

# **SKOLA: ENGLISH IN EXETER**

## **Safeguarding Young people**



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## 1. Skola Welfare Policy Statement

Skola:English in Exeter believe that, in the interests of good practice, there should be a clear policy and associated practices to guide work with under-18-year-old students who attend our school. We believe that young people have rights as individuals and should be treated with dignity and respect. We will endeavour to provide a safe environment for any young people (under 18s) in our care while they are studying at our school, at our location 89a Queen Street, Exeter, or at any other premises used for lessons or Skola activities. Out of season, there is normally a maximum of 5% 16-17-year-olds in the school, and in the summer, this percentage can rise to 15% in the adult school. Additionally, our Junior Summer Programme (July-August) caters for 11-17-year-olds. This programme, including all social activities, is held in separate premises. Accommodation for 16/17-year-olds in the adult school is offered in host families only. Host families, or 24-hour-supervised residential accommodation, are offered for the Junior Summer Programme. On their first day, students are given information on health and safety issues, including illness, accidents, safety on the streets, alcohol, drugs and driving in the U.K. Under 18s are advised what is/is not permissible for them. They are given the Childline number. They can use it if they want to talk about something they do not want anyone else to know. They are also given the English UK number, should they wish to complain about the school.

## 2. Ethos

Skola:English in Exeter fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in this school. We recognise that for young people, high esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult are important for their protection. Therefore, we are committed to:

**Prevention:** By promoting a positive school atmosphere both in and out of the classroom , through teaching, pastoral care and support to our school community;

**Protection:** By following agreed procedures, through staff training and support to enable us to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns;

**Support:** By providing support to pupils and staff.

Our school will therefore:

- a) Establish and maintain an ethos where young people feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
- b) Ensure that young people know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- c) Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents, colleagues and other appropriate agencies.

## 3. Terminology

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): This is the person with overall responsibility for safeguarding in the school, making decisions regarding systems and training.

Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP): This is the person with day-to-day responsibility for safeguarding in the school, including systems and training.

Responsible Adults: These are adults who have any responsibility for day-to-day care of under 18s, including teachers, other school staff, homestay providers, suppliers, e.g. taxi and coach drivers. Teachers will be trained on a Basic Awareness Safeguarding course.

Young Person/People: Students in the school aged under 18.

#### **4. Safeguarding v. Child Protection, including explanation of Abuse**

Safeguarding is a general term covering all aspects of looking after the welfare of students aged under 18.

Child Protection means protecting under 18s from direct harmful behaviour (abuse).

Abuse is any behaviour towards a person that deliberately or unknowingly causes harm, endangers life or violates their rights.

Abuse may be:

- Physical, e.g. signs of bruising, unexplained injuries; it should also be noted that female genital mutilation (FGM) is a form of abuse
- Sexual, including inappropriate sexual behaviour or language, inappropriate sexual knowledge for the age, child sexual exploitation 'grooming'
- Psychological – repeatedly being made to feel unhappy, humiliated, afraid or devalued by others; this may be signalled by a sudden change in behaviour, e.g. patterns of absence
- Financial or material – stealing or denying access to money or possessions
- Neglect, which may be indicated by a dishevelled appearance
- Discriminatory – abuse motivated by discriminatory attitudes towards race, religion, gender, disability, sexuality or cultural background
- Radicalisation – staff should be vigilant about signs of radicalisation, of any sort, and extremism (see our Prevent Extremism Policy)

The Basic Awareness Safeguarding Course contains a more comprehensive description of abuse.

#### **5. Who's who at Skola: English in Exeter**

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Andrew Darke, Advanced Safeguarding for Designated Staff course, Multi-Agency Safeguarding course

Designated Safeguarding Persons: Caz Potten, Multi-Agency Safeguarding course; Sandy Salisbury, Advanced Safeguarding for Designated Staff course

#### **6. Who should be protected?**

All young people and vulnerable adults, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to safeguarding from abuse. We obtain feedback from under 18s through weekly targeted meetings with them. This feedback is used to inform any updates to this policy.

## 7. Safer Recruitment

Applicants to positions of employment at Skola: English in Exeter will be informed, before interview, that the school requires the following:

- a current photo I.D.;
- a complete CV, with explanations of any gaps in employment;
- certificates of any relevant qualifications, which will be checked;
- a DBS check (required before employment can start where there is substantial access to under 18s);
- references from previous employers, including whether previous employers know of any reason why the applicant should not be in situations of responsibility with persons under the age of 18.

