



Unity College Blackpool

Safeguarding Children Procedures

Mission Statement

Children's safety and well being are central to all the work of Unity College. Staff and volunteers working within Unity College will be given training and be encouraged to develop skills to enable them to respond appropriately to any situation where a child may be at risk. Unity College believes that the best place for children is with their families in the community where they live, however children's safety will be Unity College's priority. Unity College has a duty to protect children and will pass on any concerns to the correct authority.

General Statement of Safeguarding Children Procedures

Unity College works within the 'Blackpool Local Safeguarding Children Board's' policy. This policy, along with its guidelines, has been developed from "Working Together to Safeguard Children (1999 & 2006)", and The Blackpool Local Safeguarding Children Board legal framework, Appendix 4 of the Safeguarding Children Procedures 2008, a comprehensive report and framework promoting a multi-agency approach to child protection. This document underpins the Safeguarding Procedures of Unity College.

Every team member has a duty to familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding Policy (April 2008).

Key Principles of Unity College Safeguarding Children Procedures

Based on the 'Blackpool Local Safeguarding Children's Board Policy and Procedures', Unity College and its partnership agencies will adopt the following as key principles:

Children's Rights

Every child has the right to be loved and cared for, and to be safe and well, to be offered a good standard of education, to be protected from exploitation and to have opportunities for rest and play (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: 1991).

All children will have the same rights and the same value regardless of age, race, culture, gender, disability or social/economic background.

Objectives

All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential. This is set in five outcomes that are key to children and young peoples' well being:

- Enjoy and Achieve
- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Make a Positive Contribution
- Achieve Economic Well-Being

To achieve this, children need to feel loved and valued, and be supported by a network of reliable and affectionate relationships. If they are denied the opportunity and support they need to achieve these outcomes, children are at increased risk not only of an impoverished childhood, but of disadvantage and social exclusion in adulthood. Abuse and neglect pose particular problems and can have a long term effect on a child's development.

To deliver this policy Unity College has established the following objectives.

The management team will:

- Run the Centre in a way that minimises opportunities for children to suffer harm;
- Apply safe recruitment and selection procedures for all staff and volunteers;
- Refer all allegations of abuse to recognised agencies so they can investigate;
- Provide all staff and volunteers with training that properly prepares them to respond appropriately to any situation where a child may be at risk;
- Provide a clear and transparent system for responding to allegations of abuse of all kinds;
- Evaluate and review the child protection policy and procedures annually and incorporate developments in good practice;
- Provide a support system for staff who experience issues relating to child protection.

The whole Unity College staff team will work in a way that:

1. Treats children as individuals, entitled to dignity and respect;
2. Promotes effective partnerships with all those involved with children, including parents and carers;
3. Promotes the safety of children in all aspects of the programme;
4. Raises awareness of best practice in how to protect children from harm of all kinds;
5. Uses effective and open procedures when responding to concerns, so those concerns can be dealt with quickly.

Intent

- a. Unity College believes that the best place for children to grow up is with their families, living in their own community but children's safety is our first priority and this will influence all our work. All children will have the same rights and the same value regardless of age, race, culture, gender, disability, or social/economic background.
- b. 'Child abuse' is an emotive and disturbing subject for those who care for the well-being of young children. However, it is a reality and consequently people whose work brings them into regular contact with children need information and practical guidance to ensure that they are able to recognise possible signs of abuse and deal appropriately with their concerns.
- c. The multi-disciplinary nature of the Unity College's team means there is a wide variation in terms of experience and training in the field of child protection. Some roles require a high level of knowledge and understanding but all roles require fundamental awareness of how to protect children from harm and promote their welfare.
- d. This document aims to inform staff members' understanding of the issues relating to child protection but its primary concern is to give Unity College and partnership agency staff a clear and unambiguous protocol for responding appropriately to concerns about possible abuse or neglect, including reporting concerns to the Social Services Department.
- e. **It is the duty of the Social Services Department – not Unity College staff – to investigate allegations of abuse or neglect.**
- f. This guidance does not replace the need for appropriate training and all staff will be required to take part in regular child protection training events.
- g. **All Unity College staff including partnership and seconded staff are required to work to these procedures.**
- h. *"Our knowledge and understanding of children's welfare and how to respond, in the best interests of a child, to concerns about abuse and neglect, develop over time, informed by research, experience and critical scrutiny of practice. Sound professional practice involves making judgements supported by evidence: evidence derived from research and experience about the nature and impact of abuse and neglect, and when and how to intervene to improve outcomes for children; and evidence derived from thorough assessment about a specific child's health, development and well-being and his or her family circumstances."*
(Working Together to Safeguard Children)
- i. The Unity College policy and procedures build on the 'Blackpool Local Safeguarding Children Board Policy, Guidance and Procedures.' They provide the procedures to be used by all Unity College staff, including partnership agency and seconded staff in dealing with child protection issues. The policy and procedures identify Unity College's position and responsibility within the

Blackpool Safeguarding Children structure. They also recognise that it is not the responsibility of the School to investigate allegations relating to child protection but to refer those concerns to the Social Services Department and to work proactively with other professionals to safeguard children.

