

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Northumbria School of English has a legal duty of care towards all children and young people (under the age of 18) who use our services.

Safeguarding is about the level of care we should all provide to protect under 18s and ensure their well-being.

The Principal, Christine Goodwin, is the Safeguarding lead and has been trained in Advanced Safeguarding.

POLICY STATEMENT

We are an English Language school whose main business takes place in the summer months when we accept groups of young learners for summer school programmes. We are based on the coast of North East England in the small seaside resort of Whitley Bay. The school building has 3 – 4 classrooms and 15 residential rooms where young learners can be accommodated in shared 2- 4-bedded rooms. We also offer homestay accommodation for older students. Residential students are generally aged 10 - 16, though we have had groups of mixed ages where the minimum age was 9 and the maximum age was 17. Students come on average for 2 – 3 weeks. Adults are employed as teachers and as support staff. Adult students also attend the school on a non-residential basis.

SECTION 1 GENERAL

1 i) Safeguarding is to be understood by all adults – whether teachers, other adult students, support staff and host families – as the process and actions required to look after the under 18s in our care. Everyone who comes into contact with an Under-18 has a responsibility for safeguarding. Safeguarding is different from child protection, which involves protecting the child from direct harm. The named child protection officer is Christine Goodwin, the Principal, and it is she who deals with training, recording systems and direct handling of any child protection issues.

1 ii) Our safeguarding policy is based on the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child which declares that men and women of all nations, recognizing that mankind owes to the Child the best that it has to give, declare and accept it as their duty that, beyond and above all considerations of race, nationality or creed:

1. The child must be given the means requisite for its normal development, both materially and spiritually;
2. The child that is hungry must be fed; the child that is sick must be nursed; the child that is backward must be helped; the delinquent child must be reclaimed; and the orphan and the waif must be sheltered and succored;
3. The child must be the first to receive relief in times of distress;
4. The child must be put in a position to earn a livelihood, and must be protected against every form of exploitation;
5. The child must be brought up in the consciousness that its talents must be devoted to the service of fellow men.

As a school we will provide for children

1. a safe, secure and nurturing environment to promote physical and spiritual well-being and effective learning and development;
2. good healthy meals, comfortable accommodation and medical care when required;
3. a philosophy of putting the children first
4. protection against every form of exploitation
5. leadership by example and encourage them to be good citizens

1iii) All adults who are made aware of the policy and who have contact with under-18s must take responsibility at all times for its implementation, whether in lessons, around the school, out on activities, or in homestay accommodation.

1 iv) All under-18s also have a responsibility to look after themselves and others and to raise concerns with the Principal if necessary. Under 18s will be made aware of the policy and of safety issues in their induction.

1 v) This safeguarding policy should be read in conjunction with our associated policies on Prevent Duty, bullying, use of computers, staff:student ratios, safe recruitment and student absence.

SECTION 2 CODE OF CONDUCT

All employees, teachers, support staff, visiting group leaders and homestay hosts will be made aware of the Code of Conduct as set out in the Staff Handbook and the Guidance for host families and group leaders. The purpose of this document is to ensure that a safe school culture is created and trust exists between Under-18s and adults. It is also to ensure that adults are also protected from any behaviour or actions which might be misconstrued.

2 i) Setting Standards

- Be excellent role models
- Be aware of standards of dress and behaviour – students find it hard to respect teachers and their role if they do not present appropriately
- Be punctual
- Be firm but fair when dealing with classroom misbehaviour
- If a student has a concern, find a private place to discuss it

2ii) Adult - U18 interaction

As a general rule, physical contact between adults and Under 18s is not acceptable.

Do not allow yourself to be alone in a room with an Under -18

Teachers should ensure that adult students and Under-18s are not left alone in a room together

2 iii) Appropriate appearance

All teachers and staff should be aware that their appearance does have an effect on many students and students might find it hard to respect them and/or their role if they do not present appropriately.

2 iv) Alcohol, drugs and smoking

The school has an anti-smoking policy and smoking is not permitted anywhere in school or in the grounds. Drinking of alcohol is only permitted on special occasions (e.g. special announcements, Burns Night), and when clarification has been given to the Under-18s as to the inclusion of the alcohol as part of the celebration.

2 v) The school internet has no filtering system as yet but wifi access is now a demand of students, parents and group leaders and therefore we are looking into the possibility of a filter system.

2 vi) Accommodation

As a general rule, students of 17 and below are accommodated in the school residential facility. At night times the supervision of the children and the bedroom checks are carried out by accompanying group leaders. These duties are a compulsory part of the group leaders' responsibilities and it is for this and other duties that they receive their free places. With mixed groups of boys and girls there should be both a male and a female group leader.

