

SAFEGUARDING

OUTCOME STATEMENT

The welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse

This chapter should be read in conjunction with the LSCB Procedures for Essex.

Contents

- 1. Introduction, summary and definitions of Significant Harm**
- 2. Duty to Refer**
- 3. Reporting suspicions or allegations of Significant harm**
- 4. The principals of good practice**
- 5. Managers responsibility**
- 6. Organisational responsibility**

Introduction and Definitions of Significant Harm (Child)

Introduction and summary

All local authorities have a duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in their area and to investigate and take necessary action to protect children who have or are likely to suffer **Significant Harm**.

The Local Safeguarding Children's Board is the inter-agency forum which acts as the coordinator for all agencies and professionals to work together. Each area normally has its own Child Protection Procedures.

If there is an allegation of abuse or neglect or if abuse is suspected managers and staff are expected to adhere to the policy and procedures contained within this chapter as well as the Safeguarding Children Procedures for the area in which the home is located and those of the placing authority. Safeguarding matters may also need to be referred to the **Regulatory Authority**.

Staff must report any concerns, suspicions or allegations of Significant Harm relating to any child or young person receiving services from Donyland Lodge.

Staff should report concerns to the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) who is Gillian Miele, or to the Manager of the Home, who will then inform the DCPO, unless of course the concern relates to the DCPO or Manager, in which case, the report must be made to a member of the Senior Management Team not implicated.

The role of the Designated Person is to:

- Ensure that child protection procedures are in place and updated as appropriate;
- Ensure that all staff are aware of both the Essex Safeguarding Children Board's 'Child Protection Procedures' and Donyland Lodge's own policy;
- Be available to provide advice/support to staff and for confidential discussions about concerns;
- Be available to provide support to young people;
- Liaise with young person's local authority;
- Keep records of any concerns/suspected cases of abuse/referrals on young person's Safeguarding files, separate to the young person's main file, and stored securely;
- Co-ordinate arrangements for monitoring young people who have been identified as being in need of protection;
- Arrange induction training for all staff in Child Protection awareness, and refresher training for all staff in line with National Minimum Standards and School Standards;
- Review arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children on an annual basis, and support the implementation of any action plan arising from this review.
- Participate in local safeguarding arrangements overseen by Essex Safeguarding Children Board.

Reports can also be made to the following

- **An Officer of the Local Safeguarding Board in whose area the Home is situated (Essex)**

Any action that is taken must not alert the person(s) who may have caused the Significant Harm.

DEFINITIONS

Significant Harm – also sometimes referred to as Abuse. It is broadly defined as any physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect, accident or injury which is sufficiently serious to adversely affect progress and enjoyment of life.

This can include serious or persistent bullying and the involvement of or exposure of children and young people to pornography prostitution/sexual exploitation.

Duty to Refer

All members of staff (including agency staff and volunteers) have a responsibility to be aware of the procedures to be followed if they are worried a child or young person is being abused.

It is the duty of all staff to immediately refer any child protection concerns about a pupil to the Designated Person, Gillian Miele Services Director. In the absence of the Designated Person staff should refer to the Home Manager Gordon Beattie, or the Deputy Home Manager Nikki Thorburn In the absence of all these people, staff should refer to the next most senior member of the school leadership team.

If as a member of staff, you are not satisfied with the Designated Person's response, e.g. where they decide a referral to the Local Safeguarding Board is not necessary, you should in the first instance approach the Director. If as a member of staff, you are still not satisfied you should make a referral yourself by telephoning the relevant local safeguarding office.

Donyland Lodge also has a safeguarding committee. It comprises four people, consisting of three staff from Donyland Lodge and one director from Kedleston (Donyland's parent company). This committee will be elected each September and will be published to all staff as well as being displayed in Staff offices at all times. The committee will be informed of all safe guarding concerns that are made to the Designated Person as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours from when the concern is reported.

If staff feel uncomfortable reporting incidents to the Designated Person they are able to approach any member of the committee.

