



PLCA Child Protection Policy

1. Introduction

We in The Polish Language and Culture Association PLCA are committed to a practice, which protects children from harm.

Staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of issues, which cause children and young people harm. We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by –

- Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.
- Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training

We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice on an annual basis.

2. Statement of Intent

It is the policy of PLCA to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from all forms of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual harm. This organisation is committed to creating a safe environment in which young people can feel comfortable and secure while engaged in any of organisations programmes/activities. Personnel should at all times show respect and understanding for individual's rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of PLCA.

3. Guidelines for all PLCA staff and volunteers

a. ATTITUDES

Staff and volunteers are committed to

- Treating children and young people with respect and dignity.
- Always listening to what a child or young person is saying
- Valuing each child and young person
- Recognising the unique contribution each individual can make
- Encouraging and praising each child or young person

b. BY EXAMPLE

Staff and volunteers will endeavour to

- Provide an example, which we would wish others to follow
- Use appropriate language with children and young people and challenge any inappropriate language used by a young person or child or an adult working with young people.
- Respect a young person's right to privacy

c. ONE TO ONE CONTACT

Staff and volunteers will

- Not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children, away from others. Staff should try to always be visible to others in their contact with children.
- In the unlikely event of having to meet with an individual child or young person make every effort to keep this meeting as open as possible.
- If privacy is needed, ensure that other staff are informed of the meeting and its whereabouts

d. PHYSICAL CONTACT

Staff and volunteers should never

- Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay
- Do things of a personal nature for a child or a young person that they can do for themselves.

If such an incident arises, for example, where a child or young person has limited mobility, PLCA staff should seek a member of school staff or leader of the youth organisation to deal with such an incident

- Allow, or engage in, inappropriate touching of any kind

e. GENERAL

Staff and volunteers should:

- Be aware that someone might misinterpret our actions no matter how well intentioned
- Never draw any conclusions about others without checking the facts
- Never allow ourselves to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking situations such as tantrums or crushes
- Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures about, or to a child or young person, even in fun

f. RELATIONSHIPS

Staff and volunteers who are involved in relationships with other members of staff or volunteers should ensure that their personal relationships do not affect their role within PLCA or the work of PLCA.

g. SHARING INFORMATION

Good communication is essential in any organisation. In PLCA every effort will be made to assure that, should individuals have concerns, they will be listened to and taken seriously.

It is the responsibility of the management to ensure that information is available to, and exchanged between all those involved in this organisation and its activities. Some information is confidential and should only be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis.

Children & Young People

Children and young people have a right to information, especially any information that could make life better and safer for them. PLCA will act to ensure they have information about how, and with whom, they can share their concerns, complaints and anxieties.

When sharing information, PLCA personnel will be sensitive to the level of understanding and maturity, as well as to the level of responsibility, of the people with whom they are sharing.

Parents

Parents / persons with parental responsibility are ultimately responsible for their children's welfare at all times, and they should be assured that their children are involved with a credible organisation.

We achieve this by

- Publishing the named Designated Child Protection Person(s) and how to make a complaint on organisation website.
- Publishing a full copy of the Child Protection Policy on www.polish-culture.com

Staff & Volunteers

As an organisation, which offers support and guidance to children and young people, it is imperative that each member of the PLCA staff is aware of their responsibilities under the Child Protection legislation and has a working knowledge of PLCA procedures. Each member of staff will receive updated training in Child Protection every three years.

Other Bodies

A copy of our Child Protection Policy will be made available to any other appropriate body.

h. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

All action is taken in line with the following legislation/guidance:

- Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs)
- Safeguarding Children in Education September 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2006.

In any case where an allegation is made, or someone in PLCA has concerns, a record should be made. Details must include, as far as practical:

- Name of child or young person
- Age
- Home Address (if known)
- Date of Birth (if known)
- Name/s and Address of parent/s or person/s with parental responsibility
- Telephone numbers if available

Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns, or passing on those of somebody else? If so, record details;

- What has prompted the concerns?
- Include dates and times of any specific incidents
- Has the child or young person been spoken to?

