

St Edmund's School Canterbury

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

General

- The protection of children is the proper concern of everyone in a position to help. Primary responsibility for the care and protection of children rests with their parents, but a range of services is available to help them with this task.
- The safety and protection of children is of paramount importance to all those involved in Education.
- Children can develop a special and close relationship with school staff, and view them as significant and trustworthy adults. It is not surprising therefore that children, if they have been abused, may confide or disclose to a teacher or other member of staff.
- School staff are also in a unique position to notice any change in demeanour or circumstances. There is the opportunity to notice injuries, marks or bruises when children are doing P.E., games or swimming which might indicate a child has been abused.
- The Head of the Pre-Prep School (Mrs Frampton Fell) and the Foundation Stage Co-ordinator (Mrs Amanda Johnson) have lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting in the Pre-Prep School. It is their duty to liaise with local statutory children's agencies as appropriate.
- The School takes account of the government guidance in *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*, and follows the procedures laid down in that document. It also complies with the requirements of Section 3 of the National Care Standards for boarding schools.
- The School operates safer recruiting procedures; including the appropriate checks through the regulatory body responsible (Criminal Records Bureau), in addition to the requirements of Independent School Standards Regulations.
- This policy is in accordance with the East Kent Safeguarding Children Board and is available to parents in person at all times when the school is open or by sending in a request. It is also available on the school's website.

Aims

The School aims to safeguard all pupils from abuse. Therefore, this policy aims:

- To set out procedures for ensuring that the School meets its responsibility for safeguarding pupils from abuse.
- To protect staff against spurious allegations of abuse. In this respect, the School has adopted a formal policy entitled "Staff facing an allegation of abuse or inappropriate behaviour", which is in accordance with national guidance (ASCL).

What is Child Abuse?

The definitions in this document are drawn from "Working Together to Safeguard Children (1999)". Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm in the following four categories:

Physical abuse: may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may

also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as “fictitious illness by proxy” or “Munchausen’s Syndrome by proxy”.

Emotional abuse: is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on a child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age- or developmentally-inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is fully aware of what is happening and whether or not such an act was consensual or otherwise. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. This may include non-contact activities such as involving children in the looking at or in the production of pornographic material, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect: is 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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Who are the abusers? Abusers can be parents, carers, siblings, members of the extended family, neighbours, teachers, strangers, other pupils; in short, anyone. Very sensitive steps will be taken in the case of abuse of one child by another. In such cases appropriate advice should be taken immediately (e.g. from Social Services). See also the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Procedures

Given that many pupils at St Edmund’s are boarders, the following procedures should be applied by all staff, including those in support and any adults working in the School, as well as older pupils. The term ‘staff’ therefore applies to any adult or senior pupil who has concerns of a Child Protection nature.

i) Reporting to the designated CPO (Child Protection Officer)

Any concerns about pupils whether raised by staff or senior pupils must be discussed with the designated CPO (or their named deputy in their absence) as soon as possible and at least by the end of the timetabled day.

ii) Immediate response to the child

Where a senior pupil receives a disclosure then that pupil will immediately report it to the designated CPO.

It is vital that any staff actions do not abuse the child further or prejudice further enquiries, for example:

- listen to the pupil, if you are shocked by what is being said try not to show it;

- it is acceptable to observe bruises but not to ask a child to remove or adjust their clothing to observe them;
- if a disclosure is made, the pace of the conversation should be dictated by the pupil without their being pressed for detail by being asked questions such as “What did they do next?” or “Where did they touch you?”. **The staff role is to listen, record and report; not to investigate.** Staff must use open questions such as “is there anything else you want to tell me?” or encourage them further with a “yes?” or “and?”;
- accept what the pupil says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking questions such as “why didn’t you tell me before?”;
- do acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you this;
- don’t criticise the perpetrator, this may be someone they love;
- **don’t promise confidentiality.** Reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing, explain whom you will have to tell (the designated CPO) and why. It is important that you don’t make promises that you cannot keep such as “I’ll stay with you all the time” or “it will be alright now”.

Recording Information

Staff or senior pupils should:

- make some brief notes at the time or immediately afterwards; record the date, time, place and context of the disclosure or concern, recording what has been said to you and not your assumption and interpretation. Notes must be signed and dated;
- record observed injuries and bruises on a Body Map;
- note the non-verbal behaviour and the key words in the language used by the pupil (do not translate into “proper terms”);
- keep these original notes and pass them to the designated CPO.

