



## Child Protection Policy Safeguarding Children

### 1. PURPOSE

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The Child Protection Policy is written in accordance with the Children Act 1989; Independent School Inspectorate Regulations; DfE guidelines; and with reference to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) along with publications Working together and Every Child Matters.

### 2. AIMS

This policy aims to ensure that the school recognizes and implements the following points:

- 2.1 Safe recruitment procedures and practices in checking the suitability of all staff members, in compliance with Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education.
- 2.2 To raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- 2.3 To develop, monitor and review procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse (refer to Appendix 1 of this policy).
- 2.4 To support pupils who have been abused in accordance with guidelines (refer to Appendix 1 of this Policy)
- 2.5 To establish and maintain a safe environment in which children can learn and develop, be encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- 2.6 A support network for children so that they know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- 2.7 Opportunities in the PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health & Citizenship Education) curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognize and stay safe from abuse.

The school recognizes that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, safe and predictable element in their life. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may appear withdrawn. In these circumstances, the school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, secure environment and gives the pupils a sense of being valued
- The school ensuring that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are still valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Inter-agency liaison.
- Information sharing, in so far as if a pupil suffering abuse leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and key-workers are informed where appropriate.

The Child Protection Policy is available to all staff members, in all roles, both electronically and in the shared area and in hard copy in the school office. It is also available to parents on request. In addition, we recognize, understand and implement the obligations placed on the school in terms of Child Protection which is promoted in the school prospectus, the pupil handbooks and the Information for Parents handbooks.

The school operates a strict safer recruitment system in accordance with NCSL (National College for School Leadership) on-line training. All members of staff, in all roles, are checked through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) at enhanced level, and appropriate records kept in personnel files in adherence with the Data Protection Act. During the interview process, the successful applicant will be seen by the Head of Department, and then by a member of staff who has completed the on-line Safer Recruitment training. The application form is regularly reviewed; any gaps in employment dates are questioned. The Head of Administration then ensures that identity checks are conducted, references and qualifications are verified, and CRB disclosures are obtained. Once all this is in place a contract can be issued.

The Head of Sixth Form is the current Designated Child Protection Coordinator (DCPC); she is supported by the Senior Housemaster and Head of Outdoor Education who act as Deputy Child Protection Officers in the Senior School. The Head of Sixth Form completed Child Protection training in September 2011 which will be updated every two years. The Deputy Child Protection Officers had initial training in May 2010; this will be updated every two years. A Prep School teacher is Deputy Child Protection Officer in the Prep School; she completed initial training in November 2011. Mrs P J Darbyshire is the Governor responsible for Child Protection; she has had training and this will be also updated every two years. The last Child Protection Governors' Audit was completed in June 2011 and will be reviewed annually. If colleagues, including the Head, have an allegation made against them, the procedure which is followed is included Appendix 1. If an allegation is made against the DCPC, the Deputy CPO (Child Protection Officer) or the Child Protection Governor, the matter needs to be drawn to the attention of the Head.

The INSET and induction programmes ensure that all staff members, including the Headmistress, understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for Child Protection. The majority of staff members, in all roles, have been trained in Child Protection procedures. Those who have not been Child Protection trained will be by January 2012; this will happen in group sessions run by the DCPC. The DCPC runs Child Protection training to all new staff as part of the yearly INSET in September. All staff members are kept regularly informed of any changes to guidelines and/or systems within the school.

Staff who join mid-year receive Child Protection training as part of their induction process, organised by the DCPC. The DCPC facilitates the Child Protection training.

Once Child Protection training has taken place, the staff member concerned signs the induction form. The form acknowledges that the staff member is aware of the identity of the DCPC; knows what to do in the event of hearing a child protection allegation while observing anything which might lead them to suspect child protection issues; and understands the school's policy with regard to suitable relationships between staff and pupils, and to confidentiality. (appendices 3 & 4). The induction form is then placed on the staff member's file in the Head of Administration's office.

These records are kept effectively by the Head of Administration. A register is taken at Child Protection INSET and a note is recorded electronically on WCBS/PASS staff files, showing when staff last attended Child Protection training.

All senior pupils (Sixth Form) are briefed by the DCPC on appropriate action to take should they receive any allegations of abuse. There is separate training for pupils who are given areas of responsibility over other pupils.

There is a policy known to staff and used in practice, for searching for and, if necessary reporting, any pupil missing from school (and recording any incident, the action taken and the reasons give by the pupil for being missing).

