

ABBERLEY HALL SCHOOL

Safeguarding Children Policy

Introduction

Abberley Hall School fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school.

This is a 'whole school policy.'

This policy is available to all parents on the School's website. Where no access to the website exists, a copy of this policy can be sent on request from the School Secretary.

There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safer 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 then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse;
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan;
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

Procedures

We will follow the procedures set out by the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

The school will:

- Ensure it has a Designated Senior Member of Staff (DSMS) who will undertake training every two years for this role;
- Ensure that all staff, including non-teaching staff, both permanent and part-time receives appropriate training every three years.
- Ensure it has a member of staff who will act in the absence of the DSMS;
- Ensure it has a nominated governor responsible for safeguarding children;
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and the governing body knows the name of the DSMS and their role;
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSMS and are made aware of the arrangements.
- 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 prospectus;
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including attendance at strategy meetings, initial case conferences, core group and child in need review meetings;

- Ensure that the duty of care towards its pupils and staff is promoted by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour and assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice;
- Be aware of and follow procedures set out by Children’s Services and the WSCB where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer;
- Ensure safer recruitment practices are always followed. (including CRB checks and compliance with Independent School Standards Regulations) The school will adhere to a policy of checks prior to recruitment. Where outside agencies are employed, assurances will be sought that the organisation carries out all the statutory checks as required by current legislation. See recruitment policy.

Our procedures will be reviewed annually and up-dated in accordance with current legislation.

When staff join our school they will be informed of the safeguarding children arrangements in place. They will be given a copy of this policy and told who the DSMS is and who acts in their absence.

The induction programme will include basic safeguarding information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, when and how to record a concern about the welfare of a child.

All volunteers and regular visitors to our school will be told where our policy is kept and given the name of the DSMS.

Categories of abuse

Neglect
Physical abuse
Emotional abuse
Sexual abuse

Staff should be aware of and respond to;
Significant changes in children’s behaviour
Deterioration in their general well being
Unexplained bruising, marks, burns or signs of possible abuse
Improbable excuses given to explain their injuries
Fear of returning home
Aggression towards others
Signs of neglect
Comments children may make which give cause for concern

Responsibilities

The Governing Body will nominate a member to be responsible for Safeguarding Children and liaise with the DSMS in matters relating to Safeguarding. It will ensure that Safeguarding Policies and procedures are in place, available to parents and reviewed annually.

The Headmaster will ensure that the Safeguarding Policies and procedures are fully implemented and followed by all staff and that sufficient resources are allocated to enable the DSMS and other staff to discharge their responsibilities with regard to Safeguarding.

The DSMS will co-ordinate action on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within the school ensuring that all staff, volunteers and visitors to the school know who the DSMS is and who acts in his/her absence, they are aware of their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and of their responsibility to report and record any concerns.

Managing Disclosure

Teachers and other staff in schools are in a unique position to observe children's behaviour over time and often develop close and trusting relationships with pupils. If a child discloses directly to a member of staff, the following procedures will be followed:

- Listen carefully to what is said.
- Ask only open questions such as:
 - 'How did that happen?'
 - 'What was happening at the time?'
 - 'Anything else you want to tell me?'
- Do not ask questions which may be considered to suggest what might have happened, or who has perpetrated the abuse, e.g. 'Did your Dad hit you?'
- Do not force the child to repeat what he/she said in front of another person.
- Reassure the child – they have done the right thing.
- Empathise – validate their feelings and listen.
- Younger children are more likely to confide but often lack the language. They may 'tell' through their behaviour, play and creative work as well as by direct disclosure.

Following a disclosure, the member of staff should talk immediately to the DSMS and complete a written record.

Information Sharing & Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential.

The Headmaster or DSMS will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional and, in some cases, a legal responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

Record Keeping

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse, will make notes as soon as possible (within the hour, if possible) writing down exactly what was said, using the child's own words as far as possible. All notes should be timed, dated and signed, with name printed alongside the signature. Concerns should be recorded using the school's safeguarding children recording system.

All records of a child protection nature should be passed to the DSMS including case conference minutes and written records of any concerns.

Supporting Children

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 they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Children's Services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS), education welfare service and educational psychology service and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children;
- Notifying Children's Social Care within 24 hours if there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support to a pupil about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school.

Supporting Staff

We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSMS and to seek further support as appropriate.

Safer Recruitment and Selection of Staff

The school has a written recruitment and selection policy statement and procedures linking explicitly to this policy. The statement is included in all job advertisements, publicity material, recruitment websites, and candidate information packs.

The recruitment process is robust in seeking to establish the commitment of candidates to support the school's measures to safeguard children and to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children or are otherwise unsuited to work with them.

Allegations against Staff / Volunteers / Headmaster

We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff.

Allegations made against staff, volunteers or the designated person with responsibility for safeguarding must be reported immediately inform the Headmaster. If the Headmaster is absent, the allegation should be passed to the Chairman of Governors.

