



Safeguarding Children and Young People Record Keeping and Referral Policy

12 September 2025

Annual Policy Period	2025 - 2026
Policy Adopted by Governors	September 2022
Last Policy Review	12 September 2025
Next Policy Review	September 2026

About This Document

History

Version	Date	Name	Description
0.1	1 Sep 2022	René Esterhuizen, Headteacher	First release. DRAFT
1.0	Sep 2022	School Governors	Approved and adopted.
1.1	Sep 2023	School Governors	Approved and adopted
1.2	9 Sep 2024	School Governors	Reviewed and approved
1.3	10 Sep 2025	René Esterhuizen, Headteacher	Reviewed, no changes.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. "Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play". Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- 1.2. "Schools have a duty to ensure that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children who are its pupils."
- 1.3. Education Act 2002 Section 175
- 1.4. "When the lives and the rights of children are at stake, there must be no silent witnesses."
Carol Bellamy EYFS Review 2011

2. Listening to Children

- 2.1. Experience, and consultation with children, shows that they will talk about their concerns and problems to people they feel they can trust and they feel comfortable with. This will not necessarily be a teacher. It is therefore essential that all staff and volunteers in The Vine Christian School know how to respond sensitively to a child's concerns, who to approach for advice about them, and the importance of not guaranteeing complete confidentiality.
- 2.2. Children also want to know that they will be listened to and their concerns will be taken seriously, so we should seek to demonstrate to the children that we provide them with a safe environment where it is okay to talk.
- 2.3. Any member of staff or volunteer who is approached by a child wanting to talk should listen positively and reassure the child. They should record the discussion with the pupil as soon as possible and take action in accordance with the school's child protection procedures.
- 2.4. Record keeping is an essential part of our role in safeguarding/child protection; it is vital that it is done accurately and managed carefully and securely. You are required to make a record of any incident concerning a child's welfare. Evidence has played an increasing part in inspections and legislation requires the maintenance of certain statutory records. It just isn't good enough to say what you did; you have to be able to prove it.
- 2.5. Secondly, a record needs to be made as soon as possible after the incident as you will forget. Every inch of the incident might be crystal clear at the moment but you can guarantee within a few days it will have been replaced by a number of other events in your anecdotal memory. What is most important is that we fulfil our recording responsibilities.
- 2.6. There are two types of record that we have in place in our setting:
 - i. The formal record that must be kept in a school in order to support effective child protection and safeguarding and the informal record that is for our benefit and can provide us with the information we need when we need it. All records are kept confidential to fulfil our duty to data protection.

3. The Formal Record:

- 3.1. All records should be objective and accurate, be clear about names, dates, places, etc., and also distinguish clearly between fact and opinion. We must record the following as a minimum:

Record	What it must contain
Safeguarding Concerns Record of disclosures and referrals made to social care	• Name and DOB of the person concerned • Date and time of the disclosure/ concern • Place and context • Important facts • Witnesses • Subsequent actions • Signatures
Record of concerns	This might include referrals from members of staff and concerns that you have followed up within school.
Record of incidents	This might include records of: • violent outbursts against staff • times when a pupil has had to be restrained • any act of aggression – such as a fight between pupils.
Record of bullying and harassment incidents	A record of each incident, witnesses and the actions that have been taken. A governor should be monitoring this at intervals, although identities should be kept anonymous from governors.
Record of racist incidents	A record of each incident, witnesses and the actions that have been taken. A governor should be monitoring this at intervals, although identities should be kept anonymous from governors.
Single Central Record (staff)	This must include reference to: • qualifications • identity check • references • DBS/ List 99 • Prohibition check (for qualified teachers) • right to work in the UK • overseas criminal record checks (where appropriate) • Safeguarding Training It could also include the following: • Date of employment • First Aid Training • Induction Training • CEE Training • Information regarding contracts

- 3.2. All student files are kept in a secure location, accessible by Mrs. René Esterhuizen only. These include records of incidents, all the records for child protection, and confidential files on children who are known to social care as well as our records of racist incidents, bullying and harassment, log of referrals and contacts with social care.
- 3.3. If you have need to access any files, please ask Mrs. René Esterhuizen for access. You will need to sign to say that the file has been removed and then replaced.
- 3.4. All files must be treated confidentially. You may be given contextual information to help support pupil welfare. However, the private details of families and their individual circumstances should not be discussed with others other than in the following circumstances:
 - i. records can only be read within the office
 - ii. Mrs. René Esterhuizen must be informed if files are being taken to a meeting and/or into a secure area for reading
 - iii. any returned files are given to Mrs. René Esterhuizen for returning (the same one who is told about their removal) – this way they should be replaced correctly, and it helps to keep a check on their return
 - iv. a log is kept of those removing a file with the reason why, the destination and a signature and date.
- 3.5. Formal Records are to be kept for six years past the child's 18th birthday and must be transferred to the Safeguarding Lead of the admitting school should the child change schools.
- 3.6. The Safeguarding Lead should regularly review the recording and be alert to patterns of behaviours or incidents that might make smaller less significant incidents trigger a referral to Social Care.

4. Informal Records

- 4.1. Although there is no official requirement to maintain a log of our day-to-day contacts with social care and other agencies, it can be extremely beneficial to devise a system for doing this. It is expected that all agencies are proactive in making referrals where they have concerns about a child and check up on any referral that is made. You cannot do this unless you keep a clear log of dates, times and conversations.
- 4.2. This record will act as a prompt for you, making sure that you follow up your referrals and are given a satisfactory answer to any concerns you might have. It can also help provide detail in case of an enquiry or if unfortunately, a serious case review needs to be held.
- 4.3. Any informal records may be kept by the Supervisor in the student's 'Tested' file for quick and easy access unless they contain confidential matter in which case all details must be kept in the students' files in the office.
- 4.4. Records should include the following where necessary:
 - i. a chronology at the front of the timescales and stages involved in making a child protection referral

- ii. a section for keeping your own notes where concerns have been brought to you (if you are the designated person) and what you have done. This does not replace the need for official records but will act as a quick prompt and reminder for you when you are speaking to social care
 - iii. a general page – for those incidents and concerns which may just need noting at this point but are not at the level of referral
 - iv. a log of contact with social care – it is sometimes the case that it is difficult to gain access to the people you would like to when you would like to. It is important that you keep a record of your attempts and the times you have left messages, etc. In the end if you continue to be unsuccessful always seek to take it higher – speak to the local authority child protection officer if necessary
 - v. a log of contact with parents – this is particularly important when you are seeking permission from a parent for a referral to take place – failure to contact a parent should not preclude contacting social care where you have concerns.
- 4.5. Remember that your informal notes can be requested as evidence and whatever you write, you should be aware that at some point they might be viewed by another audience.
- 4.6. Abbreviations are fine; however, objectivity and professionalism should always be kept in mind when recording.
- 4.7. In the same way as for the formal records, confidentiality is an issue with informal records; all such records should be locked and access to them restricted.
- 4.8. It takes time and it's an additional strand to the work you do, but for everyone concerned, we must not cut corners on our child protection record keeping. Remember to evidence everything!