If so, what was said?

- Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser?

If so, record details

- Who has this been passed on to, in order that appropriate action is taken? E.g. school, designated officer, social services etc
- Has anyone else been consulted?

If so, record details

i. DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION PERSONS

- The designated person will immediately inform The Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board Team by telephone. Telephone number: 01234 276512 Out of hours telephone number: 0300 300 8123. If you are worried about a child you should ring the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01234 718700 (office hours) or ring 03003008123(out of hours).
- The telephone referral to the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board Team will be confirmed in writing using the form, within a maximum of 48 hours, ideally 24 hours, with a copy to the designated person for child protection Agnieszka Haremza. Essential information will include pupil's name, address, date of birth, family composition, and reason for referral, name of person receiving the referral and any advice given. This written confirmation must be signed and dated by the referrer.
- Confidentiality must be maintained and information relating to individual children and young people/families shared with staff on a strictly need to know basis.

j. ALLEGED ABUSE BY STAFF, MANAGERS, VOLUNTEERS OR TRUSTEES

- When an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, then the allegation must be passed to your designated person for child protection Agnieszka Haremza or their deputy Zuzanna Sowińska-Tissler, or, if the allegation concerns them both, direct to the Local Authority Designated Officer.
- Your designated person for child protection should contact one of the Local Authority designated officers for consultation Local Authority Designated Officer, on 01234v276512. The designated officer contacted will record a note of the consultation and will advise on the appropriate action that needs to be taken.

k. TRAINING

- The designated person and his/her deputy must receive training every 3 years in child protection.
- All staff and volunteers shall have access to appropriate training on a regular basis, at least every 3 years.

I. RECORD-KEEPING

- All records, information and confidential notes will be kept in separate files in a locked drawer or filing cabinet.
- Only the designated Persons will have access to these files.

m. DISCLOSURE

- Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as Child Protection will always have precedence over any other issues.
- Listen to the child, rather than question him or her directly.
- Offer him / her reassurance without making promises, and take what the child says seriously.
- Allow the child to speak without interruption
- Accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question.
- Do not overreact.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement
- Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass the information on.
- Explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell.
- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event,
- Use the child's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what the child was trying to say.
- Contact one of (organisations Designated Persons) for advice / guidance.

The Designated Person may then discuss the concern / suspicion with the relevant organisation, and, if appropriate, make a direct referral.

If Designated Person is not available, or it is inappropriate to approach them, the volunteer / member of staff with the concern should make direct contact with the relevant organisation themselves

- Record any discussions or actions taken within 24 hours.

n. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about what to do if you are worried a child is being abused, see the Swindon

LSCB website, www.bedford.gov.uk/lscb

Leaflets available from Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board also include:

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused:

- Safeguarding Children- A guide for professionals working with children and young people
- Further information is available at
www.bedfordshirelscb.org.uk
www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
www.dfe.gov.uk
www.everychildmatters.gov.uk
www.nspcc.org.uk

4. Outings and trips

- All vehicles hired for outings must be insured, roadworthy and fitted with seatbelts.
- All drivers should travel with at least one escort. Drivers and escorts should have up-to-date DBS checks and should have been subject to appropriate recruitment procedures. All drivers and escorts should agree to abide by these guidelines.
- A roll call will be taken at the start of a journey and again before beginning the return journey; if the group is travelling in more than one vehicle, children/young people will be encouraged to travel in the same vehicle there and back.
- Staff/volunteers accompanying trips will carry the contact numbers for the home organisation and emergency services in the event of an alert being necessary.
- If a child/young person goes missing while on a trip, staff/volunteers should instigate an immediate search. If the child/young person cannot be found within half an hour, the appropriate security staff/volunteers and the police should be notified.
- If, having notified security staff/volunteers and the police, the child/young person cannot be found, the parents/carers of the child/young person must be notified immediately.
- The care of the remaining children/young people is paramount. It is imperative that they return to the home site as quickly as possible, while a senior staff/volunteers member remains at the visit site to co-ordinate contact between security staff/volunteers and the child's/young person's parents/carers.