If the allegation concerns the Headmaster, the person receiving the allegation must immediately inform the Chairman of Governors without notifying the Headmaster first.

In case of serious harm, the police should be informed from the outset.

In the case of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) the WSCB and Ofsted must, by law, be informed within fourteen days of the allegation being made.

Alternative accommodation away from children will be made if a member of the boarding staff is suspended pending an investigation of a child protection nature.

Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

Complaints or Concerns expressed by Pupils, Parents, Staff or Volunteers

We recognise that listening to children is an important and essential part of safeguarding them against abuse and neglect. To this end any expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual child will be listened to and acted upon in order to safeguard his/her welfare.

We will also seek to ensure that the child or adult who makes a complaint is informed not only about the action the school will take but also the length of time that will be required to resolve the complaint. The school will also endeavour to keep the child or adult regularly informed as to the progress of his/her complaint.

Prevention

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are always listened to;
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- Include in the curriculum opportunities that equip children with the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

Physical Intervention

Our policy on positive handling is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury or damage to property.

We understand that physical intervention of a nature that causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under safeguarding children or disciplinary procedures.

Abuse of trust

We recognise that as adults working in the school, we are in a relationship of trust with the pupils in our care and acknowledge that it is a criminal offence to abuse that trust.

We acknowledge that the principle of equality embedded in the legislation of the Sexual Offenders Act 2003 applies irrespective of sexual orientation: neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable within a position of trust.

We recognise that the legislation is intended to protect young people in education who are over the age of consent but under 18 years of age.

Racist Incidents

Our policy on racist incidents is set out in our Anti-bullying policy. We acknowledge that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under safeguarding children procedures.

Bullying

Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under safeguarding children procedures.

E-safety

Our Acceptable Use policy recognises that internet safety is a whole school responsibility (staff, pupils, parents).

Children and young people may expose themselves to danger, whether knowingly or unknowingly, when using the internet and other technologies. Additionally, some young people may find themselves involved in activities which are inappropriate or possibly illegal.

We therefore recognise our responsibility to educate our pupils, teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies.

Health & Safety

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the safeguarding of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

Other Relevant Policies

The Governing Body's legal responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of children goes beyond basic child protection procedures.

The duty is now to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activity and functions. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other policies, for instance:

- Managing Allegations and Concerns Against Staff and Volunteers
- Complaints Procedure
- Policy Promoting Good Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- Special Educational Needs
- Trips and visits
- First aid and the administration of medicines
- Health and Safety
- Site Security
- Equal Opportunities
- E-safety
- Extended school activities

The above list is not exhaustive but when undertaking development or planning of any kind the school will need to consider safeguarding matters.

Contacts

Internal

[Richard Wesley \(Deputy Headmaster\)](#)

Designated Senior Member of Staff for Child Protection

[John Walker \(Headmaster\)](#)

Person who acts in the absence of the Designated Senior Member of Staff

[Ann Wright \(Head of Pre-Prep\)](#)

Designated Members of Staff for Child Protection in the Pre-Prep and for EYFS

[Mrs Catharine Hope](#)

Governor responsible for safeguarding children

External

Senior Adviser for Safeguarding Children in Education 01905 728902

Children's Services Access Centre 01905 768054

Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team 01905 768020

Police Public Protection Unit:

24hrs non-emergency 0300 333 3000

Emergency 999

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

Policy updated November 2009 by Richard Wesley (Deputy Headmaster)

Reviewed by Mrs Catherine Hope (Governor responsible for Safeguarding)

Policy to be reviewed November 2010

Child Protection Recording Form

For either a **Disclosure** between.....and.....

Or a **Cause for Concern** raised by.....

Date and Time.....

Persons Present.....

How was the **Disclosure** or **Cause for Concern** brought to your attention?

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Accurate Recording of the Disclosure / Cause for Concern (This may be in note form but wherever possible the actual words of the person giving the Disclosure or Cause for Concern should be used.)

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Signed.....date & time.....

Report received by CPO / Head on.....passed on to relevant authorities by.....

Child Protection Officer Action / Referral Form

Name of Pupil.....DOB.....

Date & Time	Record of Conversation	Action

Additional Child Protection Policies

Showers

- showering in the boarding houses is supervised by matrons and in the case of Yates House by female boarding staff.
- showering in the boys' games changing room is supervised by staff overseeing changing after games.
- Staff should not watch children showering. Their duty is to ensure children go to the shower area and afterwards put their games kit away and make themselves look tidy. The member of staff on duty will ensure good behaviour in the changing rooms.

