



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

As part of the ethos of Kingshott School we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school, in compliance with DCSF Guidance *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*. This involves:

- Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern, providing an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and are confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to;
- Providing suitable support and guidance so that children have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties;
- Using the curriculum to provide opportunities for increasing self awareness, self esteem, assertiveness and decision making so that children have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and help them understand the importance of protecting others;
- Working with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need, in some situations, for referral to other agencies;
- Ensuring all staff and senior pupils in positions of responsibility are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the school's procedures and lines of communication. We do this by training;
- Monitoring children and young people who have been identified as *in need*, including the need for protection; keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals;
- Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.

This policy has been devised to help safeguard children's welfare and complies fully with the following legislation and guidance:

The Children Act 1989

The Children Act 2004

Education Act (2002), section 175

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures (2007)

DCFS guidance '*Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*' (2006)

HM Government '*Working Together to Safeguarding Children*' (2006)

The DCFS guidance '*Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*' (2006) places the following responsibilities on all schools:

- Schools should be aware of and follow the procedures established by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board;
- Staff should be alert to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions;
- Schools should have procedures (of which all staff are aware) for handling suspected cases of abuse of children, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff is accused of abuse;

- A Designated Senior Person (DSP) should have responsibility for coordinating action within a school and liaising with other agencies;
- Staff with designated responsibility for child protection should receive appropriate training.

DCSF guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2006) also states that “All parents need to understand that schools and FE colleges have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are their pupils or students, that this responsibility necessitates a child protection policy and procedures, and that a school or FE college may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child’s welfare.”

It has regard for the DCSF Singleton Report of March 2009, *The Review of Safeguarding in Independent Schools and Boarding Schools in England*, and also the supplementary guidance to *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, namely *Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation for LSCBs* (June 2009).

The policy also reflects documents specific to EYFS *The Early Years Foundation Stage: Setting the Scene from Birth to Five* from *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*.

This policy has regard to:

- The Kingshott School Behaviour Policy;
- The Kingshott School Anti-Bullying Policy;
- The Kingshott School Physical Restraint Policy, providing a clear link to physical intervention.

Child protection procedures are essential to ensure the safety of the children in our care. In the Pre-Prep, Middle and Senior Schools the form teachers represent the first contact, offering both care and advice. Matron, the Head of Pre-Prep and Designated Senior Person (DSP) work to support both staff and children.

When the term ‘staff’ is used in this document it is taken to include full-time, part-time, peripatetic and supply teaching staff, as well as support staff from every area of the school, such as administration, cleaning and laundry, medical, catering, grounds, maintenance, examination invigilators, IT technicians, laboratory assistants, library assistants, sports coaches, gap year students, assisting parent groups (e.g. Spectrum) and visiting dance and drama teachers. Volunteers also form part of this group.

Access to the Child Protection Policy

This policy is posted on the school’s website and is available to parents on request. The school will post a copy of the Child Protection Policy to any parent who cannot access the school’s website.

Safer Recruitment Procedures

Kingshott School operates safe recruitment procedures, as required by the Independent School Standard Regulations 4, 4a, 4b and 4c.

Consequently, all staff are vetted through the relevant authorities (Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority’s (ISA) Vetting and Barring

Procedure as of September 2009) to check whether there is anything in their past which would militate against them being employed at the school. All concerns or allegations of abuse are to be reported to the DSP.

Under The Education (Provision of Information by Independent Schools) (England) Regulations 2003, the school is required to report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), within one month, any person leaving the school (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children. Failure to make such a report constitutes an offence and the school could be removed from the DCSF Register of Independent Schools.

The school seeks assurances that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to those staff employed by any organisation working with the school's children on another site.