- j. **Effective child protection requires a co-ordinated approach; Unity College and its partners will work together in implementing the Blackpool Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the Unity College procedures.**
- k. Staff must familiarise themselves with the 'Blackpool Local Safeguarding Board' Safeguarding Children Procedure.
- l. Each member of staff will be given a copy of the Unity College Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures as part of their induction training when the procedures will be explained and the Child Protection Officers identified.
- m. All staff will undertake Safeguarding Children training.
- n. Individual training needs will be identified, enabling staff to work effectively within these procedures.

The Children Act (1989, 2004) places a legal duty on the Social Services Department to investigate and respond to allegations of child abuse. It is not the responsibility of Unity College staff to investigate, but to report to the Children & Young People's Department or the Police any concerns they may have about child protection issues.

Significant Harm – Immediate Action

Any member of staff who believes that a child may be suffering, or may be likely to be at risk of suffering significant harm, section 47 and cases of sexual or physical abuse, must make a referral to the Children & Young People's Department as follows:

- Discuss your concerns with a Designated Safeguarding Officer who will support you, with your referral to the Children and Young People's Department Childcare Duty Social Worker. Subsequently a Confidential file should be opened.
- Record all information as per School procedure.
- The parents should be alerted of your intention to inform the Children & Young People's Department First Response Team, unless you feel this would put you or the child at risk.
- When speaking to the Children & Young People's Department First Response Team, give your name and your role within the school; (HAVE THE CHILD'S FILE WITH YOU AND THE RECORDED INFORMATION).
- Obtain and record the Social Worker's name and the date and time the telephone call was made.

- Explain your concerns, giving as much information as possible. It may be difficult at the time but try to give clear, concise and accurate information based on your professional judgement. The Social Worker will discuss with you any concerns you have about your immediate course of action. For example, if you are caring for a child and the parent is due to collect them.
- The Social Worker will assess the situation and, if required, initiate the appropriate procedures to protect the child.
- At the earliest opportunity inform Designated Safeguarding Officer (Lisa Shuttleworth-Brown); and update recorded information.
- A Common Assessment Framework Referral Form (CAF), must be completed within 24 hours and sent to the Children & Young People's Department First Response Team.
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer will co-ordinate this as it may involve gathering information and discussions with other team members. It is unlikely that all sections of the Common Assessment Framework Referral Form can be completed by e staff but the Referral Form must still be sent to the Children & Young People's Department. A copy of the Referral Form must be retained on the child's case file held at Unity College.
- The parents will be told the reasons for the referral to the Children & Young People's Department after any risk to the child and staff member has been evaluated.

Children In Need – No Immediate Action

Working with children and families presents staff with daily challenges as to whether a child is “*in need*”. There cannot be a definitive list of what is “*in need*”, *section 17*, and reference needs to be made to the ‘Blackpool Safeguarding Children Board’ Safeguarding Children Procedures.

The nature of the work provides a variety of problems and difficulties for staff to deal with and assess. Staff’s observation skills and professional training informs their decision making. The Child Protection Officer is always available to discuss any concerns and offer support and advice.

If staff or volunteers have concerns regarding a child or family they should inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will:-

- a. Complete a request for services form with them. This will then be submitted to the appropriate Social Care.

OR

- b. Complete a Pre-assessment checklist form to determine need. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will contact the CAF Co-ordinator at Unity College (tel: 355493) if the CAF process is initiated.

Parents should be involved and agree to a decision to refer to other agencies and initiate a Pre-CAF. This may not be easy, however, it cannot be avoided and given that in many situations staff will need to have an on-going relationship with the family, it is important for everyone, especially the child involved, that this is dealt with as sensitively as possible. The majority of parents want the best for their child and will work co-operatively with agencies to achieve this. If a referral is made to the Children & Young People’s Department in these circumstances, this must be with the parent’s comments and the referral should be made using the CAF Referral Form.

Completing Internal Safeguarding Children Professional Concern Forms

N.B. Flow Charts for procedures for ‘What to do if you are worried a child is being abused’ must be followed.

All concerns must be recorded. These will be stored in the Head Teacher’s Office on the child’s confidential file. The information should then be discussed immediately and counter signed by a Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Once a Confidential File has been opened the following procedure should be adhered to:

1. Discuss concern with a Designated Safeguarding Officer.
2. Document factual concerns
3. Open a confidential file.
4. Complete a CAF

5. Subsequent reviews will continue until there is no longer a professional concern.
6. A Safeguarding Children Notification Final Review will be completed following discussion by referrer and Designated Safeguarding Officer. This is completed when the Professional (referrer) no longer has concerns and/or family moves out of the area or is transferred as an Open Professional Concern to another team member.