The designated CPO will follow up all referrals to Social Services within 24 hours. If a phone call is made, this must be put in writing within a further 24 hours.

Support

1) Pupils and families

The School recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world in a positive way. This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk.

Therefore, St Edmund’s will endeavour to support pupils through:

- the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;
- our ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued;
- the implementation of the School’s Code of Conduct;
- a consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of the behaviour from that behaviour which the pupil displays;
- regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support pupils and their families;
- a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, and
- the development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group (especially Senior Management, AEN staff, Housemasters, Tutors, and Medical Staff) trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations

2) Staff

Receiving a disclosure or observing signs of abuse can be very distressing. All staff should discuss their feelings with the designated CPO or other senior member of staff.

Incidents of a child protection nature can affect staff not directly involved. Meetings should be used to support staff in this situation.

Members of staff may be asked to attend a Strategy Meeting. You will need to take any information the school may hold.

You may be required to attend a child protection case conference for which you should provide a report.

The designated CPO will be available to support and advise you.

Any member of staff who is concerned about involvement in child protection issues can discuss the matter with the Headmaster or Master.

Where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff or a volunteer, then support is offered by the School and dealt with in line with the document *Staff facing an allegation of abuse or inappropriate behaviour*. A separate policy on Whistleblowing is in place to protect all staff in making disclosures.

Confidentiality

Staff have the professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly investigating agencies. If a pupil confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child sensitively that he/she has a responsibility to refer the matter to the designated CPO for the child's own sake. At the same time, the child should be reassured that the matter will be only be disclosed to the designated CPO, who will then decide on appropriate action. Staff who receive information about children and families in the course of their work should hold the information only within their professional context. Child protection records should be kept securely locked. Personal information about all pupils and their families is regarded by those who work in this school as confidential. All staff will aim to maintain this confidentiality. All records relating to child protection incidents will be maintained by the designated CPO and only shared as is consistent with the protection of children.

Parents

- Parents play an important role in protecting their children from abuse. The School is required to consider the safety of the pupil and should a concern arise professional advice will be sought prior to contacting parents.
- The School will work with parents to support the needs of their child.
- The School aims to help parents understand that the school, like all others, has a responsibility for the welfare of all pupils and has a duty to refer cases to the Social Services in the interests of the child.
- This policy is available to all parents as indicated in the general introduction.

When a pupil transfers to another school

- If the pupil is on the child protection register, their Social Worker will be contacted by the designated CPO and informed of the transfer.
- When the child changes schools within the authority, child protection records will be passed on to the designated CPO at the receiving school.
- When the child is moving to another authority, information will be passed onto the next school's designated CPO. Case conference minutes are not transferred but the date, name of chair, LA and outcome will be included on the records transferred.

Training

- The school has a commitment to training and attendance at inter-agency child protection meetings. Time will be given to enable this commitment to be met and it is the responsibility of the individual to notify the Deputy Head to arrange cover.
- The designated CPO will be expected to cascade learning to the wider staff group via meetings etc.

Case conferences and core group meetings

- In each case the School will assign the appropriate member of staff to attend a Child Protection case Conference. Where possible the member of staff will be accompanied by the designated CPO but this may not always be possible. You should prepare a report presenting this to the Case Conference chair at the start of the meeting. The chair will gather all information and assess the risks. You will be asked for your view in respect of registration.
- If a child's name is placed on the local Child Protection Register a Core Group will be agreed. All Core Group members meet regularly (at least monthly) to monitor and progress the Child Protection Plan and Core Assessment. Attendance at these meetings will be given priority.
- The designated CPO will be available to advise and support you.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body

- The governing body will appoint a Named Governor to liaise with the School's designated CPO on safeguarding pupils issues.
- The Governors will also appoint a Designated Teacher for Safeguarding Pupils and ensure that he/she is trained and receives further updating at least every two years.
- The governing body will receive and consider annually a verbal report from the Headmaster on safeguarding pupils in the school.
- The Named Governor will determine appropriate training (in liaison with the designated CPO) for the governing body.
- The governing body will determine any changes to the school's policies and procedures as appropriate.
- The governing body is responsible for annually reviewing and amending the policy as appropriate.

The Headmaster

- is responsible for the implementation of the policy and ensuring that the outcomes are monitored.
- will report annually to the governors on the working of the policy.
- will be trained in Safer Recruitment and will ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay.
- Will comply with the requirements of the Independent Safeguarding Authority concerning safeguarding children and the reporting of incidents where adults have left the school because they are considered unsuitable to work with children.

