

ANNEX

SAFEGUARDING

We all have a statutory duty to ‘safeguard and promote the welfare’ of children. Pupils and staff have the right to protection from abuse and exploitation. Staff should work towards fulfilling the school’s vision of providing a nurturing environment where each child is inspired to learn and discover his potential and to feel safe and secure amongst his peers and staff. It is essential that we maintain effective methods and systems to monitor and review the safety and welfare of pupils and staff.

Recruitment of Staff

The school will operate safe recruitment procedures including reference to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), CRB checks and compliance with Independent School Standards Regulations in order to ensure as far as is possible that staff are suitably qualified to care for children. (See also RECRUITMENT POLICY). Any person whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children will be reported to the ISA within one month of leaving the school.

Child Protection Core Group

Designated Senior Person (DSP): *The Headmaster*
Nominated Governor (NG): *Mr. Edward Smith*
Chairman of Governors (CoG) *The Dean*

The school will operate its policy in accordance with Westminster City Council’s inter-agency procedures. See London Child Protection Procedures v 3 (2007 edition).

Concerns, however mild, should be taken to the DSP who will advise on further action. In the absence of the DSP, concerns should be referred to the Senior Master.

In the event of an allegation made by a child against a member of staff, the DSP will interview those involved, make notes and, if the allegation is not withdrawn, report it immediately to the Chairman of Governors. If an allegation is made to a member of staff concerning inappropriate behaviour by the Headmaster, that member of staff must report it immediately to the Chairman of Governors without notifying the Headmaster first.

Training

Regular child protection training sessions will be given to the whole staff, a minimum of every three years. The DSP and the Senior Master will undertake relevant training in child protection and inter-agency working at least every two years. New staff will be given guidance on their responsibilities and a comprehensive talk as to how the school system operates. Guidance will be given to all staff to ensure as far as is possible that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of

harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil, for example in one-to-one dealings with children.

Boys will be advised what to do if they are worried about something or if they suspect that they or another boy is in any sort of danger. Opportunities will be made in Form Circle Time to discuss any concerns boys may have.

Reporting

It is the specific responsibility of every member of staff to report to the DSP, or to OFSTED, any concern or allegation about school practices or the behaviour of colleagues or pupils which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm. Staff should rest assured that there would be neither retribution nor disciplinary action for such “whistleblowing” in good faith.

The member of staff reporting a concern will be asked to give a written account of the alleged incident. This will be kept as a record for possible future reference. It is understood that should a member of staff simply wish to share a worry, or need simple advice on how best to deal with an incident, it is important to report such concerns however mild they may seem.

Recognising Child Abuse

It is part of a teacher’s responsibility to learn to recognise signs of abuse and to refer any such concerns to the DSP. Staff will be given training to help them to fulfil this role. Any signs or symptoms of child abuse should be treated with caution. At times there will be straightforward explanations for injuries or behaviour. What is essential is that teachers share their concerns with the DSP.

Definitions of Child Abuse

Concerns may be identified under the following headings:

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical and psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of a child's health or development, including failure to thrive or failure to protect a child from danger. There is often little professional consensus as to what exactly constitutes neglect.

Physical abuse is a physical injury to a child where there is definite knowledge or a reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. This includes, for example, deliberate poisoning, attempted drowning or smothering and Munchausen's syndrome by proxy - where a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health in a child. Physical abuse can lead directly to neurological damage, physical injuries, disability or even death.

Emotional abuse is the persistent or emotional ill treatment of a child which has a severe adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of that child. Its diagnosis will require medical, psychological, psychiatric, social and educational assessment. (NB: All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment; this category should only be used when it is the main or sole form of abuse). There is increasing

evidence of the long-term consequences for children's development of emotional abuse. It can have a negative impact on a child's behaviour and self-esteem.

Sexual Abuse is the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities that they do not truly comprehend and to which they are unable to give informed consent. This may include non-contact activities such as involving children in watching pornographic videos or watching sexual activities. The key elements in any definition of child sexual abuse are: betrayal of trust and responsibility, abuse of power for the sexual gratification of the abuser, inability of children to give consent.

Responding to Disclosure:

- Ensure the child is safe and, if in distress, cared for.
- Reassure the child that you are listening and want to help.
- Let the child talk freely; do not interrupt.
- Keep questions open and to a minimum; do not ask leading questions.
- Never promise confidentiality.

Reporting and Recording Disclosures:

- Report to the DSP, Senior Master or NG.
- Record the date and time of the disclosure and put into some context how the child came to say what has happened / is happening.
- Record verbatim what the child said, as soon as possible after the disclosure; keep the recording factual and objective.
- Where there is visible bruising/injury; describe what you have seen and where on the child's body. Do not ask the child to remove clothing.
- Describe your observations of the child, describing his emotional state and behaviour.
- All information is confidential and once passed onto the DSP there is no right to further knowledge.
- Where the DSP makes an oral referral to the Local Authority Children's Social Care service, which he will do within 24 hours, he will confirm it in writing within 48 hours.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

All confidential issues relating to children and young people should be dealt with on a *need to know* basis. Therefore only specifically relevant information should be passed on to the recipient, who in turn may not pass this information onto another individual, without consulting the informant.

All information given by the child is confidential at all times and once a report is made any further action taken will not be disclosed to members of staff. Before a referral to Social Services is made, an assessment of disclosure needs to be carried out by the DSP who can seek advice from the Lead Officer for Safeguarding Schools & Social Care. If a child does not consent to the disclosure of information, then the DSP can override the duty of confidentiality in order to safeguard the welfare of the child.

If appropriate, consent can be gained from the parent if this is deemed not to put the child at risk.

Only relevant members of staff in schools need to know the details of concerns relating to a child in need i.e. the DSP, form teacher and anyone involved in monitoring particular aspects of a child's behaviour such as the matrons. The boy concerned should also know which teachers/staff are in possession of what information, when it will be shared, why and with whom.

Monitoring

The DSP or, if a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) has been used, the Lead Professional will set a timescale for monitoring a child about whom a concern has been expressed (approximately half a term or 6–8 weeks). If no indicators are found or appear to develop, the monitoring will cease. If indicators and concerns continue, appropriate action will be taken and recorded. As part of good practice, parents/carers will be advised that their child is to be monitored and involved in the process as much as possible. If a child is on a child protection plan information will be shared with the Social Services.

Any deficiencies or weaknesses identified in the school's child protection arrangements will be remedied without delay.

The Governing Body will undertake an annual review of the school's Safeguarding policy and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. This will take the form of an annual report by the Headmaster to the Governors and scrutiny of the procedures by the NG.

Useful Contact Details

Independent Safeguarding Authority: PO Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA (tel: 0300 123111)

Social Services Duty & Assessment Team: 020 7641 7560

Local Authority Designated Officer-Westminster: Carla Acket
(cacket@westminster.gov.uk) 020 7641 7665

OFSTED: 08456 014772

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Next Review January 2011