5. Use of premises by other organisations

In the event of a room or rooms on the premises being used by other organisations, the letting agreement should ensure that the hiring organisation works to approved child protection procedures and/or that those hiring the room(s) read and agree to abide by these guidelines.

6. Safe recruitment

All staff/volunteers will be appointed by at least two members of the management committee. Most staff and all volunteers will work in teams or in open environments where they are not alone with children. Where necessary, staff members (but not volunteers) may work alone with children/young people, providing that they have completed a satisfactory probationary period.

All staff/volunteers will:

- be given a clear job description or role description, setting out expectations for their work and conduct
- show that they meet the person specification for the post or role
- fill in a form on first appointment and annually at the start of each school year, to update their personal details, previous and current work/volunteering experience and qualifications
- be required to produce a recent enhanced DBS check on appointment or to have one made through the Disclosure and Barring Service, giving photographic and other evidence of identity and including a formal declaration of any criminal convictions
- be taken through child protection policy and procedure on induction, followed by annual training to remind them of procedures and important concepts
- be supervised by a named manager and observed at work by the school's co-ordinator.

Appendix 1

Definitions of abuse

These definitions are based on those from *Working together to safeguard children* (Department of Health, Home Office, Department for Education and Employment, 1999).

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing harm to a child/young person.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child/young person whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described as factitious, fabricated or induced illness in children/young people or ‘Munchausen syndrome by proxy’.

A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child/young person.

Physical abuse, as well as being the result of a deliberate act, can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child/young person, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s/young person’s emotional development. It may involve making a child/young person feel or believe that they are worthless, unloved, and inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of the other person.

It may feature expectations being imposed on a child/young person that are inappropriate for their age or stage of development. It may also involve causing a child/young person to feel frequently frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child/young person. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child/young person, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child/young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child/young person is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex, or non-penetrative acts such as fondling.

Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children/young people in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children/young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Boys and girls can be sexually abused by both males and females, whether adults or other children/young people.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s/young person’s basic physical and/or psychological needs that is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s /young person’s health or development. It may involve a parent or a carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, leaving a child/young person at home alone or failing to ensure that

a child/young person gets appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's/young person's basic emotional needs.

It is accepted that, in all forms of abuse, there are elements of emotional abuse and that some children/young people are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any time.

These four definitions do not minimise other forms of maltreatment.

Note

Recent guidance identifies other sources of stress for children/young people and families, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, the mental illness of a parent/carer or drug and alcohol misuse. These may have a negative impact on a child/young person's health and development and may be noticed by an organisation caring for a child/young person. If it is felt that a child/young person's well-being is adversely affected by any of these situations, the same procedures should be followed.

Recognising and responding to abuse

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place but the possibility should be considered.

Physical signs of abuse

Physical signs of abuse may include:

- any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or games
- unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- cigarette burns
- bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds
- injuries which have not received medical attention
- neglect, undernourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care
- repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse may include:

- fear of parents/carers being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed in front of others – for example, wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- depression
- withdrawn behaviour
- running away from home.

Emotional signs of abuse

Emotional signs of emotional abuse may include:

a failure to thrive or grow, particularly if a child/young person puts on weight in other circumstances – for example, in hospital or away from their parents/carers

- sudden speech disorders
- persistent tiredness

- development delay, in terms of either physical or emotional progress.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- obsessions or phobias
- sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- inappropriate relationships with other children and/or adults
- being unable to play
- attention-seeking behaviour
- fear of making mistakes
- self-harm
- fear of the parent/carer being approached regarding their behaviour.

Sexual abuse

Physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- pain or itching in the genital/anal area
- bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, such as becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge which is beyond the child's/young person's age or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bed-wetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- a child/young person saying they have secrets that they cannot tell anyone about
- substance or drug abuse
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- not being allowed to have friends (particularly during adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way with adults.

