



St HELEN'S COLLEGE

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

This is a whole-school policy which includes the Early Years Foundation Stage

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The health, safety and well-being of all our pupils are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. All pupils have the right to opportunity and protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, sexual orientation or disability.
- 1.2 This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy applies to the whole school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 This policy is designed to ensure that all staff are clear about their responsibilities with regard to the promotion of pupils' welfare and the actions necessary should they have a concern about a possible child protection issue. Its aims are:
 - to encourage the promotion of opportunities to help children to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well being;
 - to raise the awareness of all staff and identify responsibility in reporting possible cases of abuse, which might constitute neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse;
 - to ensure effective communication between all staff when dealing with child protection issues;
 - to lay down the correct procedures for those who encounter an issue of child protection.

3 Legislative background

- 3.1 The *Education Act 2002* places a statutory duty on all schools to safeguard children, to promote their welfare and to ensure everyone plays their full part in safeguarding children from abuse and neglect.
- 3.2 *Every Child Matters (2003)*, the government's vision for children's services, proposed reshaping children's services to help children to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well being.
- 3.3 The *Children Act 2004* is the legislative spine for the reforms, supporting: partnership between Local Authorities and local service providers; accountability, with LAs appointing Directors of Children's Services and Lead Members to provide vision and impetus for local change; sharper focus on safeguarding, with Local Safeguarding Children's Boards replacing Area Child Protection Committees; and inspection, with Joint Area Reviews assessing how successfully services are working together to improve outcomes.

3.4 The *Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 (amended 2007 and 2010)* require schools to 'have regard' to guidance issued by the Secretary of State when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. The guidance is not specified but the DfE have advised that the reference is to *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*.

3.5 The DfES (now DfE) has published a series of helpful guides, including: *Working Together to Safeguard Children (latest version published in March 2010)*, *What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused*, *Every Child Matters: Change for Children in Schools*, and *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*.

4 Definitions (from *Working Together to Safeguard Children*)

4.1 'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children' is activity which is proactive and promotes safe and effective care for all children.

4.2 'Child protection' refers to the activity taken to protect specific children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm.

4.3 'Significant harm' is the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. It may be a single traumatic event, or may be a compilation of significant events, both acute and long-standing, which interrupt, change or damage the child's physical or psychological development.

4.4 'Neglect' is the persistent failure to meet the child's physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

4.5 'Physical Abuse' is physical injury to a child caused, for example, by hitting, shaking, throwing, scalding, or poisoning where the injury was deliberately inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

4.6 'Sexual Abuse' involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities (not necessarily involving a high level of violence), including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, or non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

4.7 'Emotional Abuse' is the severe adverse effect on the behavioural and emotional development of the child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment, denial of opportunities, deliberate silencing, humiliation or rejection.