The school will undertake **DBS checks** (formerly enhanced CRB checks) on all permanent staff and supply staff where there is substantial access to under 18s. A 'satisfactory' check is defined as having no criminal convictions (including cautions, reprimands and final warnings) relevant to the post. Please see our DBS Policy Statement.

The school will additionally ensure that the main care-giver in host families and exterior suppliers (taxi drivers for airport transfers and bus drivers for excursions) who are in regular or significant occasional contact with under 18s will have DBS checks, and that any other over-18s in host families will have signed disclaimers to the effect that there is no reason that they should not be in contact with young people and would not object to a DBS check being carried out.

The school will keep a **Single Central Record** of all Safeguarding checks carried out on school staff and Homestay Providers. This Record will contain each person's name, address, DOB, start date, job title, qualifications, DBS certificate details, overseas police check (if necessary), ID check, including right to work in the UK.

The member of the Management Team recruiting staff will have completed a **Safer Recruitment Course**.

All staff will be informed of this Safeguarding Policy, particularly the Code of Conduct and the Reporting Procedures. Permanent staff and regular supply staff will all complete a **Basic Awareness Safeguarding Course**.

## 8. Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Designated Safeguarding Person

The DSP on the school site has daily responsibility for the welfare of the students. The DSL has overall responsibility for the welfare of our students. In his/her absence the DSP will deputise as the appointed person.

The DSL/DSP is responsible to follow these guidelines:

- a) **School events:** Receive information about events that are planned in the school that may involve young people, and plans that indicate how safeguarding will be covered.
- b) **Reports from responsible adults:** Receive information from any responsible adults that have safeguarding concerns and record it.
- c) **Assessment:** Assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying and obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate.
- d) **Further advice:** Consult initially with a statutory child safeguarding agency to test out any doubts or uncertainty: MASH Exeter LADO 01392-384964
- e) **Formal referral:** Make a formal referral to a statutory child safeguarding agency MASH Exeter LADO 01392-384964 or the police, as appropriate.
- f) **Record keeping:** Record and keep notes from staff reports. Record statements from any member of staff who feels that a young person has indulged in inappropriate behaviour or made sexually suggestive comments or approaches. Record and keep notes from any allegations made against staff or other students. Records will be made on the attached form, and stored securely in the office filing cabinet.

### **9. What are the responsibilities of Responsible Adults?**

It is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns about abuse to the Lead or Designated Safeguarding Person, and the responsibility of the Social Services Department and the Police to conduct, where appropriate, a joint investigation.

All responsible adults are responsible for making the school a safe and caring environment for all, including young people, whereby a caring environment is one in which the health, safety and welfare of young people has been assessed and catered for, in which responsible adults are alive to the possibility of abuse and take measures to prevent that possibility, where there is a sound and known reporting system for any incident and where responsible adults take reasonable and practical precautions to avoid any suspicions of abuse being brought against them.

The Health and Safety of a young person should be given additional consideration. Responsible Adults should assist young people first in the case of a fire. They should also be aware that young people are dependent on adults for proper medical and first aid provision. Refer to the Health and Safety Policy, and the Fire Health and Safety Policy for details.

It should be noted that whilst a young person can consent to sexual activity once they reach the age of 16, the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000 makes it a criminal offence for a person to engage in any kind of sexual activity with a person under 18 where the adult is in a position of trust.

#### Supervision Ratios

For any activities off the school premises, responsible adults should be in a ratio of no more than: one responsible adult per 20 young people. Individual Risk Assessments may specify more supervision for certain activities.

#### Safeguarding Guidelines in the Residence (Summer Junior Programme only)

There will be a Responsible Adult in the residence at all times that under 18s are present, at a ratio of at least one to 15. The Responsible Adult will have access to a First Aid Kit and emergency contact numbers, as well as contact numbers for next of kin of all under 18s. The Responsible Adult will ensure that all under 18s are in the residence in the evening at the specified curfew time, and do not leave the residence until the following morning. The Responsible Adult will ensure that all under 18s arrive at the first lesson/activity safely each day.

Group Leaders who accompany groups of under 18s (e.g. from a school) may be designated Responsible Adults, as long as they have been vetted properly. However, they should not be given responsibility for under 18s that are not part of their own group.

Refer to the Code of Conduct and the Reporting Guidelines.

## 10. Code of Conduct for Responsible Adults

The following are intended as guidelines to reduce the risk to young people and also to help protect everyone from any false allegation. First and foremost common sense should be applied.