Neglect

Physical signs of neglect may include:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children/young people
- being constantly dirty or smelly
- loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- inappropriate dress for the conditions.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect include:

- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Appendix 2

Good practice guidelines

All staff should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

- always working in an open environment (for example, avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets)
- treating all children/young people equally, and with respect and dignity
- always putting the welfare of each child/young person first
- maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children/young people (for example, it is not appropriate for staff/volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child/young person or to share a room with them)
- building balanced relationships based on mutual trust, empowering children/young people to share in the decision-making process making school activities and other off-site activities, fun, enjoyable and safe
- keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance
- involving parents/carers wherever possible – for example, by encouraging them to take responsibility for children/young people in changing rooms
- ensuring that parents/carers, staff/volunteers, coaches or officials work in pairs, if groups have to be supervised in changing rooms
- ensuring that, when mixed groups are taken away, they are always accompanied by a male and a female member of staff/volunteer (but remember that same-gender abuse can also occur)
- ensuring that, at tournaments or residential events, adults do not enter children's/young people's rooms or invite children/young people into their rooms
- being an excellent role model, including not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children/young people
- giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children/young people and not pushing them against their will
- securing written consent from parents/carers for staff to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment
- keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given
- requesting written consent from parents/carers, if it is necessary for staff/volunteers to transport children/young people in their cars.

Practices to be avoided

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the person in charge in the club or of the child/young person's parents – for example, if a child/young person sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or if a parent/carer fails to arrive to pick up a child/young person at the end of a session.

Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children/young people away from others.

Avoid being in a situation where you are alone with a child, e.g. taking a child/young person to an event, or dropping them off in your car.

Practices never to be sanctioned

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- use corporal/physical punishment to manage behaviour
- share a room with a child/young person
- allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- allow children/young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child/young person, even in fun
- reduce a child/young person to tears as a form of control
- allow allegations made by a child/young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- do things of a personal nature for children/young people or disabled adults that they are able to do for themselves
- invite or allow children/young people to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

Please note

It may sometimes be necessary for staff/volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children/young people, particularly if they are young or disabled. These tasks should be carried out only with the full understanding and consent of parents/carers and of the child/young person involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices, where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing or where there is physical contact – for example, lifting or assisting a child/young person to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

Reporting suspected abuse

Confidential recording sheet

Organisation:

Name of person reporting:

Name of child/young person:

Age and date of birth:

Ethnicity:

Religion: First language:

Disability:

Parent's/carer's name(s):

Home address:

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Postcode: Tel:

Are you reporting your own concerns or someone else's? Please give details.

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Give a brief description of what has prompted the concerns – include date, time and an outline of specific incidents.

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Any physical signs? Behaviour signs? Indirect signs?

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Have you spoken to the child/young person? If so, what was said?

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Have you spoken to the parent(s)/carer(s)? If so, what was said?

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Has a specific person been alleged to be the abuser? If so, please give details.

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Have you consulted anyone else? Please give details.

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Name of person reported to:

Date of reporting:

Signature of person reporting:

Today's date:

Action taken:

Notes

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Name:

Signed:

Date:

Date implemented:	Future review dates						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Date reviewed							
Date approved by trustees							



The Polish Language and Culture Association
Stowarzyszenie Kultury i Języka Polskiego

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Child protection policy

The following named responsible person has been nominated by this supplementary school to refer allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities.

The named responsible person is: Agnieszka Haremza

In the absence of the named responsible person, the matter should be brought to the attention of the second named responsible person.

The second named responsible person is: Zuzanna Sowińska-Tissler

The social services number for the area is: 01234 276512

The emergency number is: 999

Out of hours telephone number: 0300 300 8123. If you are worried about a child you should ring the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01234 718700 (office hours) or ring 03003008123(out of hours).