Once an employee has left the school, we recognize and accept the requirement to report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), within one month of leaving the school, any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because s/he is considered unsuitable to work with children.

Students with child protection issues have separate files as well as main school files. The main school file is given a red dot indicating that there are on-going Child Protection concerns and caution should be taken when issuing information from the School Office and boarding house (in these cases the DCPC should be consulted). The corresponding Child Protection file for each of these girls is kept locked in the DCPC's office.

The school meets the requirements that any weaknesses or discrepancies in Child Protection which may occur from time to time is brought to the attention of the DCPC or SLT team and rectified without delay.

**Crucial Contacts:**

Area Children's Officer (Child Protection) West Kent	Helen Windiate KCC, 17 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling ME19 4UL 01732 525035 (mobile: 07740 183798)
Area Children's Officer (Early Years) West Kent	Claire Ray KCC, 17 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling 01732 525381
Local Authority Designated Officer 'LADO' Doctor	Kel Arthur, Education Safeguarding Manager, 01622 696366 (mobile 07786 191359) Dr Lutch, Pembury - 01892 825488
Police	01622 690690
Social Services	01892 515045
Hospital (Pembury)	01892 823535
NSPCC (Head Office)	0207 825 2500
NSPCC Childline	0800 1111
NSPCC Adult helpline	0808 800 5000
School Counsellor	Sonja Jenkins- 01892 750209
Play Therapist	Laura Budden - 01959 564702
School Sister	Sister Janette Devine - 01892 529987

Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)

PO Box 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA Tel: 0300 123 1111

**Whole School Child Protection INSET**

January 2003 - Adrian Underwood. Director of Boarding Schools Association (BSA)  
 January 2005 - Helen Windiate, Area Children's Officer (Child Protection), West Kent Education  
 November 2005 - Headmistress - Child Protection BSA INSET  
 Safer recruitment NCSL site reference - Headmistress & Bursar 2007  
 Safer recruitment - Recruitment staff Oct 2007  
 Whole school 2007 - Follow up sessions with groups of staff including boarding and support staff of all kinds  
 September 2008 - Helen Windiate (as above), Child Protection INSET  
 September 2010 - Child protection update, whole staff meeting, DCPC  
 September 2011 - Whole school Child Protection INSET, DCPC

**Appendices to Child Protection Policy:**

- 1 Staff Guidelines
- 2 Summary of Every Child Matters (Sept 2005 Inspection frameworks)
- 3 Guidance on Staff-Pupil relationships
- 4 Confidentiality Policy
- 5 Policy on Use of Force to Restrain Pupils

Reviewed by SLT: October 2011

Approved by Governors: November 2011

Policies linked to Child Protection Policy:

- Health & Safety Policy
- Principles of Boarding at KC
- Visitors to the School
- When a Girl Goes Missing - Senior School

## Child Protection Policy

### Staff Guidelines

*What are the indicators of a potential Child Protection issue?*

Physical abuse - what to look for:

- Injuries, especially those which are atypical
- Girls who find it painful to walk, sit down, move their jaws etc
- Frequent occurrence of injuries with no adequate explanation
- Reluctance to change for PE
- Uncharacteristic behaviour
- Compulsive eating or loss of appetite
- Girl who is suddenly uncoordinated
- Conflicting explanations of injuries
- Reluctance to explain

Neglect - what to look for:

- Deterioration in appearance or hygiene
- Deterioration in behaviour

Emotional abuse - what to look for:

- Depression
- Withdrawal
- Introversion
- Excessive aggression

Some points to consider:

- Many forms of abuse have no physical symptoms
- The diagnosis of abuse is difficult - even for experts
- To delay reporting the suspicion of abuse could be disastrous

### Disclosure

*Every situation pertaining to Child Protection is different but the following guidelines should always be followed:*

- Do not promise confidentiality - explain that if a child is at risk you will need to pass information on
- Do not seek to discover more details - trained personnel will do this if it becomes necessary
- Record the time and date of the conversation and as many details as you can remember as soon as possible
- Note down the child's own words as far as possible
- If the child indicate parts of the body, make a rough sketch to aid recording with greater precision
- Tell the Designated Child Protection Coordinator immediately (if an allegation is made against the DCPC, then tell the Headmistress/Head of Prep School).

Even if you are not sure that the issue you have encountered is serious, still let the DCPC know. They can then make an informed decision as to the best course of action.