### YOU SHOULD:

- a) Remember that you are a role model for young people. Your actions, words and appearance (including dress) should reflect this at all times. Be aware especially of cultural and religious sensitivities.
- b) Treat all young people with respect and respect their right to personal privacy.
- c) Ensure that, whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities or that you are within sight or hearing of others. If you need to be alone with an under-18-year-old (e.g. for tutorials), make sure other staff know, and keep the door open.
- d) Exercise caution when discussing sensitive issues. Educate students to accept and be tolerant towards a range of views. (See **Prevent Extremism Policy**)
- e) Exercise caution in initiating any physical contact with a young person.
- f) Challenge all unacceptable behaviour and report all concerns about young people, allegations or suspicions of abuse.
- g) Take a serious approach to the use of alcohol and smoking, and reinforce the fact that legal highs are dangerous, and that other drugs are illegal.

### YOU SHOULD NOT:

- a) Spend excessive time alone with young people away from others.
- b) Take young people off the school premises unless for an authorised Skola activity which has been risk assessed.
- c) Take young people to your home, unless you are a Homestay Provider.
- d) Engage in physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay.
- e) Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- f) Make over-familiar or sexually suggestive comments or approaches to a young person, even as a joke.
- g) Let allegations, inappropriate comments or approaches to a young person or by a young person go unchallenged or unreported.
- h) Do things of a personal nature that young people can do for themselves.
- i) Take photographs, videos or other images of a young person without the express permission of their parents.
- j) Be friends with a young person on social media, or give them your personal phone number or email address.
- k) Allow young people to be exposed to inappropriate media, e.g. sexually explicit or gratuitously violent or racially or religiously intolerant material.

**Record notes of any concerns, and report immediately to the DSL/DSP in the school:**

Andrew Darke, Caz Potten or Sandy Salisbury

**If the DSL/DSP is not available, or you wish to speak to an outside agency, you can contact the Local Exeter Child Protection Office, LADO: 01392-384964**

### **11. Role of the class teacher**

The class teacher is the person who bears the primary pastoral responsibility for the young people in his or her own class. The class teacher will register the students during the first 5 minutes of the morning school and the first 5 minutes of the afternoon school if applicable. Registers are provided for this purpose and are kept in the teacher's file. Any absence of an under-18-year-old will be reported immediately to the School Manager.

### **12. Policy for IT and Media, including Social Media**

There are laptops available for student use. These have filters which block access to inappropriate websites. Responsible Adults will not become friends with under 18s on social media. Any communication by any means (internet, mobile, social media, phone, etc) by a responsible adult with an under-18-year-old will only be for professional reasons. Responsible adults will not allow young people to be exposed to inappropriate media, e.g. sexually explicit or gratuitously violent or racially or religiously intolerant material.

### **13. Training**

The member of the Management Team hiring staff or recruiting Homestay Providers will have completed a **Safer Recruitment Course**.

All staff will be informed of this Safeguarding Policy, particularly the Code of Conduct and the Reporting Procedures. Permanent staff and regular supply staff will all complete a **Basic Awareness Safeguarding Course**.

Staff will have regular Staff meetings in which general issues of Safeguarding will be addressed. The **Code of Conduct** will be displayed in the Staff Room, and regular revision of Safeguarding principles will take place. Staff feedback to the Policy will be used in the annual update.

Homestay Providers will be given a copy of this Safeguarding Policy, as well as a copy of 'English UK Advice for Homestay Providers', which has Safeguarding information for the home situation.

The DSL will be certified to **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Level**. The DSP will be certified to at least **Advanced Safeguarding for Designated Staff Level**.

### **14. Reporting Guidelines**

If a young person comes to you with a concern or complaint, you must take care to remain calm and show support. In this case, or if you have a concern for a young person, these guidelines will help lessen the risk of causing more trauma for the young person and/or compromising any criminal investigation that might follow.

- a) **Receive:** Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief. Accept what is being said without judgement. Take it seriously.
- b) **Reassure:** Reassure the young person as far as is honest and reliable. Assure him/her that you take the concern seriously. Don't promise confidentiality – you have a duty to report your concerns to the DSL/DSP.



