



Emergency Response Policy

WHG operates a 24/7 phone line. Between 9am and 5pm UK time, this will go through to our Head Office in Bournemouth. Out of these hours, the call is redirected to a mobile which is answered by a member of Head Office to assist in emergency situations.

Responding to a child making an allegation of abuse

Safeguarding is the responsibility of ALL members of staff & host families. All staff & host families are in a position of trust, and therefore all are required to take a shared responsibility to safeguard children and young people. All staff & host families will be made fully aware of their duties and in safeguarding students and responding to allegations of abuse or neglect.

Any member of staff or host family with an issue or concern relating to child protection, including but not limited to allegations of child abuse, should discuss it immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) on +448 458 686 688.

Anyone who hears an allegation of abuse against or has concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff must report the matter immediately to a DSL. If the DSL is unavailable, or involved in an allegation, the matter must be referred immediately to another DSL.

A concern against the management of WHG should be forwarded to AEGIS +44 (0) 1453 821293. At no point should an attempt be made to investigate the situation. This will be undertaken by NSPCC/Social Services and/or the Police as necessary.

All concerns or disclosures of abuse should be acted upon.

Staff should know the 5 Rs:

- Recognise signs of vulnerability
- Respond to student concerns
- Record student concerns
- Report student concerns
- Refer student concerns
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How to respond to a disclosure

Stay calm, sometimes issues are raised which, whilst seemingly complex, are generally safeguarding matters and not necessarily a child protection issue. These matters should be responded by offering a supportive response and where necessary or relevant, refer them to the Local Guardian & DSL.

When a student self-discloses a matter that constitutes a potential or alleged situation of abuse, the staff member must take the student to a private place within view but out of ear-shot of other people. Promises of confidentiality must not be given. Tell the student that you have a duty to pass on the information, only to those who need to know.

- Listen carefully to what is said
- Do not interview them, but ask what happened, keep questions to a minimum and obtain sufficient facts to understand what is being alleged
- Allow the child to continue at their own pace
- Ask questions for clarification only and always avoid asking leading questions (questions that suggest a particular answer). Do not make assumptions or offer explanations
Remember that an allegation of child abuse may lead to a criminal investigation, so do not attempt to personally investigate any allegations of abuse
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared with a DSL at Head Office in Bournemouth

Recording a report

A call must be made to notify a WHG DSL and the head of pastoral care at the school.

A full incident report must be made as soon as possible detailing the nature of the allegation. Record in writing everything that was said, using the child's own words. Note place, date, time, and names of persons to whom the information was given.

Do not confront any person against whom an allegation has been made. The DSL will guide you and in dealing with any allegation or suspicion of abuse, and if applicable, report allegations and incidents of abuse to the LADO (Local Area Designated Officer) at the local County Council Children's Social Services.

WHG recognises that the Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of the child is the paramount concern. It also recognises that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within a centre, shall do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way and in accordance with our procedures.

If you are ever in doubt as to what to do, please consult a member of the Safeguarding Team at Head Office.