Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy for Education Candidates

New Directions Education Ltd.

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1. Introduction
This policy is in place to confirm that New Directions Education Ltd is fully aware and compliant with the legislative requirements placed upon it by the Children's Act 2004 and the Education Act 2002, the obligations under the ‘All Wales Child Protection Procedures’ (2008) and the guidance stated in ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ (2013). This has been further updated with guidance documents Welsh Government: Safeguarding Children In Education: Handling Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Staff (April 2014), Welsh Government: Keeping Learners Safe (April 2022) and DFE: Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023). Information sharing to safeguard children and adults (Sept 2019), Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019).

2. Policy Statement
New Directions Education Ltd understands, takes seriously and fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Safeguarding is taken to mean “all agencies working with children, young people and their families, take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risk of harm to children’s welfare is minimised” and “where there are concerns about children and young people’s welfare, all agencies take all appropriate actions to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other agencies”.

We recognise that all teaching staff, cover supervisors, learning support staff plus all New Directions Education staff, have a full and active part to play in protecting children from harm and that the child’s welfare is our paramount concern. The term ‘staff’ covers all adult staff working with children.

This policy is to be reviewed on an annual basis.

3. Policy Aims
To help schools provide an environment in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected, to feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties.

To raise awareness of all New Directions staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.

To provide a structured procedure within the company, which will be followed by all members of staff in cases of suspected abuse.

To ensure that all adults we place in schools have been fully checked as to their suitability using our approved Compliance and Vetting Procedures.
4. Designated Child Safeguarding Officer (DCSO)
A designated person for child safeguarding will be appointed within New Directions Education Ltd. The Designated Child Safeguarding Officer (DCSO) will undertake to attend all appropriate training for the role as recommended by the Senior Management Team. The DCSO will update their training with approved training every two years.

If you have any concerns about the DCSO please refer to New Directions’ HR department based at the Cardiff office, contact number 029 2039 0150.

**The New Directions DCSO**

**Name:** David Lewis  
**Telephone:** 029 2039 0133 or 07399736208  
**E-Mail:** David.lewis@new-directions.co.uk

**The Role of the DCSO**

- To act as a focal point for any staff concerns and liaise with other agencies and professionals on any child safeguarding issues which may arise.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of the company’s Child Safeguarding policy and procedures, and know how to recognise and refer any concerns.
- To keep up to date with knowledge to enable them to fulfil their role, including attending relevant training at least every two years.
- To ensure that all New Directions Education staff receive basic child safeguarding training on joining the company, and are updated at least every 3 years.
- To ensure that either they, or another appropriately trained and informed senior member of staff, attend strategy meetings or other planned meetings called as and when required.
- To make referrals to the safeguarding service if there are concerns regarding a teacher or support member of staff. New Directions Education will only refer those candidates we believe meet the threshold for:
  - Unacceptable professional conduct
  - Serious professional incompetency
  - and/or where a caution for a relevant offence has occurred
- To ensure that detailed and accurate written records are kept.
- To ensure that all such records are kept confidentially and securely.
- To conduct comprehensive risk assessments when a relevant referral is made, to ascertain an individual’s suitability to be placed with our Clients.
5. Scope of Policy
All staff should be aware that allegations made against teachers or support staff may lead to criminal investigations. A police officer is normally present at strategy meetings; hence information received could be called as evidence in court.

As a general rule the following allegations would suggest a person is unsuitable to work with children:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he/she is unsuitable to work with children
- Behaved in a way in his/her personal life which could put children at risk or harm
- Persistently failed to understand how their behaviour adversely affected children
- Failed to understand or comply with the need for clear, personal and professional boundaries in the work place

In most cases, the initial behaviour will be reported by the school who would be expected to take the appropriate course of action, which in the more serious cases will be dealt with under the ‘All Wales Child Safeguarding Procedures’ (Wales) / Working Together to Safeguard Children / Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (England).

Very often this results in a strategy meeting where the employer will be in attendance. The strategy meeting will make recommendations, which in more serious cases could be a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), EWC (Wales), DFE (England).

In such cases the employee will normally be placed on HOLD until the completion of the investigation and/or ordered not to work with children until its completion. The decision to place a candidate on HOLD is a neutral act intended to protect the candidate and learners.