The following persons underwent Safer Recruitment in Education training

January 2010: Mr Iain Gilmour (Headmaster/ DSP), Mrs Sheila Wearmouth (SLT/ Deputy DSP), Mrs Caroline Gilmour (SLT), Mrs Jude Ilott (SLT), Mrs Joanne Bottomley (Governor), Mrs Clare Dorrell (Governor)

Designated People

At Kingshott there are two designated persons with responsibility for child protection:

Mr Iain Gilmour (DSP) and **Mrs Sheila Wearmouth** (Deputy SDP)
Mrs Sheila Wearmouth is also DSP for EYFS in the Pre-Prep.

In the absence of the DSP, the Deputy DSP will deal with child protection matters. When appropriate, the DSP will make referrals to the local statutory children's agencies.

The Role of the Designated Senior Person(s) (DSPs)

- Ensure that he / she receives refresher training at two yearly intervals to keep his / her knowledge and skills up to date;
- Ensure that all staff who work with children undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively and that this is kept up to date by refresher training at least every three years;
- Ensure that newly appointed staff receive a child protection induction;
- Ensure that temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection;
- Ensure that the school operates within the legislative framework and recommended guidance;
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Board Child Protection Procedures (see signed staff list);
- Ensure that the Headmaster is kept fully informed of any concerns;
- Develop effective relationships with other agencies and services;
- Decide whether to take further action regarding specific concerns (e.g. refer to Children, Schools and Families);
- Liaise with CSF social care teams over suspected cases of child abuse;

- Ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept separate from the academic file in a secure place marked 'Strictly Confidential' and that these records are passed securely should the child transfer to a new school;
- Submit reports to ensure the school's attendance at child protection conferences and contribute to decision making and delivery of actions planned to safeguard the child;
- Ensure that the school effectively monitors children about whom there are concerns, including notifying CSF of the absence of a child who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan;
- Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support.

Procedures where Abuse is Suspected

- At Kingshott, any minor concerns about a child are to be entered in the Incident Book and / or written in confidential files and reported, as appropriate;
- A Record of Concern pro forma is available and should be completed;
- Where appropriate these incidents are discussed with form teachers, at year group meetings, with Matron or at weekly staff meetings. Minutes are kept of these discussions;
- Should a concern involve possible ill treatment or abuse by parents and relatives at home, other persons outside the school, or one or more children against another child, the DSP should be alerted immediately. He will inform the relevant CPSLO (Child Protection School Liaison Officer). Procedure will follow the prescribed format;
- All staff members have a duty to report to the DSP or to CPSLO any concern or allegation about school practices or the behaviour of colleagues which are likely to put children at risk of other serious harm;
- Colleagues should recognise that bullying can develop into abuse (sexual, physical and emotional);
- Colleagues should be vigilant for early warning signs; for instance, favouritism or excessive one-to-one contact;
- Kingshott provides immunity from retribution or disciplinary action against staff for 'whistle blowing' in good faith;
- All staff need to be aware that it is an offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk. If in doubt, consult with the DSP;
- With reference to child protection in EYFS, OfSTED will be informed of any allegations of serious harm and abuse by any person living, working or looking after the children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations. OfSTED will be informed of any such incident within fourteen days.

Procedures in the Event of an Allegation against a Member of Staff

Whenever it is alleged that a member of staff or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence related to or against a child;

- Behaved towards a child in a way which indicates that he or she is unsuitable to work with children;

the person receiving the allegation must take it seriously and immediately inform the DSP or Deputy DSP.