4.8 Specific indicators of neglect and physical, sexual and emotional abuse are provided in Appendix A.

5 Safeguarding and the promotion of children's welfare

5.1 All staff must contribute towards the creation and maintenance of a safe learning environment.

- 5.2 The Headmaster (Mr. Crehan) is the designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) for the school. In addition, the Headmistress (Mrs. Crehan), as Deputy Child Protection Officer, takes lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the Early Years Foundation Stage and for liaising with the local statutory children's agencies as appropriate.
- 5.3 The culture of St. Helen's encourages children to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well being. The example set by the teachers and other staff; school policies such as Anti-bullying, Welfare, First Aid, Health and Safety, Medicines and Equal Opportunities; assembly, which follows the SEAL programme, SPAHCE (Social, Personal and Health, Citizenship Education) and Circle Time; curriculum work in subjects such as RE; charitable work; visiting speakers and the experience of residential trips all promote these values.
- 5.4 The school operates safer recruitment procedures which include CRB checks and compliance with Independent Schools Standards Regulations. We require all adults employed in school and helping voluntarily on a regular basis (see Parent Helper Policy) to have their application vetted through the Criminal Records Bureau (at Enhanced level) to ensure that there is no criminal record or evidence of offences involving children or abuse. Non-employees regularly working in the school on a contract basis (e.g. cleaners) are required to be CRB checked (at Enhanced level) by their employers and to follow a code of conduct detailed in writing by the school (see Appendix B).
- 5.5 Recruiting procedures and vetting checks for staff and volunteer helpers will follow the requirements laid out in *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*. From 1st January 2010, at least one member of every interview panel will have completed safer recruitment training.
- 5.6 When pupils are educated off-site, for example at a residential centre, the school will obtain assurance that only staff who have been subject to appropriate child protection checks and procedures will be allowed to have direct contact with pupils, and members of St. Helen' staff will be in attendance.
- 5.7 The Headmaster will report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) within one month of leaving any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or a student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children. The ISA address for referrals is PO Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA (0300 123 1111).
- 5.8 Staff training will be provided to
- train the CPO and Deputy CPO at least every two years in child protection and inter-agency working;
 - train all staff at least every three years to ensure that staff are competent and confident in carrying out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting children's welfare;
 - train temporary and voluntary staff at induction to ensure that they are aware of the school's safeguarding arrangements;
 - ensure staff are aware of how to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns;
 - support and promote inter-agency training.
- 5.9 Temporary and voluntary staff will be trained in Child Protection and made aware of school procedures.

6 The Role of the Designated Person

- 6.1 The main responsibilities of the Child Protection Officer are:
- to be the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and support staff, external agencies and any other in all matters of child protection;
 - to co-ordinate the child protection procedures in the school;
 - to maintain an ongoing training programme for all school employees;
 - to monitor the keeping, confidentiality, and storage of records in relation to child protection;
 - to liaise with the child protection officer appointed by the local authority and any other relevant agencies as necessary;
 - to advise and act upon all suspicion, belief and evidence of abuse reported to him/her;
 - to undertake initial training and follow up with refresher training every two years.

7 Child Neglect and Abuse - identification and the decision to refer

- 7.1 Dealing with child abuse is rarely straightforward. In some cases, a child's disturbed behaviour, or an injury, may clearly suggest that the child has been abused. In many situations, however, the signs will not be so clear cut and decisions about what action to take will be difficult.
- 7.2 If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse, or a member of staff has grounds to believe that a child has been abused, the member of staff receiving the allegation or having the concern must inform the Headmaster (CPO) immediately. If the CPO is unavailable, the allegation must be passed to the Headmistress (Deputy CPO). In the case of serious harm, the police must be notified from the outset.
- 7.3 Sometimes staff may be reluctant to refer because of the fear that if suspicions are wrong the ensuing investigation may be damaging to the child and the school's relationship with the child and the child's parents. The consequences of reporting suspected child abuse and being wrong can be difficult. The consequences of not reporting suspected child abuse can be fatal.

8 Child protection referrals

- 8.1 When deciding whether to make a referral, following an allegation or suspicion of abuse, the CPO and Deputy CPO should not make their own decision over what appear to be borderline cases, but rather the doubts and concerns should be discussed with the LADO.
- 8.2 If a decision is taken to refer, the CPO will immediately (and always within 24 hours) contact the Hillingdon Referral and Assessment Team by telephone (01895 250102/250053 in hours, 01895 250111 out of hours), and follow-up within 48 hours by logging the referral on the Local Authority Common Assessment Framework (CAF) form. The Hillingdon LADO is Andrea Nixon (01895 277463 anixon@hillingdon.gov.uk). Guidance, procedures and contact details are provided at : <http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=17450>. For children who are resident in Buckinghamshire, the contact number for the Buckinghamshire Referral and Assessment Team is 01296 387957.