If a child Safeguarding concern has been raised about a direct employee of New Directions Education outside of work, it is the employee’s duty to inform their employer. This concern may lead to further enquiries about their work and any contact they may have with children outside of their working life.

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and all agencies have a duty to safeguard children and to protect them from harm.
All staff working with children should:

- Treat their welfare with the utmost importance
- Be alert to potential indicators of abuse and neglect
- Be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children
• Be aware of the effects of abuse and neglect on children
• Contribute as necessary to all stages of the safeguarding process
• Respond positively in every case

The name of any member of staff not suitable to work with children will be notified to the EWC/DFE, supported by our HR team in accordance with our current policies, and withdrawn from contact with children with immediate effect.

6. Procedures
All new staff will be made aware, in writing, of the company’s policy and procedures for child protection, the name and contact details of the DCSO, and have these explained as part of the induction to the company.

The DCSO will assist in any training required.

Our Selection and Recruitment policy and procedures should include all checks on staff (including Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks) as recommended, and in accordance with, current legislation.

7. Confidentiality
We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. The DCSO will disclose personal information about any safeguarding issues on a need to know basis only. All staff will be made aware of their obligations to ensure matters are dealt with appropriately and confidentiality is not breached.

However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise or guarantee confidentiality.

All records will be kept in a password protected file with access only available to designated personnel.

SECTION B - Statutory Definitions of Abuse

1. What is Abuse?
Child abuse is a term that describes all the ways in which a child’s health and development are damaged by the actions or inactions or others. Abuse describes physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse (and includes abuse taking place in any setting, whether in a private dwelling, an institution or any other place).
2. Physical Abuse
Physical abuse means deliberately hurting a child or young person. It includes: physical restraint; such as being tied to a bed, locked in a room inflicting burns cutting, slapping, punching, kicking, biting or choking, stabbing or shooting, withholding food or medical attention, drugging, denying sleep, inflicting pain, shaking or hitting babies, fabricating or inducing illness (FII).

3. Emotional Abuse & Psychological Abuse
Emotional abuse is the ongoing emotional maltreatment of a child. It’s sometimes called psychological abuse and can seriously damage a child’s emotional health and development. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare or humiliate a child or isolating or ignoring them. Children who are emotionally abused are often suffering another type of abuse or neglect at the same time.

Emotional abuse includes: humiliating or constantly criticising a child, threatening, shouting at a child or calling them names, making the child the subject of jokes, or using sarcasm to hurt a child, blaming, scapegoating, making a child perform degrading acts, not recognising a child’s own individuality, trying to control their lives, pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations, exposing a child to distressing events or interactions such as domestic abuse or drug taking, failing to promote a child’s social development, not allowing them to have friends, persistently ignoring them, being absent, manipulating a child, never saying anything kind, expressing positive feelings or congratulating a child on successes, never showing any emotions in interactions with a child, also known as emotional neglect.

It may involve serious bullying (including cyber-bullying) 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, though it may occur alone.

Psychological Abuse includes threats of harm or abandonment, coercive control, humiliation, verbal or racial abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks, witnessing abuse of others.

4. Sexual Abuse
There are 2 different types of child sexual abuse. These are called contact abuse and non-contact abuse.

Contact abuse involves: touching, activities where an abuser makes physical contact with a child, including penetration. It includes: sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child’s wearing clothes or not, rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child’s mouth, vagina or anus, forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity, making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else’s genitals or masturbate.

Non-contact abuse involves: non-touching activities, such as grooming, exploitation, persuading children to perform sexual acts over the internet and flashing. It includes encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts, not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others, meeting a child following sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them, online
abuse including making, viewing or distributing child abuse images, allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images, showing pornography to a child, sexually exploiting a child for money, power or status (child exploitation).

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

5. Neglect
Neglect means a failure to meet a person’s basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs, which is likely to result in an impairment of the person’s well-being (for example, an impairment of the person’s health). 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
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

6. Financial Abuse
Financial abuse includes theft, fraud, pressure about money, misuse of money. This may have an indirect impact in children.