- In the event of an allegation against a member of staff (which includes volunteers and all other staff as listed above), the DSP will follow procedures by taking advice from the CPSLO. An investigation will ensue. They should also make a written record of the allegation using the informant's words – including time, date and place of the alleged incident, what was said and anyone else present. This record should be signed and dated and immediately passed to the DSP or Deputy DSP.
- Should an allegation be made against the Headmaster (in this case also the DSP), the person receiving the allegation should report it immediately to the Deputy DSP who in turn must report the allegation to the Chairman of Governors, Mr Nigel Baker. They should also make a written record of the allegation using the informant's words – including time, date and place of the alleged incident, what was said and anyone else present. This record should be signed and dated and immediately passed to the Deputy DSP.
- Should an allegation be made against the Deputy DSP, the member of staff receiving that information must immediately inform the DSP (Headmaster in this case). Should the Headmaster be absent, the allegation should be passed directly to the Chairman of Governors, Mr Nigel Baker. A written record of the allegation should also be made using the informant's words – including time, date and place of the alleged incident, what was said and anyone else present. This record should be signed and dated and immediately passed to the DSP.
- In the case of serious harm, the police should be notified from the start.
- The Headmaster / DSP will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but will assess whether it is necessary to refer to the Children Schools and Families in consultation with the Local Authority Designated (07920 283106 or 07995 288271).
- If it is decided that the allegation warrants further action through Child Protection Procedures, the Headmaster / DSP must immediately make a referral to CSF Client Services (03001234043) so that the allegation can be investigated in accordance with Section 10 of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures.
- If it is decided that it is not necessary to refer to Children Schools and Families, the Headmaster / DSP and the Local Authority Designated Officer (Mrs Jane Hardy) will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation.
- The Headmaster / DSP should, as soon as possible following the briefing from the Local Authority Designated Officer, inform the subject of the allegation.

For further information see *Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures*: section 10, Allegations Against Those Working With Children.

Training and Awareness of Child Protection Issues

For the Designated Persons:

- The DSPs must maintain their own training in Child Protection and inter-agency work. This is updated at least every 2 years (last completed September 2009).

Mr Iain Gilmour and Mrs Sheila Wearmouth attended a Child Protection Designated Senior Person One Day Training on 15th September 2009. Mr Iain Gilmour has also attended the Reducing and Managing Allegations Against Staff training on 21st October 2009.

All Staff

- The DSP has the responsibility to provide regular training and to update all staff with regard to Child Protection issues. Part-time and voluntary staff who work with children are also made aware of the arrangements. Such training is updated every three years.
- Child Protection training includes identifying signs and symptoms, legal requirements, school procedures and guidance for staff to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place them at risk of harm or allegations of harm to a pupil. Advice has been given specifically in relation to avoiding inappropriate electronic communication with a child.
- The last whole school training was delivered by Mrs Jane Hardy, Child Protection School Liaison Officer for East 1 (Stevenage and North Herts) on Tuesday 1st September 2009.
- At Kingshott, as part of the PSHCE and IT curriculum, teachers deliver E-Safety training to the children. Workshops for parents may be provided.

All staff attended Safeguarding Children Training held at Kingshott on 1st September 2009. An attendance Register is kept in the Headmaster's Child Protection Folder.

Remedying Deficiencies in the Child Protection Policy

If, in the course of a Child Protection case or consultation, a deficiency or weakness in the school's provision or arrangements is revealed, this will be immediately remedied.

The Governing Body

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that there are sufficient measures in place to safeguard the children at Kingshott.

In particular, the Governing Body must ensure:

- Child protection policy and procedures;
- Safe recruitment procedures;
- Appointment of a DSP who is a senior member of the SLT (School Leadership Team);
- Relevant child protection training for all school staff and volunteers is attended;
- Safe management of allegations;
- Deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay;
- A member of the Governing Body (usually the Chair) is nominated to be responsible in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against the Headmaster;
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed annually and information provided to the local authority about them and about how the above duties have been discharged.

The following Governors attended a Child Protection Training for Governors on 9th December 2009: Mr Nigel Baker (Chairman), Mrs Clare Dorrell, Mrs Joanna Bottomley, Mr Edmund Wright.

Reviewing the Child Protection Policy

The Governors of Kingshott School will annually review the policies and procedures for Child Protection within the school. They will undertake an assessment to establish how effectively and efficiently the related duties have been discharged. All these aspects will be recorded.

The Governor with special reference for Child Protection within the school is Mrs Joanna Bottomley.