9 Procedures for staff who have concerns about a child's welfare

1. Report any suspicion of child abuse, however minor, to the CPO.
2. Make no effort to question the child concerned. If the child volunteers information, then listen but do not probe. Do not ask any leading questions. Do not promise confidentiality - tell the child that the information may need to be shared with other adults so that they can help him/her.
3. Keep records of any conversations, observations and/or actions. Should a parent or guardian volunteer information, it should be recorded.
4. The CPO will take action as appropriate. This might involve a) in minor cases recording concerns and advising staff to keep a watch for further evidence of neglect or abuse; b) telephoning Social Services for advice; c) notifying Social Services of the concerns and then following up with a written referral within 24 hours of the disclosure or suspicion of abuse.
5. For reasons of confidentiality, all records concerning suspected or confirmed child abuse together with the minutes of any conferences will be kept securely locked in the Headmaster's office, separate from the child's normal school records.

10 Allegations of abuse against the Headmaster/mistress, member of staff or volunteer.

- 10.1 If a pupil makes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer, the member of staff receiving the allegation must inform the Headmaster (CPO) immediately. If the CPO is absent, the allegation must be passed to the Headmistress (Deputy CPO). If the allegation is made against the Headmaster or Headmistress, the member of staff receiving the allegation should contact the LADO. In the case of serious harm, the police must be notified from the outset.
- 10.2 Any allegation of abuse made against the Headmaster/mistress, member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child, and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.
- 10.3 The procedures to be followed are those laid down in the booklet '*Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (Appendix 5)*'.

11 Specific instructions for staff

- 11.1 There may be times when a member of staff, in the course of duty, uses physical intervention to restrain a child. This is permissible only to avert an immediate danger of personal injury to, or the immediate danger to the property of, a person (including the child him/herself). The member of staff involved must report any such incident to the Headmaster/mistress immediately.
- 11.2 Staff must take care never to use language, gestures or body language which could cause humiliation or embarrassment to a child. Sarcasm, unmeasured criticism and shouting at children are not allowed.
- 11.3 Where possible, staff should avoid situations where they are alone with a child. There will be times when a member of staff needs to be alone with a single child, for example when teaching a child with LDD, or an individual instrumental lesson, or when a child is being dealt with for a pastoral issue or

reprimand. In these situations, where possible, staff are advised to conduct the lesson or conversation in a place which is not isolated from the coming and going of other staff and/or pupils, and to leave the door open so that passers by can see/hear what is going on. If at any time a member of staff becomes uncomfortable about one to one lessons with a particular child, they should bring the lesson to a close and speak to the Headmaster/mistress.

- 11.4 Members of staff must not become over-familiar with pupils, must not divulge home/mobile phone numbers or personal email addresses, and must not communicate electronically with a pupil through private channels.
- 11.5 There must always be at least two members of staff on the premises when there are children in the school. The Funtasia staffing is organised on this basis, but the same requirement holds true for pupils taking part in extra-curricular activities.
- 11.6 Physical contact between staff and pupils is permissible but must not be inappropriate. Appropriate behaviour would include staff sitting young children (N – Y1) on their laps or carrying them if they are hurt, upset or tired, or shaking hands with, patting the back of or giving a congratulatory hug to an older child. Inappropriate behaviour would include any kissing or sexual touching, unduly prolonged physical contact or touching a child who was not fully dressed. Male staff should restrict physical contact with pupils to an absolute minimum. There should be no physical contact between a member of staff and a pupil if they are alone unless it is absolutely necessary for the proper conduct of professional duties.
- 11.7 Female staff only may supervise the mixed changing of children from N to Y3. Boys and girls in Ys 4 – 6 should change separately and be supervised by staff of the same sex.

12 Abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil

- 12.1 Any suspicion of abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil must be reported to the CPO. In this event, a multi-agency approach will be adopted, using provision and colleagues from a range of services including the NHS, social services and probation.

13 Review

- 13.1 The proprietors 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.
- 13.2 The CPO and Deputy CPO ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in the school's child protection arrangements are remedied without delay.

Author(s)	DAC (Child Protection Officer)
Date	May 2011
Review Frequency	1 year
Next review	May 2012

Appendix A

Specific indicators of various forms of child neglect and abuse.

