

Heltwate School Safeguarding & Child Protection Statement



September 2024.

Under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (as amended), and the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (as amended) we will have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

We will always endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children and young people are respected and valued.

The school will therefore be alert to signs of abuse and neglect and will follow the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board's procedures to ensure that children receive appropriate and effective support and protection.

Parents/carers should know that

- the law requires all school staff to pass on information which gives rise to a concern about a child's welfare, including risk from neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse.
- that records of safeguarding concerns may be kept about their child.
- that school staff may seek, in general, to discuss any concerns with them including referrals to other agencies.

Local procedures state that **"Consent should always be sought from an adult with parental responsibility for the child/young person before passing information about them to Children's Social Care, unless seeking consent would place the child at risk of significant harm or may lead to the loss of evidence for example destroying evidence of a crime or influencing a child about a disclosure made."** This includes allowing them to share information without consent, if it is not possible to gain consent, if it cannot be reasonably expected that a professional gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

Where there is a need to share special category personal data, the Data Protection Act 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows professionals to share information.

In accordance with legislation and local Information Sharing Protocols, we will ensure that information is shared securely and sensitively. Information will only be shared with other services where it is deemed necessary and proportionate to ensure that children and young people are safe and receive the right service. In all circumstances, the safety and well-being of the child will remain the paramount concern.

Schools will contact Children's Social Care when they have reasonable cause to suspect a child may be suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Occasionally, concerns are passed on which are later shown to be unfounded. Parents/carers are asked to appreciate that the member of staff in the school with responsibility for child protection (known as the Designated Safeguarding Lead or his/her Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads) are carrying out their responsibilities in accordance with the law and are acting in the best interests of all children.

Under Section 3 (5) of the Children Act 1989, any person who has care of a child "may....do what is reasonable in all the circumstances of the case for the purpose of safeguarding promoting the child's welfare". This means that on rare occasions, the school may need to "hold" a child on site whilst Social Care and the Police investigate any concerns further. If this proves to be the case, parents and carers will be informed that their child is safe and in the care of school staff, pending investigations being satisfactorily completed.