

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY/ **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

Principles

- The Child Protection Policy applies to all staff, governors, volunteers and frequent visitors to the school.
- To ensure the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers working with children – see details in Safer Recruitment Policy.
- To raise awareness of child protection issues and to equip staff and pupils with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- To develop and implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- To support pupils who are on the Child Protection Register with their agreed protection plan.
- To establish a safe and caring environment where pupils can learn, develop and are listened to with regard to problems in and out of school.
- To put in practice procedures to deal with pupils absent without leave from the school site.
- All issues of child protection will be managed in accordance with the local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.
- To ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school admission pack and by posting this Child Protection Policy on the school's website.
- The school will notify social services if there is an unexplained absence (more than two days) of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences where possible.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- All records of child protection are kept securely, separate from the main pupil files in a locked location in the Headmaster's office.
- To follow procedures below where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- The director will respond to requests from the ISA for any information that they already hold.
- All staff (including ancillary) staff to be briefed or trained in responding and taking action to suspicions or allegations of abuse.
- The school ensures and checks in writing, that all persons and organisations and their representatives to the school are following an accepted Child Protection Procedure.

School arrangements for dealing with accusations/suspicion of abuse

Arrangements to deal with allegations of abuse against all members of staff are as follows:

- The Child Protection Officer is the Headmaster, but in his absence the Deputy Head (Pastoral) – all staff must report instances of abuse to the Child Protection Officer.

- If the allegation concerns the CPO, the Headmaster, then staff must inform the Director of the school.
- If the allegation concerns a CPO, who is not the Head, then the Head must be informed and if absent the Director.
- The designated member of staff in instances of allegations and suspicions will liaise with social services and (where applicable) the police.
- Written confirmation of allegations or suspicions of abuse will be referred to the local social services department within 24 hours.
- The designated member of staff will have received the appropriate training and will hold a copy of 'Working together to Safeguard Children and any local Area Child Protection Procedures – the training will be updated every two years. The designated member of staff, currently the Headmaster, and the deputy CPO will receive appropriate training and upgrading for this role at least every two years.
- Senior pupils, where appropriate, will also be briefed by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) on appropriate action to take should they receive any allegations of abuse.
- All other staff will be trained in child protection issues and training will be updated yearly – this takes place in the first staff meeting of the academic year – see minutes – the Director will brief the domestic staff annually – see dates in diary.
- Part-time staff and volunteers, if not trained as above, will be made aware of the arrangements.
- The Director of the school will undertake an annual review of the school's child protection policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. The Director, the Head and the Deputy Head (Pastoral) are aware that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay.
- The school's policy is also in accordance with minimum boarding standard 3.

Whistle-blowing

- Whistle-blowing is the mechanism by which adults can voice their concerns, made in good faith without repercussion.
- Staff at Eccles Hall should feel able to speak to another member of staff to voice their concerns about any issue without repercussion.
- This information must be passed on to the CPO if it is a child protection issue.
- Any whistle-blowers will be supported and given immunity as requested. They will be kept informed and feedback will take place.

Staff: Being aware and dealing with accusations or suspicions of abuse

All staff must be sensitive to the *fact* that children are living away from home and that they must therefore be protected from abuse from other pupils and from adults. Abuse in this case has a wide definition whether it comes from other pupils, staff, parents or visitors:

- **Neglect:** The persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from danger, including cold and starvation. Neglect may result in the child's health suffering or unsatisfactory development and the failure to thrive. As can be appreciated this can be applied to many areas.
- **Physical Abuse:** Actual or likely physical injury failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent by another pupil or by an adult in or outside the school.

- **Emotional Abuse:** Persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment. This category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.
- Staff receiving allegations of abuse or who may suspect occurrences of abuse must **Limit** any questioning to the minimum required for clarification. **Avoid** leading questions. **Use** the language of the child, do not make changes. **Make** no suggestions of what happened. **Stop** asking questions when you have enough information to suggest that further action is going to be required. **Tell** the pupil what the next stage will be and who will be involved. **Do not** express any shock or outrage about the nature of what is being disclosed or suggest an explanation to the pupil. **Always** offer help to assure future protection from the source of the abuse. **Agree** to support the child during the investigation. **Do not** make promises that you will not be able to keep particularly with regards to confidentiality which cannot be assured.
- Staff must report their findings to the designated member of staff. Follow this up with a written report as soon as possible and give a copy to the designated member of staff. Do not change the language used by the child.
- Any staff reporting any instances of abuse will of course be immune from any retribution or disciplinary action against such staff for ‘whistleblowing’ in good faith.
- Important contact details:

Pople Street, Child Protection	01953 602071
John Rigden, Independent Listener	01379 688381
Ofsted	01159449000
Access Services Child Protection	0844 800 8014
Childline	0800 1111
Grace Cheese (LADO)	01603 223473

Pupils: strategies in place to seek help with allegations of abuse or suspected abuse

- School notice on Independent Listener/Childline/use of personal tutor – see further details on the school’s Independent Listener below:
- Boarders divided into two small houses junior/senior.
- Daily meetings with Year Tutors.
- Education through PSHE sessions and the wider curriculum.
- Access to a personal tutor – pupil’s own choice after one term.
- Access to a the medical centre at least three times daily.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school discipline policy and the Pupils’ Charter (adopted annually) are designed to promote an environment where unacceptable behaviour towards others will not be tolerated. Pupils will be valued, vulnerable pupils will receive special support and anyone subject to abuse will not be blamed.