- c) **React:** Do not investigate, interrogate or decide if the young person is telling the truth. Remember that any allegation of abuse may lead to a criminal investigation, so don't do anything to jeopardise this. Don't ask leading questions. Don't ask the young person to repeat their concern to another staff member. Explain what you have to do next and to whom you have to talk. Do not discuss the case with anyone other than the DSL/DSP.
- d) **Record:** Make brief notes at the time of reporting and write them up in detail as soon as possible. Use the Reporting Form (Appendix 1). Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by Court. Record the date, time, place, words used by the young person and how he/she looked to you. Keep it factual.
- e) **Report:** Report your concern, together with your written notes, to the DSL/DSP. Do not discuss the case with anyone else. The DSL/DSP will decide how to proceed.

**DSL:** Andrew Darke: 01392-666419, 07771-867600, [exeter@skola.co.uk](mailto:exeter@skola.co.uk)

**DSP:** Caz Potten: 01392-666419, 07900-906823, [exeter@skola.co.uk](mailto:exeter@skola.co.uk)

Sandy Salisbury: 01392-666419, 07768-404575, [exeter@skola.co.uk](mailto:exeter@skola.co.uk)

**If the DSL/DSP is not available, contact Exeter LADO: 01392-384964**

## 15. Communication with Parents

The UK Border Agency requires under 18s to be met by a designated responsible adult at their point of arrival in the UK. The school can arrange a transfer service from any UK port of entry, and we will always advise parents to make use of this service.

Parents of under 18s will be required to sign a Consent Form prior to confirmation of the student's booking. This Consent Form will include: permission for the student to travel from their accommodation to the school unaccompanied; permission for the student to take part in excursions and activities outside school hours; details of curfew times. Parents will be made aware that the school carries out DBS checks on all permanent school staff, who are certificated at Basic Awareness Safeguarding Level. Parents are also asked if they give permission for photos of their child being used for school publicity. If the student is 16 or years old and is enrolled in the year-round adult programme, the Consent form will include permission for the student to be in an adult school, where the course content, style and methodology is directed towards adult learners.

For the Summer Junior Programme, documents accompanying the Consent Form will include: rules for the Homestay or Residence; rules for travelling between the accommodation and lessons/activities; timings of lessons; confirmation that a responsible, First Aid trained adult will be present in the residence at night and that no other over 18s will be allowed in the same residence; and that there will be a weekly laundry service.

Parents or guardians are welcome to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher. If the parents/guardians need to be contacted for any reason this is done through the School Manager or Academic Manager.

## 16. What happens after a report to the DSL/DSP has been made?

The DSL/DSP will deal with the concern according to the above guidelines. The reporting responsible adult should not take further steps to investigate, or to speak with other members of staff.

If an allegation has been made against a responsible adult, the DSL/DSP will refer to the Guidance Document from the DfE: 'DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST TEACHERS AND OTHER STAFF GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES, HEAD TEACHERS, SCHOOL STAFF, GOVERNING BODIES AND PROPRIETORS OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS' (Appendix 2)

If an allegation has been made against another adult student, or against an under-18-year-old student, the following steps will be taken. It is imperative that confidentiality is maintained, and that a quick resolution is a priority.

- a) The DSL/DSP will try to determine if the allegation is **Substantiated, False, Malicious, Unfounded** or **Unsubstantiated**. (See definitions in Appendix 2) It is important to determine if any misunderstandings, or wrong impressions, have occurred.
- b) If the allegation is determined to be **substantiated**, the DSL/DSP should contact LADO. Together they will discuss appropriate steps to take. Care should be taken to safeguard any under-18-year-old involved. The parents of any young person involved will be informed and kept informed throughout any investigation.  
The DSL/DSP will decide if suspension of the student is necessary. This should not be the default option, but should only be used if there is no reasonable alternative. It should be decided whether other action needs to be taken to separate the student from the others involved. If this is deemed necessary, appropriate discretion should be used in informing relevant teachers.
- c) If the allegation is determined to be **false, malicious, unfounded or unsubstantiated** the DSL/DSP should decide if the case can be resolved internally, or if advice from LADO is necessary. Care should continue to be taken to safeguard any under-18-year-old involved. Together with LADO, the DSL/DSP will decide when and how the parents of any under-18-year-old involved should be informed.
- d) Clear records should be kept of the allegation, the decisions made, action taken, and other people/parents/bodies informed. Use the reporting form (Appendix 1).

## 17. Review of this Policy

This Policy will be reviewed annually, and it will be signed off by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. All school staff will have the opportunity to contribute to discussion about the review. Any feedback from responsible adults and young people will be used to inform the review of the Policy.

## 18. Extra Guidelines for Homestay Providers

Refer to the 'English UK Advice for Homestay Providers' booklet for specific guidelines. This now includes an additional supplement for Skola English in Exeter.