*You should also have the following advice in mind:*

- If you cannot find the DCPC then one of the Deputy DCPOs, or Deputy Head will be available to help. The Headmistress will help with an allegation against the DCPC.
- Try not to tell other people about the situation - this will cloud information later.
- If you have been upset/distressed, the school will seek professional advice/counselling on your behalf. However, this cannot proceed until the Child Protection case has been investigated by professional agencies.
- If the accusation is against a colleague, please follow the same procedures. Remember, an allegation may be true and the pupil needs protection. However, it may be untrue, in which case a colleague should have the right to clear their name. In cases such as this, your anonymity will be protected as far as practically possible.
- All information is treated in the strictest confidence. Sometimes it may become necessary to share information but those providing it will be involved in how this comes out and have the right to confidentiality.

*What are we likely to do with information you provide?*

- At least record it; it may not seem significant straight away but may add to further information received at a later date.
- Telephone professional agencies for advice without giving names (the DCPC and the school will always be named).
- Telephone professional agencies for advice, providing names so that they can check records.
- Make a full referral.  
All inter-agency contact details can be accessed through the DCPC.  
**All Child Protection records are kept securely and separate from pupil files in a locked location.**

The DCPC will always let you know what will happen to information you provide. Where practically possible, and with the advice of professional agencies, the anonymity of a referring colleague will be protected.

Colleagues must also be aware of appropriate conduct with pupils in order to avoid allegations and misunderstandings (see guidance contained in Staff/Pupil relationships):

- Use caution and judgement in any physical contact with pupils. It should be appropriate (eg shoulder/arm) and the child's wishes read and respected.
- Avoid being alone with a pupil. Where this is necessary take appropriate steps to mitigate the situation eg leave doors open, report timetabled or scheduled meetings to your line manager
- Do not allow pupils into your car unless agreed with other members of staff/parents for the benefit of the child
- Do not give pupils personal contact details (eg mobile telephone numbers, home email addresses).
- Avoid social networking with pupils

- Do not exchange personal or private information / opinions with girls
- If you have concerns regarding an incident or pupil behaviour in the light of these guidelines, please discuss them with the DCPC.
- If you feel you have been inadvertently drawn into a situation which could be regarded as suspect, inform your line manager, DCPC or Deputy DCPO and record the circumstances.

**Failure to follow these instructions will put staff at risk of allegations and may in some circumstances lead to disciplinary action.**

### **Physical Restraint**

There may be times when adults, in the course of their school duties, have to intervene physically in order to restrain children and prevent them from coming to harm. Such intervention will always be the minimum necessary to resolve the situation. We follow the guidance given in the DfE circulars: 'The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils 11/07' and 'Use of Reasonable Force' 08/11. The Headmistress will require the adult(s) involved in any such incident to report the matter to him or to her immediately, and to record it in the Interventions Book, kept by the DCPC.

**Please refer to your contract and the staff handbook for the school's disciplinary procedures.**

**If an allegation involving Child Protection is made against an employee, they will be suspended on full pay and without prejudice pending investigation. A resident employee will be offered accommodation elsewhere during this period.**

October 2011

### **‘Every Child Matters’**

The paper entitled Every Child Matters was initially presented to parliament in September 2003. This paper promoted the five key outcomes that were considered to really matter for the well-being of children and young people.

**a. Being healthy**

Physical and mental health: Pupils enjoy a good and healthy lifestyle so that they are physically healthy; mentally and emotionally healthy; sexually healthy; have healthy lifestyles; and are able to make choices, for example not to take illegal drugs.

**b. Staying safe**

Protection from harm and neglect: Pupils’ welfare is safeguarded and they know how to stay safe from accidental injury and death; safe from maltreatment, neglect and sexual exploitation; safe from bullying and discrimination; safe from crime and anti-social behaviour; safe from exposure to violence.

**c. Enjoying and achieving**

Education and training: Pupils enjoy and make good progress in their learning, leisure and personal development. They are ready for school, attend regularly and enjoy school; achieve good educational standards at primary school; achieve personal development and enjoy recreation; achieve good educational standards at secondary school.

**d. Making a positive contribution**

Contribution to society: Pupils join in, take responsibility and play a productive part in the community. They engage in decision making; support the community and environment; choose not to offend, re-offend or engage in anti-social behaviour; choose not to bully or discriminate; develop self-confidence and enterprising behaviour.

**e. Economic well-being**

Achieve economic well-being: Children and young people enjoy a good start in life and are able to achieve their full potential and secure employment. They are prepared to engage in further education, employment or training on leaving school; are ready for employment; have a desire to live in a decent home and community; have the skills and ambition to access transport and material goods and to strive for a good income.

Summary of ‘Every Child Matters’ December 2004