Pupil v Pupil abuse

For a pupil making an accusation of abuse against another pupil to a member staff, that member of staff will follow the same procedures as listed earlier in this policy, i.e.:

- Staff receiving allegations of abuse or who may suspect occurrences of abuse must **Limit** any questioning to the minimum required for clarification. **Avoid** leading questions. **Use** the language of the child, do not make changes. **Make** no suggestions of what happened. **Stop** asking questions when you have enough information to suggest that further action is going to be required. **Tell** the pupil what the next stage will be and who will be involved. **Do not** express any shock or outrage about the nature of what is being disclosed or suggest an explanation to the pupil. **Always** offer help to assure future protection from the source of the abuse. **Agree** to support the child during the investigation. **Do not** make promises that you will not be able to keep particularly with regards to confidentiality which cannot be assured.
- Staff must report their findings to the designated member of staff. Follow this up with a written report as soon as possible and give a copy to the designated member of staff. Do not change the language used by the child.

Other issues

- The school will ensure that when a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the appropriate authorities including the social worker are informed.
- The school accepts the requirement to report to the (ISA) within one month of leaving the school any person whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children.
- The school will give guidance to staff to ensure that their behaviour and their action do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil – one to one situations, conveying a pupil by car, engaging in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil etc.
- The school will comply with all the requirements of ISA when it becomes active.

Policy for the absence of a child missing from the school without authority

- No pupils are allowed to leave the school campus without the permission of the Headmaster/Deputy Headmaster (School) during the school day and by the Housemasters in the evenings/weekends.
- Permissions granted by the Headmaster/Deputy Headmaster (School) are recorded in the absences diary in the 'Print Room', absences authorized by the Housemasters are recorded in the relevant duty folders.
- Any unauthorized absence noted by the Staff is reported to reception and to the appropriate Senior Member of Staff. The absence is then investigated and if no explanation can be found the procedure is to assume that the child is missing from the school site without authority.
- The Senior member of staff will inform the parents and consult with relevant staff. Having searched the site for evidence of departure or presence then the Senior member of staff will inform the Police to report the child missing.
- The Police will come to the school to take full details for their records and subsequent search.
- A written record will be made of the incident, the action taken, and any reasons given by the pupil for being missing.

- The pupil in question will be given the necessary support and parents will again be contacted with all details etc.
- In instances where a pupil is seen running off the site restraint will not be used to stop them except in circumstances where they are putting themselves or others in danger providing it is safe to do so.
- The matter will again be reported to the appropriate senior member of staff to deal with.
- Depending on the circumstances the senior MOS may decide that a pupil may be followed from a safe distance.
- If the pupil does not return, or will not comply, parents and police will be informed in the usual way.
- All instances of unapproved absences are recorded in the appropriate duty/conduct folders.

School awareness of whereabouts of pupils

- A twice daily attendance register is taken during the week. See Registration Policy.
- During the week, all staff are expected to check that they have each member of their form for each lesson.
- All absences will be reported to the main office where it will be relayed to the Senior Member of Staff.
- Day pupils are checked off the site at the end of the day, roll call are taken in houses at the beginning of each evening.
- Later pupils are checked into their dormitory areas at changing time and lights out.
- At the weekend the activity arrangements are more fluid and care is taken to record the on site and off site participants. These are recorded in the Weekend Folder.
- Roll Calls are taken for all pupils at meal times (Breakfast Lunch and Dinner). There is a final evening roll call at the end of the day at 7.00pm. Absences are reported to the Senior Member of Staff.

Independent Listener

John Rigden 01379 688381

- The school has a policy of providing an 'independent listener' for all its pupils, day or boarding.
- The independent listener will be known to the management of the school, will have a working knowledge of the school, is not employed by the school and is through interest, experience and expertise able to liase with the pupils and the management of the school.
- The telephone number of the independent listener is to be displayed in telephone phone boxes and notice boards.
- The pupils are to be made aware of the role of the independent listener – to act on behalf of the pupil in guiding the pupil to handle a situation or issue appropriately and safely whether it be school based or other wise.
- The independent listener will be introduced to the pupils in small groups and will visit the school each term to meet the pupils informally.
- There will also be an opportunity for pupils to discuss with the IL in private if they wish. Individual meetings should take place in a private but easily observed location.

- The independent listener will not guarantee anonymity or secrecy but will act in accordance with the Child Protection Policy Guidelines of the school which follow those laid out by NMS.
- The independent listener will have discussed expectations of role with senior management and will have been made aware of training opportunities and of current Child Protection Policies.
- The Independent Listener will know that they have a duty to report and follow up any issue, which by its nature cannot be handled by the school, to the Area Child Protection Team. (LSCB)

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