now part 5 of '*Keeping children safe in education*' Sept. 2020, p.69 – p.81.

Addressing the needs of victims, offenders and any other children affected by peer on peer abuse

As has been said, the majority of cases are low level harassment cases and usually all the victim requires is the support of the meeting. However, should the victim, or any other child affected by peer on peer abuse, require further support then the nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. These can include a quiet word from an ombudsman, asking the house-parent to provide support, providing formal counselling, referring to the local authority children's services, completing a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) form or referring to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Equally, the offender may require support such as that which is outlined above.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, Summerhill School will ensure that the student's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take. We will always act in the best interests of the child.

Further information – other specific safeguarding issues

Schools throughout the country are faced with a wide variety of safeguarding issues and there are now, in fact, more than twenty separate safeguarding issues. As has been said, the main safeguarding issues at Summerhill are related to online safety, sex and relationship concerns and, at times, mental health issues including self-harm and eating disorders / problems. However, that does not mean that the school will not face other safeguarding issues and it is important that **all staff** are aware of the existence of some of these other issues and of the strategies employed to deal with them.

One key strategy is:

Early Help

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. It is a process in which a child's needs are assessed by various professionals such as a health visitor, GP, family support worker, teacher etc. It is a process which cannot go forward without the co-operation of the child and/or parents/carers.

It is important to understand the difference between a 'concern' about a child and a concern

that a child might be in need, is in need, or suffering, or likely to suffer harm.

In the case of having a 'concern' about a child, including a concern about radicalisation, staff should discuss with Zoe, or Henry, **and** Andrew what action should be taken. Possible actions include:

- managing any support for the child within the school or
- an early help assessment.

If early help is appropriate the designated lead will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment. In line with the concept of '**contextual safeguarding**', any assessment will consider the whole range of social environments where a child spends their time and therefore where a child might be at risk e.g. the school, the home, the neighbourhood, online etc. Staff may be required to support other agencies in an early help assessment. Any action taken will be done so in accordance with the locally agreed procedures put in place by the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership using the referral threshold set by them.

For more information on 'Contextual Safeguarding', see *Contextual Safeguarding – an overview of the operational, strategic and conceptual framework*, (C. Firmin, University of Bedfordshire, November 2017)

It could be argued that our whole school culture of safeguarding, together with our school meetings, staff meetings and special attention list and end of term oral reports function as Summerhill's 'early help', in that it is in these 'forums' that often problems occurring in a child's life are first raised and then acted upon. Further, it could be argued that the weakest link in our 'early help' system is sometimes the lack of information we get from parents about our newest students. It is for this reason that all new students are put on our special attention list.

For more information on Early Help, see *Suffolk Early Help Teams – Engagement Guidance* (SCC September 2017) on the *Summerhill Drive*.

Child suffering or likely to suffer harm

If you have concerns that a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, you must immediately report your concern to the DSL who will immediately call children's social care (Customer First) and the police if a crime has been committed. The SSP multi-agency referral form (MARF) must be completed within twenty-four hours of the referral and a social worker makes a decision about the type of response that is required within one working day. A referral to obtain statutory services does **not** require parental consent.

Child in Need

A child in need is a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services. If you have concerns that a child may be in need, you must immediately report your concern to the DSL who will assess the concern and, taking into account any other safeguarding information known about the child, the DSL

will consider what action needs to be taken such as contacting the MASH Professional Consultation Line for advice. If appropriate, the DSL will complete and submit the SSP multi-agency referral form (MARF) to children's social care.

Where the safeguarding concern does not meet the threshold for completion of a MARF, the DSL should record how this decision has been reached and should consider whether additional needs of the child have been identified that might be met by a co-ordinated offer of early help or some other form of support.

Safeguarding Thresholds

Level 4 High Risk

Children and young people who present with complex needs/risk. Including high level CSE concerns/risk. They will require specialist services and multi-agency statutory response - Child Protection (Children Act 1989 Section 47)

Level 3 Medium Risk

Children with multiple or complex needs, incl. medium risk of CSE, which have to be met by targeted services or by a multi-agency CAF assessment or by a Child in Need (Children Act 1989 Section 17) social work assessment.

Level 2 Low Risk to Vulnerable – Targeted Support

Children with emerging needs or low level Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) concerns that can be met with the support of a multi-agency CAF assessment and Family Network Plan.

Level 1 Universal

All children and young people accessing mainstream services with low level need that can be met by a single agency CAF (Common Assessment Framework) assessment and Family Network Plan.

For more information on Safeguarding Thresholds, see *Suffolk's Threshold of Need Guidance*, (SSCB, October 2017) on the *Summerhill Drive*.

Important safeguarding issues include:

- **Radicalisation** – the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home). See *Online Safety Policy (The Prevent Duty, p.8)*
- **Children Missing Education** – children going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues such as abuse and neglect. Matters relating to this issue are dealt with by the school secretary.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** – if a **teacher**, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police.
- **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** – CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology and may occur without the child's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).
- **Child Criminal Exploitation** – CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can occur through the use of technology.
- **County Lines**. County lines is a term used to describe organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines. Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines model with children exploited to move drugs and money between locations. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation and violence (including sexual violence) to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools and can easily be trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network. 'County Lines is the biggest threat facing Suffolk at present without question.'

- **Serious Violence** – This is linked to CCE and all staff need to be aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime through their involvement with individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs. Indicators may include, but are not limited to, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, signs of assault or unexplained injuries.
- **Children and the court system** – Children are sometimes involved in the criminal court system or the family courts. Any involvement in the court system can be very stressful for children.
- **Children with family members in prison** – These children are at risk of a range of negative consequences.
- **Domestic abuse** – Domestic violence and abuse is ‘any incident or patterns of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.
- **Honour Based Abuse (HBA)** – so called ‘honour-based’ abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including FGM, forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing.
- **Private Fostering** – a private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

Information about these and other issues, and the signs to be aware of, can be found in *Safeguarding Reference Documents* on the *Summerhill Drive*.