SECTION C - Procedures for Supply Teachers and Support Staff Working in Education

1. General
The DCSO will be made known to all staff, particularly new and/or temporary staff.

All candidates/temporary workers will be made aware, in writing, of the company’s policy and procedures for child safeguarding, the name and contact details of the Designated Person and have these explained as part of the registration with the company. All candidates / temporary workers will be expected to confirm that they have read and understood the Company Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

All procedures will be reviewed on an annual basis and updated as necessary.

Our recruitment and selection policy includes all checks on staff and candidates, including referencing, DBS and barred list checks (if eligible), right to work and identity checks, and prohibition and qualification checks, as recommended and in accordance with current legislation.
Any candidate considered not suitable to work with children will be notified to the Employment Workforce Council for Wales (in Wales) and/or the Teaching Regulation Agency (in England).

Rehabilitation Of Offenders
The Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC) Education guidance requires assurances that processes are in place to require candidates to update New Directions Education in the event that the candidate is subject to any kind of investigation or prosecution relating to a criminal act and/or which could lead to a conviction/police caution after the most recent DBS/Update Service check was undertaken.

Where this applies, evidence will be gathered from all relevant sources including the candidate, when appropriate, and a purposeful and rigorous Risk Assessment will be formulated and shared with all relevant parties including the candidate and schools/settings so that the school/setting can make an informed decision as to whether the assignment should continue.

2. Procedures for Supply Teachers and Support Staff Working in Schools
These procedures should be read alongside New Directions Education Ltd overarching Child Safeguarding Policies/Procedures.

All staff working for New Directions Education will be made aware in writing of the company’s policies and procedures for Child Safeguarding and where appropriate have these explained as part of their registration with the Company.

All staff working in schools should be told where the Child Safeguarding policy is kept and given the name of the school’s designated Child Safeguarding Officer (usually a senior member of staff).

When an instance occurs in a school, school-based staff should refer to the school’s own Child Safeguarding Policy and refer to their Designated Safeguarding Officer. However, if in doubt, contact your individual Account Manager who will inform New Directions Education’s DCSO.

3. Confidentiality & Information Sharing
All matters relating to Child Protection/Safeguarding are confidential. Disclosure will only happen on a need-to-know basis. However, all staff must:

- Be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

- Be aware that they cannot promise a child they will keep secrets.

4. Record Keeping
Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse, will make notes as soon as possible writing down exactly what was said, using the child’s own words as far as possible. All notes should be timed, dated and signed with name printed alongside the signature; this should then be passed to the Designated Officer within the school. Concerns should be recorded using the school’s safeguarding system.
5. Supporting Staff
We recognise that staff who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or is likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties and support their wellbeing with our DCSO and to seek further support as appropriate.

6. Physical Intervention
A school's policy on positive handling/restraint is usually set out in a separate policy. Most state that staff should only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury or damage to property.

Candidates must not use physical intervention unless it necessary, in the best interests of the child and the actions taken are reasonable and proportionate.

Candidates are strongly advised to advised to attend TEAM TEACH or similar training as and when this becomes available.

Any physical intervention that causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under the safeguarding or disciplinary procedures and may be investigated by other agencies including the Police.

7. E-Safety
You are under a duty to comply with the standards of behaviour required by the Company, and to behave in a responsible manner at all times. This would include the misuse of electronic/digital devices and social networks such as Facebook, Twitter etc.

Please note the following:

- Be aware of the school’s policy regarding the use of the internet/social media
- Do not take into school any electronic/digital device containing inappropriate material.
- Do not attempt to take photographs of pupils or staff.
- Do not give out your own phone number or e-mail address to pupils, and do not seek their contact details.
- Be aware of the dangers of chat rooms, on line games and social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other technology which may be used to gain access to children.
- Be aware of the possibilities of cyber bullying which involves the use of the internet and mobile phones to threaten or frighten children. Cyber bullying is becoming increasingly common and includes:
  - Sending threatening or abusive text messages
  - Homophobia, racism or sexism
▪ Making silent, hoax or abusive calls
▪ Creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
▪ Trolling – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games.
▪ Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
▪ Sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
▪ Pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

8. Allegations Against Supply/Support Staff
All school based staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable and susceptible position with a child. However, where an allegation against a member of staff is made, referral will normally be made to the Head Teacher who then may decide to discuss the allegation with New Directions Education and/or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Normal safeguarding procedures will then follow. In all serious cases the member of staff will be placed ‘on hold’ from work in order for further investigation to take place.