In certain circumstances, and when requested by parents, students aged 16 – 17 may be accommodated with local host families. When this happens, the families are selected which live within 5 minutes walking distance of the school and strict curfew times are imposed by both the school and the family. Parents of the student concerned are consulted on these rules and have to also add their agreement. We select only those families in which the main family member has been DBS checked. It is now a requirement that all adults over 18 in the family have to be DBS checked. Until this has been carried out, some families will not be used for under 18s. At present, it is normal practice to accommodate under 18s in the school residence however we are losing business because of our inability to provide enough DBS-checked host families and therefore we are currently working with families to get the checks carried out.

The second-floor residential accommodation itself provides one corridor for boys and one corridor for girls' sleeping arrangements. When older teenagers are in residence, a group leader also takes a room on the second floor in the main students' accommodation. Two rooms are available on the first floor, where staff and group leaders are also accommodated, for either boys or girls but not both.

2 vii) Transport

All transport is arranged with local coach companies whose drivers are DBS checked. Airport transfers of individuals are carried out by the Principal.

SECTION 3 CHILD PROTECTION

The school has a separate child protection policy and a safe recruitment policy. Please read these separately.

All staff and host family members in contact with under 18s are requested to be vigilant and to report immediately to the Principal any concerns regarding suspicions of neglect, abuse, bullying, depression, homesickness. The Principal is our nominated Child Protection Officer.

SECTION 4 TRAINING

4 i) As the school's main business with Under 18s takes place in the summer months, from June – August, adult staff are generally part time and temporary. All new tutors are requested to complete online training at Level 1 Safeguarding with particular emphasis on the needs of our particular context. All staff must complete the online course which is recommended by English UK:
<http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/learning-improvement/nyscb-basic-awareness-elearning>
Our Principal has Advanced Safeguarding training.

SECTION 5 SAFER RECRUITMENT

5 i) Our recruitment procedures are as recommended by the British Council's accreditation criteria and involve seeking at least 1 reference for every freelance tutor and in addition a notification that a DBS check will be required.

5 ii) Accompanying group leaders are required to provide a letter from their school, their local police or their organisation to confirm that they are suitable to work with children.

5 iii) All staff and host families who will have contact with Under 18s must have a DBS check. We have recently been accepted by North Tyneside Council who will act as our 'umbrella' organisation. Some of our host families and staff already have DBS checks and details of these are recorded. We are not allowed to retain photocopies of DBS checks because of Data Protection issues, however the DBS reference, date of check and type of check are recorded.

5 iii) Staff from outside agencies who come into contact with our students on activities (e.g. Longsands Surf School and Cullercoats Bike & Kayak) are DBS checked by our local authority and have the appropriate professional qualifications.

SECTION 6 WELFARE

Safeguarding procedures are in place to ensure the safety and well-being of our Under-18 students.

6 i) Risk assessments are carried out for every activity. Copies of risk assessments are provided in advance for activities supervisors. Supervisors brief students prior to the visit about any risks and special instructions.

6 ii) Prior to every afternoon or weekend excursion a powerpoint presentation is given to provide visual information about the place or activity. At the end of it, information about any specific risks is given verbally. On each occasion, the road safety advice and the need to have mobile phones in bags when walking around in groups is repeated.

6 iii) Whilst out on activities, supervision ratios are strictly adhered to with at least 1 supervisor per 10 students. Most students have a smart phone with them. A record of every student's phone number is maintained both at school and with the accompanying supervisor.

Students are occasionally allowed, with parental permission, to shop in small groups of no less than 3 in restricted areas, e.g. Eldon Square, Northumberland Street Newcastle, Shopping Centre Whitley Bay. At all times they are aware of the location of the supervisor.

6 iv) There are strict curfew times for under 18 students when in homestay accommodation. Parents, students and host families are made aware of these and parents have to sign a consent form in agreement. Students are expected to notify their group leaders when they have returned home.

6 v) Students under 18 are never accommodated with students over 18 either in homestay or in the school residence.

6 vi) Fire safety is a legal requirement of the school. Inspections and servicing of equipment occurs on a regular and annual basis. The school has a fire risk assessment which is updated annually. Records are kept. Students are informed of fire safety procedures at their induction. Host families are required to provide a short fire risk assessment to the school.

6 vii) First Aid & Medical

There is a qualified First Aider in the school. The medical centre is in the same street as the school and an arrangement exists for students to receive medical care when required. At all times of the day and night the student and host families have the school's emergency number and can call for aid if required.

6 viii) Discipline and Behaviour Policy is included in the Student Handbook and information about proper behaviour given to students at the induction.

6 ix) All under 18s are transported to and from the airport. Unaccompanied minors are met personally by the Principal on arrangement with parents.

6 x) The school provides phone numbers to parents of individual students and we hold the phone numbers of parents to enable immediate contact in the case of an emergency. In the case of groups, we ensure that group leaders hold parents' phone numbers. Group leaders are residential and on call at all times. The school has a record of all student's phone numbers currently in residence or homestay.

CDG/2016