Alternatively

Visit the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership website at: www.suffolkscb.org.uk.

Or

See *Keeping children safe in education (Sept 2020, pages 94 - 96)*

Further Information and (on the next page) some important telephone numbers

For more detailed information regarding safeguarding at Summerhill, see the safeguarding folders on the *Summerhill Drive*.

This *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* is reviewed at least annually

SPS05

Document history

Some important telephone numbers

Children's Services:

Customer First – Children's Social Care

Telephone: 0808 800 4005

Customer First – Professional Referral Line (for use in emergencies only)

Telephone: 0345 606 6167

Local Authority Designated Officer(s) (LADO)

Telephone: 0300 123 2044

E-mail: LADO@suffolk.gov.uk

MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)

Professional Consultation Line. Telephone: 0345 606 1499

Monday – Thursday: 9.00 to 5.00 pm. Friday: 9.00 to 4.25 pm.

Please note that the consultation line is not a point of referral

Suffolk Police: Telephone: 01473 613500

Police – Non-Emergency: Telephone: 101

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 999

Remember:

- **Anyone can make a referral**
- **Always act in the best interests of the child**
- **If you have any questions or concerns about safeguarding children, you can ask Zoe, Henry, or Andrew at any time, day or night.**

COVID-19 Policy Addendum

September 2020

The school meeting

Government guidance for the full opening of schools states that:

'There cannot be a 'one-size-fits-all' approach where the system of controls describes every scenario. School leaders will be best placed to understand the needs of their schools and communities, and to make informed judgments about how to balance delivering a broad and balanced curriculum with the measures needed to manage risk. (p.6)

The opening paragraph of Summerhill's curriculum states:

'A.S. Neill believed in educating the whole child. Summerhill School is a community and the curriculum embraces everything that happens here: social and emotional development has as much importance as academic learning, much of which happens outside of the classroom. Thus, we would consider the time that a group of teenagers spend sitting together and discussing topics of their choice to be a valuable learning experience - as well as, more formally, the roles of Ombudsmen, Beddies Officers, etc. Just being part of the Summerhill democratic community, living with others in this uniquely free environment and helping one another to do so is an invaluable learning experience.' (p.1)

Thus, it is clear that a *broad and balanced curriculum* is not confined to what is delivered in the classroom and that for Summerhill to deliver a *broad and balanced curriculum* it is essential that the school functions as a whole *democratic community* and to do that the holding of school meetings is a prerequisite.

As it is stated in the introduction above, the *'meetings are used to create, confirm and amend all the school laws which form the structure of expectations for the community of adults and students.'* Further, it *'is our laws and our method of creating and enforcing them which could be described as our 'behaviour policy' and the 'school meeting is the forum to bring the whole school's attention to any safeguarding issues'* (p.2)

The school is required to balance the need to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum with the need to mitigate the risk of transmission. The risk of the transmission of Covid-19 arising from a community meeting will be mitigated by the following measures:

Firstly, the meeting will be held outside, weather permitting. If the meeting cannot be held outside, the meeting room (the lounge) will be extremely well-ventilated with all six doors leading to the room being left open, of which four of the doors open directly to the outside.

Secondly, the following conditions will be in place:

- a distance of at least 2 metres will exist between Bubble 1 and Bubble 2.
- a distance of one metre plus will be encouraged between children in Bubble 2.

- a distance of 2 metres between staff and between staff and children in Bubble 2 will exist.
- face coverings will be worn by all staff and the children in Bubble 2.

Further, meetings will be held once, possibly twice, a week instead of three times a week and the length of each meeting will be restricted to 30 minutes instead of one hour plus.

A special meeting can still *'be called (with the permission of the 'chairman' who is almost always a senior student) **by anybody, at any time, day or night....'*** but **only** for safeguarding reasons. The appeals process also continues to be available.

In addition a 'jury system' will be implemented if required.

The 'jury system'

This is a system which has been employed in the past. Approximately eight, representative members of the community (usually, but not always, two staff, two Carriage, two Shack, two House) are elected as 'jurors'. The 'jurors' meet once a week to hear and settle any simple, straightforward disputes that may arise between community members. The community gives the 'jurors' certain powers to 'fine' where appropriate. The 'jury' reports back to the whole school meeting so that everybody is aware of the issues they have managed. Any difficult cases are referred to the whole school meeting.

Thus, by introducing all the above measures Summerhill is delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, ensuring the school safeguarding measures continue to be robust **and** ensuring the risk of transmission of Covid-19 is mitigated.

Further Safeguarding Issues

Mental health

The school is very aware that the last few months have been particularly difficult for many, if not all, children. All staff need to be particularly vigilant when it comes to detecting symptoms of mental health issues.

Should a child's behaviour suggest that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one, it is imperative that this is reported to Zoe, or Henry, **and** Andrew as soon as possible.

Online safety and teaching online

See *Code of Conduct COVID-19 Policy Addendum*

School trips

There will be no overnight trips. Day trips will be risk assessed on an individual basis and will only take place in accordance with government guidance.

Note: This addendum is under constant review, like all other Covid-19 addenda, and it is very possible that there will be further changes as the situation develops within the school, the local community, nationally and internationally.

Note: This addendum is informed primarily by the school's philosophy and the following documents:

- *Keeping children safe in education (September 2020)*
- *Guidance for full opening: schools (September 2020)*
- *The School Curriculum (2019)*