9. Dealing with Disclosures
If a child discloses directly to you, you should follow the correct procedures:

9.1 Receive
▪ Listen to the child. If you are shocked by what they tell you, try not to show it. Take what they say seriously. Children rarely lie about abuse and to be disbelieved adds to the traumatic nature of disclosing. Children may retract what they have said if met with revulsion or disbelieve.
▪ Accept what the child says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking “why didn’t you tell me before?”

9.2 Reassure
▪ Stay calm and reassure the child that they have done the right thing in talking to you. It’s essential to be honest with the child, so don’t make promises you may not be able to keep, like “I’ll stay with you” or “everything will be alright now”.
▪ Don’t promise confidentiality: you have a duty to refer a child who is at risk.
▪ Try to alleviate any feelings of guilt that a child displays. For example, you could say: “you’re not to blame” or “you’re not alone, you’re not the only one this sort of thing has happened to.”
▪ Acknowledge how hard it must have been for the child to tell you what happened.
▪ Empathise with the child – don’t tell them what they should be feeling.
9.3 React

- React to the pupil only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter; but do not interrogate them for full details.

- Do not ask leading questions such as: “what did he do next?” (this assumes that he did!) or “did he touch your private parts?” such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child’s) in any later prosecution in court. Instead ask open questions like “Anything else to tell me?” “Yes?” or “And..?”

- Do not criticise the perpetrator: the pupil may love him/her and reconciliation may be possible.

- Do not ask the pupil to repeat everything to another member of staff.

- Explain what you have to do next and to whom you have to talk.

- Inform the Designated Person for child protection.

- Ensure that if a Social Services interview is to follow, the pupil has a support person present if they wish (possibly yourself).

9.4 Record

- Make some very brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible.

- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by a court.

- Record the date, time, place, any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and words used by the child. If the child uses their family’s own private sexual words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them in to proper words. Sign and date this record.

- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising.

- Be objective in your recording: include statements and observable things rather than your interpretations or assumptions.

9.5 Support

- Make sure that you continue to support the child, providing time and a safe space through the process of investigation and afterwards.

- Get some support for yourself, without disclosing confidential information about the child to colleagues.
10. Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

10.1 Possible signs of physical abuse

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Improbable/inconsistent explanations for injuries
- Untreated injuries or lingering illness not attended to
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Shrinking from physical contact
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
- Fear of undressing
- Fear of medical help
- Aggression/bullying
- Over compliant behaviour or a ‘watchful attitude’
- Running away
- Significant changes in behaviour without explanation
- Deterioration in work
- Unexplained pattern of absences which may serve to hide bruises or other physical injuries

10.2 Possible signs of emotional abuse

- Continual self-deprecation
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Self-harm or mutilation
- Compulsive stealing/scrounging
- Drug/solvent abuse
- ‘Neurotic’ behaviour – obsessive rocking, thumb-sucking and so on
- Air of detachment – ‘don’t care’ attitude
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends
- Desperate attention-seeking behaviour
- Eating problems, including overeating and lack of appetite
- Depression, withdrawal

10.3 Possible signs of neglect

- Constant hunger
- Inappropriate clothing
- Untreated medical conditions
- Compulsive stealing or scrounging
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Poor personal hygiene
- Low self-esteem
• Poor social relationships
• Constant tiredness

10.4 Possible signs of sexual abuse

• Bruises, scratches, burns or bite marks on the body
• Scratches, abrasions or persistent infections in the anal or genital regions
• Pregnancy (particularly in the case of young adolescents who are evasive concerning the identity of the father)
• Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child’s age – shown for example in drawings, vocabulary, games and so on
• Attempts to teach other children about sexual activity
• Refusing to stay with certain people or go to certain places
• Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, tearfulness
• Withdrawal from friends

10.5 Possible signs in older children

• Promiscuity, prostitution, provocative sexual behaviour
• Self-injury, self-destructive behaviour, suicide attempts
• Eating disorders
• Tiredness, lethargy, listlessness
• Over-compliant behaviour
• Sleep disturbances
• Unexplained gifts of money
• Depression
• Changes in behaviour

References

Child Safeguarding – New Incident Procedure

Appendices

None

The Projects Team will continuously review all related policies, monitor employment practices and provide relevant advice and support to managers across the Group.