



EFFICIENT LEARNING PROTECTING CHILDREN POLICY DOCUMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

This document will formalize the responsibilities we have as an organisation for ensuring the safety of young people within our charge. It seeks to assist those involved in working with young people within Efficient Learning should they be confronted with a possible case of abuse. In particular, it seeks to establish procedures which will:

- highlight the direction to follow where child abuse is suspected
- take all reasonable steps to protect employees from false allegations
- comply with the charity's legal responsibilities under the 1989 Children Act.

Children / young people are those under the age of 18.

2. APPOINTMENT OF STAFF

- a. No-one should be invited to be involved in any work with children without the approval of the Board of Trustees
- b. When considering a person's suitability for working with children we will allow time to get to know them. The process should include.
 - i. Completion of a formal Application Form including a Declaration.
 - ii. Interviewing the worker to find out about previous experiences and attitudes.
 - iii. Following up references.
 - iv. Obtaining a CRB disclosure or other police check.
 - v. Reviewing progress and assessing suitability.
- c. During this process Efficient Learning will complete a CRB check on all Appointees or obtain evidence of an existing check.

3. DEALING WITH POTENTIAL CHILD ABUSE.

It is the responsibility of the charity to refer any incidents of child abuse to the Social Services Department, whose task it is to investigate under Section 47 of the 1989 Children Act. The procedures outlined below should be used to do this.

The information may come anonymously, from a parent or child directly, from a known source or by direct observation of the child.

It must be recognised that upon recognition of potential abuse certain feelings may arise, such as fear, anger, anxiety or even a sense of paralysis. It is most important to remain calm and to invoke the following procedure.

PROCEDURE

- i. Collect and record as much information as possible, as near to the event as possible (e.g. details of referrer / family / Child Concerned names, address, telephone number, date of birth of subject child etc. ; details of the cause of concern, the nature of

any injuries or observations about the child etc.; details of conversations held, preferably a verbatim record.)

- ii. Discuss your concern with the Charity's Child Protection Team who will then consider whether there are sufficient concerns to warrant referral to the Social Services Department. Should there be any disagreement between the staff member and the Child Protection Team as to the appropriateness of referral the staff member retains a responsibility as a member of the public to report serious matters to the Social Services Department.

The Charity's Child Protection Team shall consist of a staff member and a member of the Board of Trustees of Efficient Learning. They will be nominated by Board of Trustees. In the event of a complaint against a member of the CPT, then the staff member initially discuss the issue with any member of the Board of Trustees.

- iii. When an allegation / referral has been brought to light, the following people should be advised, by the staff member receiving the allegation, as indicated:

In the case of:

- a) A **THIRD PARTY REFERRAL** (i.e. someone other than the alleged abused child) – the informer must be informed that information relating to any child at risk, or potentially at risk, will be shared with the Child Protection Team and may result in referral to the Social Services Department, and in this event the Social Services Department may wish to interview the referrer as part of the Child Protection Investigation.
- b) **PARENTS** - the staff member will inform the parent of his/her duty to refer concerns to the Social Services Department and the probability of interview by that Department.
- c) **CHILD** - explain as simply as you can that the information they have shared cannot, now, be a secret, and that other responsible adults will have to be told (explaining who those adults are). Then add that, together, the adults will try to help as best they can to try to ensure the child is protected. It is advisable that the child is NOT asked to repeat information to the CPT; this should be left to the relevant external agencies. It is sometimes tempting to give unrealistic assurances to a child in such circumstances - such temptations should be avoided.
- d) In cases of allegations of **SEXUAL ABUSE** the matter must be reported immediately to the Child Protection Team for possible referral to the Social Services Department; and parents will not be informed at this stage.
- e) Where a parent/carer alleges sexual abuse by another person, the parent/carer should be advised:
 - a. Not to inform the alleged perpetrator.
 - b. To inform Social Services immediately.
 - c. That the staff member will also notify Social Services.

- d. Whatever the scenario, it should be borne in mind that the first loyalty must be to the child.
- e. Should referral to Social Services Department take place then the charity worker will
- f. Confirm the referral in writing to the Social Services Department within 48 hours, leaving a copy with the Efficient Learning Child Protection Team.
- g. In consultation with the EL Child Protection Team, provide a written report on the background to the suspicion/allegation and on the family background in preparation for attendance at the initial Child Protection Conference (normally held within 15 days).
- h. In the event of any media involvement, all approaches must be referred to the EL CPT.

4. TRAINING

It is recognised that changes in this area of abuse are still occurring; and it is important that the EL CPT and Staff Members are kept up to date with relevant issues. Therefore, Efficient Learning will encourage and support both initial and 'update' training for all involved.

5. PASTORAL SUPPORT

It is important to realise that those involved in identifying and reporting abuse can themselves be affected emotionally etc. In order to give support in this area, the Board of Trustees will initiate and direct whatever pastoral support is needed.

Designated people responsible for implementing this policy and reporting to Duty Officer at Social Services where necessary:

Child Protection Team:

1. Julie Thorpe – Staff – 01296 715870 (nominated person)
2. Kate Mitchell – Trustee - 01296 7133969 (deputy)

Social Services: (01296) 383999; Out of hours (01494) 817750

Police: Buckingham: (01280) 823939; Aylesbury (01296) 396000

January 2003.

Updated September 2004.

Updated November 2006.

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EFFICIENT LEARNING WORKING WITH CHILDREN

CODE of PRACTICE

In order to protect our staff members from potential false allegations of child abuse, it is necessary to outline certain procedures that must be adopted when fulfilling their role within Efficient Learning. These procedures are as follows:

As far as is possible two adults should always be present when a child is being taught. Staff members should preferably not be left alone with a child; but where this is not practical the door should be left open.

If a child is accidentally injured, this should always be recorded and parents informed.

NOTE: All organisations should keep an up to date Accident /Injury Book & Register, with contact telephone numbers recorded. Efficient Learning issue accident forms to all staff which must be completed in duplicate, one copy given to student/parents and the other to Julie who will keep the records up to date.

In cases where urgent medical attention is required, the Efficient Learning representative must seek this immediately, having sought parental consent. All parents should sign a Terms of Agreement form which asks for consent in this eventuality. If parents refuse to give consent, the staff member will immediately refer to social services or the police. If the parent or parents are not available the staff member must not delay in seeking immediate medical treatment and inform Social Services.

All activities will be subject to random visitation from the Board of Trustees.

Parental consent forms should be signed when children join Efficient Learning, allowing appropriate first aid treatment should it ever be necessary.

January, 2003.

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