As a further safeguarding measure, Donyland uses the services of Safecall, an independent whistle blowing company which can be used by all staff at Donyland Lodge should they be unhappy about any serious wrong doing in the organisation. Safecall can be contacted on 0800 915 1571 or online on www.safecall.co.uk/report where an anonymous report can be made detailing any concerns raised.

Reporting Suspicions or Allegations of Significant Harm

The following actions should be taken where there is any allegation or suspicion of **Significant Harm**, or any likelihood that Significant Harm may occur in relation to a child or young person. This includes harm perpetrated by another child (including serious or persistent bullying) a visitor, a person in the community, teacher, social worker, parent, other carer including colleagues within Donyland Lodge.

Staff responses will depend on whether they are faced with an emergency or non emergency situation. An emergency would mean that there is an immediate risk to the child e.g. staff cannot prevent the child from being harmed or the child needs urgent medical attention.

EMERGENCY (There is immediate risk)

In an emergency situation staff must first take action to ensure that the child is safe and if necessary medical attention is secured. This must be the first priority. Only when the situation is safe,

Staff should report to the DCPO or Manager unless the DCPO/ Manager are implicated. In which case staff must notify one of the following:

- The Director
- Any member of the Senior Management Team
- Following consultation any other appropriate agency (LA, Regulatory Body, LSCB)

In certain circumstances it may be necessary to involve the Police.

NON-EMERGENCY (There is no immediate risk)

Where a member of staff receives a report or has suspicions that a child or young person has been or is at risk of being subject to Significant Harm, but there is no immediate risk to the child.

Staff should report to the DCPO or Manager unless the DCPO/Manager are implicated. In which case staff must notify one of the following:

- The Director
- Any member of the Senior Management Team
- Following consultation any other appropriate agency (LA, Regulatory Body, LSCB)

Remember that any action taken should not alert the person(s) who may have caused the Significant Harm.

PRINCIPALS OF GOOD PRACTICE

The following are principles of good practice which staff must adhere to.

Receiving Comments/Concerns

Staff members on receiving a report of alleged abuse should firstly take any necessary steps to protect the child or young person from risk of harm, especially if the child will be exposed to the person(s) whom the child is making allegations about. Immediate decisions need to be made to ensure the safety of the child or young person, including any child or young people who are alleged perpetrators.

Staff should allow the young person to speak freely in their own time without interruption. The person receiving the concern should offer reassurance to the young person if they are distressed. It is important that the young person feels able to communicate their concern, feels listened to and believed

The person receiving any form of disclosure should limit any questioning to the minimum necessary to establish the basic facts, or to seek clarification. They must not ask any leading questions or take any actions to investigate or make judgements about what is reported to them. Investigations, if necessary, must be undertaken by properly trained, independent professionals.

When a child or young person has disclosed about Significant Harm, staff should discuss with the young person what steps they would like to see taken, as far as possible and so long as any such action does not conflict with other procedures, their wishes should be followed. When it is not possible to comply with the wishes of the child, the reasons for this should be explained to them, in a manner appropriate to their age and level of understanding.

Staff should also establish if the young person has any visible injuries or is claiming to have injuries which cannot be readily seen. Staff are not to make judgements about how injuries were sustained nor or they to ask the young person to show injuries that are under clothing. Staff must ensure that a child is safe and receives medical attention if necessary, before any other action is taken.

Where a child or young person makes allegations of a historical nature, e.g. relating to harm they allege had been perpetrated against them in the past, another place or before they became looked after, their allegations must be taken seriously and must be recorded in the same way. This may include expressions of dissatisfaction about the way in which a previous investigation was conducted. Staff should not presume that because a disclosure is “historic” it is already known about.

Donyland Lodge promotes a “No Secrets” ethos therefore staff must make no promises to any young person who discloses to them, that they will keep the information between themselves. Staff should guarantee that they will take all necessary steps to keep the young person safe and that information will only be passed to the people who need to know in order to ensure action is taken to address the problem.

Staff must make a written record as soon as possible in regards to what they have been told, detailing any questions asked, and the replies given which must be recorded word for word as spoken by the young person and what action has been taken and by whom. They must then give the report to the DCPO or Manager. Staff members are reminded to treat any such reports as confidential and they should only be shared with and given to those who need to know.