Further Information

If required, a copy of the Children Act and other notes are available from Mr Iain Gilmour (DSP), Mrs Sheila Wearmouth (Deputy DSP) or Miss Gill Day (school secretary).

Useful Numbers

The Chairman of Governors, Mr Nigel Baker, can be contacted through the school.

Kingshott's Child Protection Schools Liaison Officer (CPSLO) is Mrs Paula Hayden
07788567907 (mobile).

The Head of Child Protection has overall responsibility for the CPSL team and safeguarding in schools. The Head of Child Protection is Mrs Brenda McLaughlin, who is available on 01992 556938.

The following contacts are reviewed annually:

Diane Hall

Schools' Liaison Support Officer (working days are Monday, Wednesday & Friday)

Tel - 01992 556936

Email – cpsloadmin@herscc.gov.uk

Post: CP Unit, Room 51/51, Post Point CH0026, County Hall, Hertford SG13 8DF

Paula Hayden

Child Protection School Liaison Officer

Mob - 07788 567912

Email – paula.hayden@herscc.gov.uk

Post: CP Unit, Room 51/51, Post Point CH0026, County Hall, Hertford SG13 8DF

APPENDIX: Guidance for Staff with Respect to Handling Child Protection

Incidents

Categories of Abuse

- **Neglect:** can be described as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. This may be due to the inadequate provision of food, shelter or clothing, failure to protect the child from danger or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical needs. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
- **Physical Abuse:** actual or likely physical injury to a child. This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing any other physical harm. This may also occur when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child (Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy).
- **Sexual Abuse:** actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. This may be forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The child may not be aware of this. Activities may be non-contact. This could include involving children in watching sexual activity or pornographic material or encouraging children to act in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Emotional Abuse:** actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment. This may involve conveying to the child a feeling of worthlessness, being unloved or inadequate insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed or making a child feel threatened or in danger. Emotional abuse is likely to be a feature of all forms of child abuse.

Some Indicators and Symptoms of Possible Significant Harm

Possible Signs of Physical Abuse:

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent;
- Injuries not typical of accidental injury;
- Frequent injuries even with apparently reasonable explanations;
- Improbable or conflicting explanations for injuries;
- Refusal to discuss injuries;
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive;
- Fear of parents being contacted;
- Bald patches;
- Withdrawal from physical contact;
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather;
- Fear of returning home;
- Fear of medical help / parents not seeking medical help;

- Self-destructive tendencies;
- Aggression against others;
- Chronic running away;
- Frequent absence from school.

Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse:

- Probably the most difficult type of abuse to recognise. An emotionally abused child is often withdrawn, introverted and depressed;
- Admission of punishment which appears to be excessive;
- Over-reaction to mistakes;
- Sudden speech disorder;
- Fear of new situations;
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations;
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking);
- Self mutilation;
- Fear of parents being contacted;
- Extremes of passivity or aggression;
- Drug / solvent abuse;
- Chronic running away;
- Compulsive stealing;
- Scavenging for food or clothes;
- Continual self-depression;
- Air of detachment – ‘don’t care’ attitude;
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends;
- Desperate attention-seeking behaviour;
- Eating problems, including over-eating or lack of appetite;
- Depression, withdrawal.

Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse:

- Demonstration of sexual knowledge or behaviour that is inappropriate to age or stage of development, or is unusually explicit;
- Wetting or other regressive behaviours, e.g. thumb sucking;
- Inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn;
- Stop enjoying previously liked activities;
- Reluctant to undress for PE or Games;
- Become fearful of, or refuse to see, certain adults for no apparent reason; show dislike of a particular babysitter, relative or other adult;