Children in Staff Quarters/ Accommodation

- If staff interview or have a tutorial with a child on a one-to-one basis then the door to the room where the interview or tutorial is taking place must be kept open. Children must never enter a staff study uninvited, nor unattended. (Children are allowed into the Headmaster's study to use their mobile phones. Children must knock before entering but if the Headmaster is not present the child may enter with the sole purpose to collecting their mobile phone.)
- If a child appears in a staff house uninvited, the member of staff should ring the School to inform the duty staff/Headmaster. The child should then be escorted back to School by the staff member concerned or a member of staff on duty.
- If children are invited to visit staff houses then this must be made known to the Headmaster (or Deputy Head in his absence) before the event. There must be a minimum of four children and their names must be given to the Headmaster together with details of time of visit and return and purpose. If the Headmaster feels the visit should not take place, for whatever reason, then it must be abandoned.
- Staff should not be alone with a child on the School grounds unless there is good cause.

Physical Contact

Physical contact between children and staff can be appropriate for comforting in time of distress. This would normally be acceptable with younger children when an appropriate 'hug' could be seen as giving comfort. Care must be taken to avoid a possible embarrassing situation and if in doubt a member of staff should refrain from all physical contact in such circumstances.

In the situation where a child is injured, either on the games' field or in the School, then a member of staff may need to come into physical contact with a child in keeping with First Aid regulations. If a member of staff is unsure as to how to proceed in the case of finding an injured child then it is best to seek help from Matron or qualified First Aiders.

Staff should avoid 'ragging' with children. This type of 'horseplay' is nowadays seen as inappropriate and could lead to possible embarrassing situations.

The School's Policy on the Use of Force to Control or to Restrain Pupils

The Use of Reasonable Force

The law states that, where necessary, reasonable force may be used by teachers - and others who are authorised by the Headmaster to have charge of pupils – to control or restrain pupils in schools. This applies when a teacher or authorised person is on the school premises and when he or she has lawful charge of pupils elsewhere, for example on a field trip or school outing.

There is no legal definition of 'reasonable force'. However, there are three relevant considerations:

- The use of force is reasonable only if circumstances warrant it.
- The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.
- Whether it is reasonable to use force, and the degree of force that could reasonably be employed, might depend on the age, understanding and needs of the child.

In no circumstances should corporal punishment be used by a teacher. The law forbids a teacher to use any degree of physical contact which is deliberately intended to punish a pupil or which is primarily intended to cause pain, injury or humiliation.

Types of Incident

There are wide variety of incidents in which reasonable force might be appropriate, or necessary, to control or restrain a child. They fall into three broad categories:

- a. Where action is necessary for self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury
- b. Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property
- c. Where a child is behaving in a way that is compromising good order or discipline

Examples of a. and b.

- *A child attacks a member of staff or another child*
- *Children are fighting*
- *A child is engaged in, or about to cause deliberate damage or vandalism to property*
- *A child is about to cause, or is causing injury or damage to themselves or to others by accident, rough play or misuse of dangerous materials or objects*
- *A child is running in the corridor, or across open areas between classrooms, which may cause an accident or injury*

Examples of c.

- *A child persistently refuses to obey an order to leave the room*
- *A child is seriously disrupting a lesson*

Procedures and Guidelines

- Physical intervention should be used as a last resort.
- A calm and measured approach is essential
- Where possible, staff should enlist the help of a colleague
- It is advisable to isolate the child being restrained by either sending other children away from the area of the incident or, if possible persuading the child in question to move with you to a calmer area.

Guidelines for the Application of Restraint:

- Use minimum reasonable force necessary
- Assess the situation and call or send for help to act as witness.
- The purpose of physical restraint is to prevent injury, danger or damage to property.
- Any action which causes pain is forbidden.
- Pressure against joints, fingers, wrists and elbow are dangerous and should not be used.
- Avoid breast area or upper thigh.
- Shoulder, upper arms and just above the knee are more suitable applications.
- Tell the pupil precisely what you are doing and why.
- Staff should avoid touching or holding a child in a way that could be considered inappropriate

Application of Force

Physical intervention can take various forms. It might involve staff:

- getting between children
- blocking a child's path
- holding
- pushing or pulling
- leading a child away by the arm or hand
- guiding a child away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
- using more restrictive holds in extreme circumstances

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, where there is a risk of an immediate serious injury, staff should **not** act in a way that could cause injury, for example, by:

- holding round the neck, by the collar or in any way that may restrict the child's breathing
- slapping, punching or kicking a child
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- tripping
- holding or pulling a child by the hair
- holding a child face down to the ground

Recording Incidents

Staff who have had to deal with an incident that has required the use of reasonable force on a child must report this to the Headmaster. Equally, if a member of staff is injured or assaulted by a child, they report this to the Headmaster.

The incident must also be written up in the 'Red Book' which is in the Upper Resources Room

Updated by Richard Wesley (Deputy Headmaster) November 2009

Reviewed by Mrs Catherine Hope (Governor responsible for Safeguarding) November 2009

To be reviewed next in November 2010.