NB IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE REFERRER TO ENSURE THAT THE FLOWCHART PROCEDURE IS FOLLOWED. THE FILE IS REVIEWED AS AGREED AND THAT ANY INTERIM INCIDENTS ARE DOCUMENTED ON THE INCIDENT SHEET.

All child protection referrals will in the first instance be telephoned to the Duty Officer, First Response Team, Children & Young People's Department on:

477668/477664 – 9.30am to 4.00pm

477600 – Out of hours

Abuse Reported by a Third Party

In responding to an allegation of abuse reported by a third party:-

- Listen carefully to the information given and record and date it on the child's family file stating the information source.
- Ask the informer to contact the Children & Young People's Department First Response Team or the police directly.
- If the **informer is an adult** (parent, relative, non-professional), advise them to contact the Children & Young People's Department's First Response Team and offer them the telephone numbers.
- The professional involved should confirm with the duty team that a referral has been made.
- If the **informer is a child**, support the child in the process of contacting the Children & Young People's Department First Response Team.
- If the **informer is another professional**, request that they make a direct referral following the agency's procedures.
- Pass the information on to the Children & Young People's Department using the Common Assessment Framework Referral Form.

Allegations of Child Abuse Against Staff or Volunteers

Internal – Blackpool Council has a team who manage allegations against adults who work with the Children and Young People's First Response Team.

Refer – either to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or directly to the Children & Young People's Department First Response Team.

External – complaints should be encouraged to go directly to the Children & Young People's Department, but if they are unwilling, all complaints must be made to the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will then inform the Children & Young People's Department.

The complaints, disciplinary and grievance procedures of the employing agency will be applied in relation to individual members of staff.

Confidentiality

Personal information about children and families held by professionals and agencies is subject to a legal duty of confidentiality and should not normally be disclosed without the consent of the family. The law does however permit the disclosure of confidential information without permission if it is necessary to safeguard a child or children; this includes cases of child protection. In addition all staff must follow their own agency's confidentiality policy.

Working with Parents and Families

Parents know more about their children than any professional could possibly know, this knowledge should be drawn upon and valued. Partnership with parents is essential to have long-term impact on children's safety and well-being. In working with parents and families Unity College staff and its partnership agency staff are required to:

- Treat all family members as you would wish to be treated, with dignity and respect;
- Ensure that family members know that the child's safety and welfare must be given first priority, but that each of them has a right to a courteous, caring and professionally competent service;
- Take care not to infringe privacy any more than is necessary to safeguard the welfare of the child;
- Be clear with yourself and family members about your power to intervene, and the purpose of your professional involvement at each stage;
- Be aware of the effects on family members of the power you have as a professional, and the impact and implications of what you say and do;
- Respect the confidentiality of family members and your observations about them, unless they give permission for information to be passed to others or it is essential to do so to protect the child;
- Listen to the concerns of children and their families, and take care to learn about their understanding, fears and wishes before arriving at your own explanations and plans;
- Learn about and consider children within their family relationship and communities, their cultural and religious contexts, and their place within their own families;
- Consider the strengths and potential of family members, as well as their weaknesses, problems and limitations;
- Ensure children, families and other carers know their responsibilities and rights including any right to services, and their right to refuse services, and any consequences of doing so;

- Use plain, jargon-free language appropriate to the age and culture of each person. Explain unavoidable technical and professional terms;
- Be open and honest about your concerns and responsibilities, plans and limitations, without being defensive;
- Take care to distinguish between personal feelings, values, prejudices and beliefs, and professional roles and responsibilities, and ensure that you have good supervision to check that you are doing so;
- If a mistake or misinterpretation has been made, or you are unable to keep an agreement, provide an explanation. Always acknowledge any distress experienced by adults and children and do all you can to keep it to a minimum.

Staff Support

Working with families, particularly when child protection issues are involved entails making difficult professional judgements and as such can be distressing and stressful. All staff will have access to advice and support, from their peers and line managers, and regular supervision. Supervision will be used to promote good practice and offer support. This will ensure that staff fully understand their role and responsibilities in relation to the 'Blackpool Local Safeguarding Children Board' and Unity College policies and procedures. Supervision will also identify training and development needs.

A Designated Safeguarding Officer will always be available for support and guidance.