	Physical indicators	Behavioural indicators
Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor hygiene • Inadequately clothed, torn, dirty or inappropriate clothing • Poor nourishment/failure to thrive • Emaciation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tired or listless • Low self-esteem • Always hungry • States that there is nobody at home to look after them or indicates that they spend a lot of time at home alone
Physical abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained bruising in places where an injury cannot easily be sustained or explained • Facial bruising • Hand or finger marks or pressure bruising • Bite marks • Burns (particularly cigarette burns), scalds • Unexplained fractures • Lacerations or abrasions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shying away from physical contact • Withdrawn or aggressive behaviour • Sudden changes in behaviour e.g. from extrovert to introvert
Sexual abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruises or scratches inconsistent with accidental injury • Difficulty in walking or sitting • Pain or itching in the genital area • Torn, stained or bloody underclothes • Loss of appetite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexually precocious, uses seductive behaviour towards adults • Uses sexually explicit language • Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters • Informed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour • Poor self-esteem • Withdrawn or isolated from other children
Emotional abuse		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention seeking • Withdrawn • Telling lies • Inability to have fun • Low self-esteem • Tantrums past the age when they are part of normal development • Speech disorders e.g. stammering • Inability to play • Indiscriminately affectionate

Appendix B

To: All non-employees working on a contract basis at St. Helen's College

Re: Child Protection Code of Conduct

Introduction

There has been much discussion in the media recently over checks on people who work in schools. I am writing to all non-employees who work at the school to explain how we ensure that the children remain safe and secure, and to explain the measures which you must take to support us.

Employees

The safety and security of the pupils at St. Helen's College is my highest priority. All employees of the school are checked for their suitability to work with children in three ways: by interview, by references being taken up from previous employers, and by a check being made with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). The CRB check informs me whether the employee has any criminal convictions, or has been deemed unsuitable to work with children.

School employees include teachers and assistant teachers, and Funtasia, office, welfare, caretaking and playground staff. All such people are CRB checked at an enhanced level. Parent volunteers and peripatetic music teachers are also checked, again at an enhanced level.

Contract Workers

In addition to school employees, a number of other people work in the school on a regular basis, but do not have unsupervised contact with the children, and are not employed by the school e.g. the cleaners. Others, such as tradesmen and technicians, work at the school from time to time. Their employment contracts are with their employers, who provide cleaning, maintenance and technical services on a contract basis. The school does not run a CRB check on these people, because a) they are employed by other companies/organisations, b) they do not have unsupervised contact with children.

Requirements of Contract Workers

It is important that certain protocols are followed, to ensure the safety and security of the children, and equally to protect the interests of contract workers. False accusations, made against adults by children, can have a devastating effect on the lives of the individuals concerned.

Since they are not employees, and their suitability to work with children has not therefore been checked, contract workers must observe the following protocols. Contract workers:

- are not allowed to have unsupervised access to children;
- must not touch any child, or allow any child to touch them;
- must not give gifts or treats to any child;
- must not exchange any kind of personal information (e.g. phone number) with a child;
- must not allow any close relationship to develop with an individual child or group of children.

Friendly and courteous behaviour is of course appropriate, but care must be taken to ensure that the above protocols are observed.

If a contract worker finds him/herself in a position which is inappropriate, e.g. in a classroom with children with no adult present, then he or she should seek the supervising teacher immediately, and report any concerns to me.

I have provided you with two copies of this Code of Conduct. When you have read it, please sign one copy and return it to me. The second copy is for you to keep.

Thank you for your assistance in this important matter.

D.A. Crehan

Appendix C

St. Helen's College

Child Protection Record of Concern or Disclosure

Complete and pass to the CPO (DAC) or Deputy CPO (GRC) as soon as possible on the same day the concern arises or disclosure is made.

Pupil's Name:		Class:	
Concern identified by:		Date:	Time:
Nature of concern / details of disclosure / other relevant information			
Signed:		Date:	
(Continue on reverse if needed)			
Passed to:	Received by:	Date:	
Action taken by CPO/DCPO (or person receiving this form)			
Signed:		Date:	
This form to be filed in pupil's CP file.			