- Draw sexually explicit pictures;
- Urinary infections, bleeding or soreness in genital or anal areas;
- Soreness or bleeding in the throat;
- Chronic ailments, such as stomach pains or headaches;
- Take over the parental role at home; seem old beyond their years;
- Develop eating disorders, such as anorexia or bulimia;
- Depression, suicidal thoughts;
- Poor self-image, self-harm, self-hatred;
- Physical discomfort;
- Use of drugs or drink to excess;
- Unexplained pregnancy;
- Memory loss;
- Frequent running away;
- Restricted social activities;
- Find excuses not to go home or to a particular place;
- Have a recurring nightmare / be afraid of the dark;
- Unable to concentrate; seem to be in a world of their own;
- Have a 'friend who has a problem' and then tell about the abuse of the friend;
- Sudden changes in school work habits, become truant;
- Withdrawal, isolation or excessive worrying;
- Outbursts of anger or irritability;
- Unexplained sums of money;
- Act in a sexually inappropriate, harmful or seductive way towards others.

Possible Signs of Neglect:

- Constant hunger;
- Poor personal hygiene;
- Inappropriate clothing, clothing in a poor state of repair;
- Frequent lateness or non attendance at school;
- Untreated medical problems;
- Low self-esteem;
- Poor social relationships;
- Compulsive stealing;
- Constant tiredness;
- Emaciation;

- Destructive tendencies;
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking);
- Chronic running away;
- Scavenging for food or clothes.

In addition to all the above signs, a child may disclose an experience in which she or he may have been harmed, or there may be any other cause to believe that a child may be suffering harm.

Dealing with a Disclosure

- Always stop and listen straight away to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse;
- If possible, write brief notes of what the child is telling you and times (these will act as prompts later). Keep your original notes, however rough;
- Avoid promising confidentiality. If you are told about abuse you are duty bound to report it so that action can be taken. Give reassurance that initially only the DSP will be told;
- Never ask leading questions. If in doubt or unsure, repeat what the child has told you. This will help reassure the child and will not skew subsequent potential questioning by specialists in child protection;
- Immediately inform the DSP, who will decide the course of action;
- The DSP will take the appropriate action to immediately safeguard the child who has made the disclosure;
- The priority of Child Protection at Kingshott School is to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. The removal of the child from harm and dealing with the perpetrator(s) of the abuse is the role of Social Services and the Police. With that in mind, never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected or alleged abuse, as you could wreck criminal proceedings. Specialist outside agencies will undertake the investigation;
- If the report is considered to be sufficiently serious, (such as sexual or physical abuse, criminal acts or gross misconduct) the DSP will refer the matter as soon as possible, but within a 24 hour period, to the CPSLO (Mrs Jane Hardy or another member of staff if unavailable). Their guidance will then be followed;
- Information regarding the child's developmental needs and the ability of the parent or carer to respond to those needs may be requested as a part of this referral;
- When referring a case of suspected or alleged abuse, the DSP should ask to be informed of the timing of the strategy discussion between the statutory agencies, which will decide whether and how to investigate. The DSP should clarify with the investigating agencies when, how and by whom the parents and the child will be told that a referral has been made. The DSP will often agree with Social Services to inform parents in advance of the formal referral;
- The DSP should contribute to any strategy discussion by sharing the school's knowledge of the child;

- In all but the most exceptional cases parents or carers will be made aware of the concerns felt for a child or young person at the earliest possible stage and, in the event of this becoming necessary, their consent to a referral to Social Services will be sought. Referrals to Social Services will be made using Hertfordshire's inter-agency referral form;
- In situations where there are felt to be urgent or grave concerns, a telephone referral will be made prior to the form being completed and sent to the CPSLO.

Confidentiality

Child Protection raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff and volunteers in school.

- All Kingshott staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have a responsibility to share with other professionals relevant information about the protection of children, particularly the investigative agencies (Children, Schools and Families and the Police).
- If a child confides in a member of staff or volunteer and requests that the information be kept secret, it is important that the member of staff or volunteer tells the child in a manner appropriate to the child's age and stage of development that they cannot promise complete confidentiality – instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe.
- Staff or volunteers who, in the course of their work, receive information about children and their families should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.

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