Contacts for Child Protection Issues

The nominated Safeguarding Officer within Unity College is:

Assistant Headteacher Lisa Shuttleworth Brown
(tel: 355493)

The nominated Children & Young People's Department contact for the programme is:

Duty Officer/Team Leader
First Response Team
Progress House, Blackpool

Telephone No: 477668/477664 – 9.30am to 4.00pm
Telephone No: 477600 Out of hours

Structure of Children's Social Work Teams

North

Wards: Anchorsolme, Bispham, Greenlands, Inglethorpe, Layton, Park, Norbreck, Warbreck

Locality Group Manager	-	Kath McTavish	-	476744
Team Manager	-	Elaine Woods	-	477399
Senior Practitioner	-	Vera Hadwin	-	477036
Social Worker	-	Reesai Muteveri	-	477505
Social Worker	-	Donna Ryan	-	477830
Social Worker	-	Tracy Poole-Nandy	-	477665
Social Worker	-	Irene Patterson	-	477574
Social Worker	-	Lee Postlethwaite	-	477615
Social Worker	-	Sandra Roberts	-	477096
Social Worker	-	Laura Higham	-	477957
Fieldwork Support Officer	-	Simon Haworth	-	476810
Fieldwork Support Officer	-	Vicky Arkley	-	477846
Duty Number	-			477668
General Enquiry Number	-			477545
Fax Number	-			477528
E-mail address	-			duty.north@blackpool.gov.uk

Central North

Wards: Claremont, Brunswick

Locality Group Manager	-	Diane Pennington	-	477910
Team Manager	-	Kathy Gardner	-	477663
Senior Practitioner	-	Jennifer Williamson	-	477648
Social Worker	-	Sharron Mulvaney	-	477609
Social Worker	-	Christine Shaw	-	477786
Social Worker	-	Anne Greaves	-	477965
Social Worker	-	Tonya Harrison	-	477356
Social Worker	-	James Cameron	-	477037
Student Social Worker	-	Janet Rostron	-	477955
Student Social Worker	-	Lucy Pollitt	-	477958
Fieldwork Support Officer	-	Bernadette Short	-	477831
Fieldwork Support Officer	-	Jaclyn McKie	-	477661
Duty Number	-			477955
General Enquiry Number	-			477670
Fax Number	-			477667
E-mail address	-			duty.centralnorth@blackpool.gov.uk

Central South

Wards: Bloomfield, Talbot, Tyldsley

Locality Group Manager	-	Diane Pennington	-	477910
Team Manager	-	Carole Jones	-	477542
Senior Practitioner	-	Linda Morrison	-	477607
Social Worker	-	Maria Nyklewicz Betney	-	477612
Social Worker	-	Peter Dilworth	-	477657
Social Worker	-	Sheila Smalley	-	477299
Social Worker	-	Joy Miller	-	477749
Student Social Worker	-	Mark Ruman	-	477660
Fieldwork Support Officer	-	Julie Morgan	-	477593
Fieldwork Support Officer	-	Rob Barlow	-	477602
Duty Number	-			476811
General Enquiry Number	-			477673
Fax Number	-			477667
E-mail address	-			duty.centralsouth@blackpool.gov.uk

South

Wards: Clifton, Haweside, Highfield, Marton, Squires Gate, Stanley, Victoria, Waterloo

Locality Group Manager	-	Marion Shaw	-	477811
Team Manager	-	Mandy Cross	-	477617
Senior Practitioner	-	Hazel Thomasson	-	477832
Social Worker	-	James Isles	-	477605
Social Worker	-	Sharon Holmes	-	477616
Social Worker	-	Tanya Dos Santos	-	477409
Social Worker	-	Sharon Garth	-	477565
Social Worker	-	Jane Bispham	-	477408
Student Social Worker	-	Karen Bainbridge	-	477579
Student Social Worker	-	Joanne Jameson	-	477238
Student Social Worker	-	Clair Hughes	-	477883
Student Social Worker	-	Sharlene Ashgar	-	477603
Fieldwork Support Officer	-	Ingrid Kiely	-	477664
Duty Number	-			477664
General Enquiry Number	-			476860
Fax Number	-			476875
E-mail address	-			duty.south@blackpool.gov.uk

Possible Signs of Abuse

The following table gives some examples of possible abuse. The examples given are not meant to be exhaustive. When making professional judgements around signs and symptoms of abuse it is crucial that all available information and presenting injuries or behaviours are considered and that they are considered in the context of the child's overall development – both physical and psychological.

Possible signs of physical abuse

Possible signs of emotional abuse
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- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent.
- Parent's refusal to discuss 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 or bullying
Overly-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.

- Continual self-deprecation.
- Fear of new situations.
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations.
- Self-harm or mutilation.
- Compulsive stealing or scrounging.
- Drug or 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 over-eating and lack of appetite.
- Depression, withdrawal.

Possible signs of neglect

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

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.
- Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child's age – shown for example in drawings, vocabulary, games and so on.
- Frequent public masturbation.
- 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.