

Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out the principles for safeguarding within St James & St John PTFA.

It is relevant to all within the association and is endorsed by the committee of St James & St John PTFA.

It will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains appropriate to the Organisation and its volunteers needs annually.

Responsibility

St James & St John PTFA has a duty of care to consider the safety of children and vulnerable adults. This should be taken into consideration when risk assessing a PTFA event and the duration of such events.

It is best practice for St James & St John PTFA to have a set of procedures in place and guidelines for volunteers to follow at events, this may be developed with guidance from the school

All PTFA members should be aware of the person responsible for safeguarding within the school. The school may provide training for PTFA members on safeguarding and the procedures to follow, or the PTFA may arrange their own training for its volunteers

What to do if you have concerns about a child

You may have concerns about a child because of something you have seen or heard, or a child may choose to disclose something to you.

If a child discloses information to you, you should:

- Listen to the child without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is said and reassure the child, do not make promises that you may not be able to keep, e.g. 'Everything will be alright now'
- Do not ask leading questions and do not interrogate the child – this is not your responsibility to investigate
- Explain to the child what you have to do next and who you have to talk to
- Take notes, if possible, or write up the conversation as soon as possible afterwards
- Contact the school safeguarding officer or a member of the school leadership team as soon as possible

Guidance for Events:

- All Events should be risk assessed

- Events where children are dropped off and collected – a register should be available, and children should be checked in and out of the event. The PTFA should have a list of any child being collected by another parent/carer or travelling home alone
- Contact details for the child's parent/carer may be collated by the PTFA for the event, deleting digital information and destroying paper information after the event.
- Exits should be monitored to ensure children cannot leave an event unattended
- If this is a regulated activity the volunteer will need an Enhanced DBS check.

Guidance for Social Media:

It can be challenging working on social media and there may be times where volunteers could be subject to unpleasant or abusive comments directed at the charity, our work or people.

It is also vital that St James & St John PTFA does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials in pursuit of social media engagement. For example, a video of a stunt or visiting an unsafe location.

Volunteers should be vigilant regarding suspicious content or links and must not reveal personal, confidential or sensitive information about themselves, other staff members, volunteers or supporters of St James & St John PTFA. Volunteers should be wary of fake accounts that may claim to be St James & St John PTFA and should immediately notify the committee.

Care must also be taken to ensure that any links to external sites from our social media accounts are appropriate and safe.

Under 18s and vulnerable people

Young and vulnerable people face risks when using social networking sites. They may be at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming or radicalisation. Where known, when communicating with vulnerable or young people under 18-years-old via social media, staff and volunteers should ensure the online relationship with St James & St John PTFA follows the same rules as offline.

Staff and volunteers should be aware that children under the age of 13 should not be encouraged to create their own personal social media accounts or engage with others and are not legally allowed to use social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram or X.

How to complain about social media content

If you are concerned about material posted on St James and St John PTFA Facebook page, you can:

- Email: PTFA@stjamesjohn.bucks.sch.uk

Trolling or negative comments

- Report trolling and negative messages to the committee via email: PTFA@stjamesjohn.bucks.sch.uk
- If you feel threatened or believe a criminal act has taken place, always report it to the police.
- If trolling or negative comments are posted, commenting can be turned off. PTFA administrator can offer to send the Complaints Policy to the commentor if they email PTFA@stjamesjohn.bucks.sch.uk
- Take a break from social media.

Wellbeing

Social media can be a relentless environment. If you are administering or monitoring the Facebook page, ensure you take regular breaks.

The PTFA can offer support to the page administrators if social media abuse is harming your wellbeing. Please speak to the committee, who will be able to offer more advice in the first instance and provide wellbeing support.

If you believe that a criminal act has taken place or feel threatened, please report the account and content to the police.

Top tips:

- Take breaks from social media – even for a few hours.
- Try to alternate the person monitoring comments and feeds during times of challenging social media sentiment.

This policy will be reviewed by the St James & St John PTFA committee annually.