The Designated Child Protection Officer

- The Designated Child Protection Officer is the Chaplain

- Their deputy or the person to contact in their absence is: the Headmaster, Master or Head of the Pre-Prep School, as appropriate. All Deputy Masters are trained in Child Protection and may act as designated CPO in the Chaplain's absence.
- The designated CPO is responsible for ensuring that all cases of suspected or actual problems associated with child protection are investigated and dealt with. The designated CPO will ensure that he/she is aware of the latest national and local guidance and requirements and will keep the Headmaster, Master or Head of Pre Prep and staff informed as appropriate.
- The designated CPO and their deputies will receive appropriate training in child protection matters, to include both national and local bodies, at least every two years.
- The designated CPO will ensure that appropriate training is given to all new staff, including part-time and voluntary workers. Update child protection training must be organised at least every three years.
- The designated CPO will ensure that School Prefects receive training in child protection as soon as is practically possible after their appointment.
- The designated CPO will liaise with the governing body's Nominated Governor for Safeguarding Pupils.

The Staff

- All staff, including supply teachers and other visiting staff (e.g. school nurses) and those supporting school trips, will be informed of the designated CPO's name and the School's policy for the protection of children: *(tick as appropriate)*
 - During their first induction to the School
 - Through the staff handbook (Vademecum)
 - Whole staff training or briefing meetings
- All staff need to be alert to the signs of harm and abuse (see Appendix). They should report any concerns if not immediately, as soon as possible, that day to the designated CPO or named deputy. If in any doubt they should consult with the designated CPO.
- All relevant national and local procedures will be made available for staff reference and is located in the designated CPO's office.
- When utilising employees of another organisation on a site other than the School, and they are taking responsibility for the School's pupils (e.g. on camps, field trips, visits to activities centres, etc.), assurance must be received that they have appropriate safeguarding checks.

Prefects

It is often the case that pupils with problems talk to senior pupils and this is particularly the case in a boarding environment. All School Prefects will be trained by the designated CPO (and/or the Headmaster) in matters of child protection and, in particular, how to deal with information which might suggest abuse.

Equal Opportunities

All staff and governors with responsibilities under this policy must take into account the Equal Opportunities Policy when discharging their duties.

Monitoring and Review

The designated CPO will monitor the working of the policy and will report as required to the Headmaster.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body and amendments made as necessary due to changes in legislation and/or guidance issued by regulatory bodies. The review will take into consideration both the detail of the policy and how the related duties have been discharged.

JMG

Signed: _____
Chairman of Governors

Date: _____

Review Date:

Appendix 1

Child Protection - Staff Guidance

A. Procedures to be followed:

- **Members of staff who suspect abuse of a child should report their suspicions to the designated CPO.** The designated CPO, in consultation with the Headmaster, Master or Head of Pre-Prep will determine whether the Social Services and in some instances, the Police will be notified. It is the role of the police to investigate this type of incident. Where the allegation involves the designated CPO, Master or Head or Pre-Prep the matter must be referred direct to the Headmaster. Where the Headmaster is suspected of abusing a child, the matter must be reported directly to the Chairman of Governors.
- **Senior pupils who suspect abuse of a child should report the matter to the designated CPO.**
- **Information is received from primary schools, other schools, parents, and various other sources.** Where it is thought that the Social Services are not aware of the case they will be informed.
- **Risk Register.** A confidential register will be maintained of all those pupils known to be at risk. Names will be entered on the register if it is confirmed by Social Services that the child is actually at risk.
- Where a child is known to be at risk, the named member of staff will inform the relevant pastoral staff and members of the appropriate Senior Management Team.

Procedures in respect of Child Abuse

Abuse exists where children have been physically, emotionally, or sexually abused or severely neglected. Abuse of children who are over three years of age is likely to be noticed by the school staff and Health Workers or Education Welfare Officers. It is essential, therefore that all those whose work brings them into contact with children and their families know the signs of child abuse and are aware of the procedures that they must follow to safeguard the child.

The Education Service in general, and this school in particular, has the role of recognising and responding to potential indicators of abuse and neglect, all other action should be taken by those with statutory powers to help the child. Early contact and close liaison with such agencies is therefore regarded as essential by the School.

In the event that staff have serious concerns about the inadequacy of policies or child protection in practice in school, they should contact the Headmaster. If a member of staff feels that this response is inadequate they should report the matter to Ofsted.