Allegations made against young people

Significant Harm can be perpetrated upon one child by another in many different ways, including serious or persistent bullying, sexual exploitation, aggression and other threatening behaviours.

Where there is any suspicion or allegation of significant harm perpetrated by one young person upon another, the DCPO or manager must be notified. Emergency procedures (there is immediate risk) should be followed if necessary.

Following assessment of all the facts, it may be necessary to separate the alleged perpetrator from the victim, but it may not be possible to explain why this is necessary to the alleged perpetrator until the LSCB has been consulted.

Allegations made against a member of staff

Any concerns that involve allegations against a member of staff should be referred immediately to the Designated Person, who will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to discuss and agree further action to be taken in respect of an allegation.

Any child protection allegation concerning the Director should be referred to the Services Director and vice versa. Full guidance is available to the Designated Person in 'Concerns/Allegations Regarding People who Work With Children' in [Local] Safeguarding Children Board's 'Child Protection Procedures' available

The DCPO will inform any member of staff who is subject to an allegation about that allegation as soon as possible but (s)he will have to follow directions from the LADO and/or the police as to what can be shared and when.

It is recognised that any allegation of abuse will cause the member of staff anxiety and advice will be given as to possible avenues of support from, for example, their union, professional association or the Senior Management Team.

Any member of staff subject to an allegation will be given a copy of the leaflet "A guide for staff and volunteers who work with children and are faced with an allegation of abuse".

The staff member will be kept advised as to the progress of the investigation as far as possible

Managers Responsibility

The manager is responsible for:

- Keeping a copy of the current Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures for Essex and for ensuring that all staff are familiar with it and have access to it.
- Holding and being conversant with the most up to date copy of the "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (March 2010) and ensure that all staff has access to it.
- Ensure that staff is kept up to date regarding safeguarding children and that they are well trained and conversant with Donyland Lodge safeguarding policy and procedure.
- Ensuring that the appropriate procedures and recording are followed within the home.
- For liaising with the DCPO and other relevant officers within the local authority and elsewhere in respect of safeguarding.
- Receiving reports and sharing these with the DCPO of any suspicions or allegations of significant harm, supporting the DCPO in contacting the LSCB and taking any other appropriate actions as agreed necessary or as set out in these procedures.
- The manager has responsibility for ensuring that the Regulatory Authority is notified in respect of all Notifiable Events (See Appendix2)

The Responsibilities of Donyland Lodge as an Organisation

Donyland Lodge understands that our first duty is to promote children's rights to be protected from harm, injury, exploitation and safeguard their welfare. This overall duty permeates all our policy and procedure.

We must be mindful that we are looking after other people's children and that our standards of protection must be high. To this end Donyland Lodge undertakes the following:

- We will gather as much relevant information as possible about the children we consider for placement.

- When an offer of placement is made it is based on our ability to meet all the identified needs of the child or young person.
- We will provide high levels of supervision balanced by appropriate opportunities for privacy and security
- We understand the need for young people to be allowed to take some risks, but we will not allow children to place themselves at unnecessary risk and will take whatever steps are reasonable to prevent them from harming themselves or others.
- When necessary and as a last resort staff may use Physical Interventions, including physical restraint, the approved technique at Donyland Lodge is Team Teach.
- All staff will receive training in Team Teach
- We will provide plenty of opportunity for children and young people to express their feelings, views, wishes and fears in terms of their day to day living, education, social and cultural needs and plans for the future, inclusive of safe opportunity to disclose and make complaints
- All children will be given access to a private space and phone, Numbers for other agencies such as the NSPCC and Childline will be clearly displayed.
- We will provide information, advice and education with regards to healthy living and lifestyle choices.
- We will carefully select, vet, train, support and supervise staff to ensure they remain committed to the principals detailed above.
- We will not employ or continue to employ staff who give cause for concern or who engage in any behaviour not deemed to be conducive to safeguarding our children and young people.
- If at any time we suspect that a child or young person is being placed at risk, or is likely to be placed at risk, we will act swiftly to prevent it. All suspicions of significant harm will be openly discussed with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and any other agencies as appropriate.