

WESTMINSTER ABBEY CHOIR SCHOOL

POLICY DOCUMENT

SAFEGUARDING

The school will safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school in compliance with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) Guidance “Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education”. There are five main elements to our policy, which applies to all staff, Governors and volunteers working in the school:

- Ensuring that we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with their agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that, because of their day-to-day contact with children, staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to
- ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried
- include opportunities in the PSHCE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by DCSF to

- ensure that we have a designated senior person for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role
- ensure that we have a nominated Governor responsible for child protection who has also received appropriate training
- ensure that every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and of the Governing Body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and his role
- ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection

- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out the relevant obligations in the parents' handbook
- notify Social Services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who has a child protection plan
- develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences
- keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately
- ensure that all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file
- develop and follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer
- ensure that safe recruitment practices are always followed.

We recognise 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, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through

- the content of the curriculum
- the school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued
- the school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse that has occurred
- liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Social Services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service
- ensuring that, where a pupil with a child protection plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

Procedures and arrangements to implement these policy objectives are set out in the Annex.

Approved by Governing Body April 2010

Next Review January 2011