In the event of an actual or suspected case of child abuse by adults, parents, teachers, any other adult, or one or more pupils

It is the responsibility of school staff to report this to the designated CPO (or Headmaster, Master or Head of Pre-Prep) as soon as possible. The designated CPO is responsible for ensuring that School procedures are initiated immediately and the appropriate agency involved. Within 24 hours of a disclosure or report of suspicion of

abuse, the matter will be reported to the Area Children's Officer (child protection) for East Kent by the designated CPO.

It is important that if staff overhear children discussing 'abuse' or 'neglect' that this information is relayed for investigation.

Where an employee is considered unsuitable to work with children, a report will be made to the ISA within one month.

There is a separate school policy outlining action to be taken on **Staff facing an allegation of abuse or inappropriate behaviour**, which should be consulted alongside the School Policy on **Staff Discipline**.

Where the School Code of Conduct is not sufficient to deal with an allegation made against another pupil, external agencies will be involved initially, and advice will be sought from the East Kent Safeguarding Children Team.

B. Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

A child may exhibit some of the following symptoms and have perfectly reasonable explanations of how they occurred. It is of great concern if several of these injuries or signs occur simultaneously or if the explanation of the presence is unconvincing.

Injuries

- Bruises or abrasions especially about the feet, head, genitals or other parts of the body where they would not normally be expected to occur given the age of the child.
- Damage or injury to the mouth of a child e.g. bruises or cut lips.
- Bite marks.
- Burns and/or scalds especially small circular burns (often cigarette burns).
- Bilateral injuries such as two black eyes – this rarely occurs accidentally.
- Poisoning and other misuse of drugs.
- Repeated minor injuries and/or self harming.
- Untreated injuries.
- Attempted suicide

Other signs include:

- Developmental retardation, failure to thrive or grow without an underlying medical condition.
- Lethargy.
- Withdrawal.
- Wariness.
- Passivity.
- Attention-seeking or over-compliance.
- History of running away.
- Aggression towards others. Violent outbursts.
- Poor peer relationships
- An unkempt, dirty appearance. Poor personal hygiene.
- Eating disorders.
- Low self-esteem, self-deprecation, depression.
- Alcohol or drug abuse.
- Lying, delinquency, stealing.
- Unwillingness to undress for PE, or to have a medical examination.

- Over-solicitous behaviour towards adults.
- Use of inappropriate sexual remarks or behaviour.
- Presence of sexually transmitted infection, or recurrent infections.
- Pregnancy.
- Inappropriate response to painful situations.
- Over-reaction to mistakes.
- Fear of parents being contacted.

C

All staff are to be cautioned against:

- any physical contact with pupils which is not in accordance with DCSF guidance on handling pupils and which is open to misinterpretation.
- one-to-one tuition should only take place where both parties are visible e.g. through a window, or vision panel. Doors should not be closed/secured.
- care must be taken in one-to-one sports coaching, such that no action/comment might be misconstrued.
- it is inappropriate for adults to offer lifts to a child or young person outside their normal working duties, unless this has been brought to the attention of the line manager and has been agreed with the parents/carers.
- there may be occasions where the child or young person requires transport in an emergency situation or where not to give a lift may place a child at risk. Such circumstances must always be recorded and reported to a senior manager and parents/carers.
- staff should avoid electronic communication with pupils unless it is absolutely necessary. Any inappropriate communications contravenes the Staff Code of Conduct and is a serious disciplinary offence.

D Useful contacts:

Independent Safeguarding Authority – PO Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA. Tel 0300 123 111

Area Children’s Officer (child protection) East Kent – Elaine Coutts – Clover House, John Wilson Business Park, Thanet Way, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3QZ – Tel 01227 283682 or 07786 191601

Head of Children’s Safeguards Service – Kel Arthur – Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone ME14 1XQ – Tel 01622 696366 or 07786 191359

Ofsted – 08456 404045 (reporting child welfare concerns in the context of boarding)

- 08456 404046 (Whistleblowing hotline, Mon-Fri 8am – 6pm), also via email: whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk and by texting 60086.

E Boarding Matters

As a boarding school we closely monitor the presence of pupils to ensure their safety. In the event of the apparent disappearance of a pupil, school staff should consult the **Missing Pupil Policy**. All boarding staff will be made aware of action in the event of a missing pupil.

Signed: _____
Chairman of Governors

Date: _____

Review Date:

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY
St Edmund's School Canterbury

I confirm that I have read the
attached Safeguarding Children Policy and have kept a copy of this document on file.

Name

Department

Date

Please return this sheet to the Headmaster's PA immediately.