



Policy to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children who are pupils at the School Part 1: Child Protection

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Hornsby House School

The Policy to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children who are pupils at the School

Statement

Hornsby House School fully recognizes its responsibilities for child protection, it will safeguard and promote the welfare of the children who are pupils of the school, in compliance with the DCSF guidance *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education* and the locally agreed interagency procedures of Wandsworth Local Safeguarding Children's Board. This policy applies to all staff (whether employed full time or part time, contracted or a volunteer) working in the School and the Governors. It is our intention that every pupil should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse: (neglect, non-accidental physical injury, sexual exploitation or emotional ill-treatment). This policy applies to the school and the EYFS.

The School regards the Policy to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children as integral to the effective discharge of its duties and responsibilities and accordingly has determined that a Governor undertake an annual review of the Policy and whenever required to ensure compliance with new or updated best practice guidelines or legislation.

This policy is available to download on the schools website. <http://www.hornsby-house.co.uk/policies> A hard copy will be provided on request by calling the school office on 020 8673 7573. Alistair Gerry (Assistant Head) is the designated CEOP for the school.

Aims and Objectives

Hornsby House School is committed to taking all reasonable measures to safeguard and promote the welfare of each pupil in its care by:

- Ensuring that it practises safe recruitment in checking the suitability of all staff working with our pupils including CRB checks and compliance with Independent Schools Standards Regulations.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping pupils with the skills needed to recognize and keep them safe from abuse, as part of the PSHE curriculum.
- Having clear procedures in place for identifying and reporting suspected cases of abuse.
- Supporting any pupil who has been abused in accordance with his/her agreed protection plan.
- Creating an environment where children know they can approach adults, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- The School undertakes to follow the procedures set out in "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education", "and to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in accordance with section 157 Education Act 2002 and associated regulations.
- Every complaint or suspicion of abuse from within or outside the School will be dealt with according to the guidance provided (as stated in this policy). It will be investigated and in all proper circumstances will be referred to an external

agencies such as the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), Wandsworth Social Services (WSSD), or the local authority agency in which the child resides or the child protection unit of the police (CPU).

Hornsby House School undertakes to:

- Ensure Safer Recruitment Procedures are always followed according to the DCSF document "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" – January 2007.
- Ensure that there are designated staff members for child protection who have received appropriate training (updated every two years) and support for this role.
- Ensure there is a nominated Governor designated for Child Protection.
- Ensure all members of staff and Governors know the name of the designated staff members and their role.
- Ensure all staff understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and reporting arrangements for referring any concerns to the designated staff members responsible for child protection. A list of all staff members who have undertaken CP training is held in the office.
- Ensure parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Notify Social Services if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who is on the Child Protection Register.
- Notify the DCSF and ISA of any employee, (whether current or having recently left the employ of the school), about whom there is a concern regarding his or her attitude or actions towards pupils.

The Designated staff members

The School's designated staff members who are responsible for matters relating to child protection and welfare throughout the school and EYFS are the Headmaster, Mr Jon Gray, the Deputy Head, Miss Jennifer Paul and School Nurse, Mrs Michele Leslie. The designated staff members report all matters to the Head Master unless he were subject of the complaint, in which case the Chair of Governors should be informed. The designated staff members will have received appropriate training in child protection and inter-agency working and attend refresher training at two yearly intervals.

The designated staff members will:

- Liaise with the local and statutory children's agencies where appropriate
- Keep written reports of concerns about children, even when there is no need to refer the matter immediately
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separately from the main pupil file, and in a locked location
- Follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff as stated in this policy
- Ensure that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, the information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the pupil's social worker is informed

- Report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) immediately on leaving the school, any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer etc) whose services are no longer used because she/he is considered unsuitable to work with children.

Mrs Alison Siddiqui is the named Governor responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Child Protection Policy and undertakes to independently review the policy on a yearly basis.

Duty of Employees

Every member of the School's staff is under a general legal duty:

- To protect children from abuse
- To be aware of the School's child protection procedures and to follow them
- To know how to implement the procedures
- To keep a full record of any significant complaint, conversation or event
- All evidence, (for example, scribbled notes, mobile phone text messages), must be safeguarded and preserved
- To report any matters of concern (suspicions or complaints of abuse) to the Designated staff members or if the complaint involves any of these people then it should be reported to the other
- To undertake appropriate training, including refresher training, at three yearly intervals
- For part time and voluntary staff who work with children the school will that they are aware of the arrangements
- To ensure their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil, for example, in one to one tuition, sports coaching and conveying a pupil by car

Whistleblowing:

In accordance with the Independent School Standards Regulation 3. (2) (b) which requires compliance with Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education section 2.23ff that refers to the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools Standard 3, the School recognizes the requirement for a Whistleblowing section in this Policy.

All staff are required to report to the Designated staff members any concern or allegations about school practices or the behaviour of colleagues which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm. In exceptional cases such reports should be made to the ISA and the nominated member of the governing body. There will be no retribution or disciplinary sanction taken against a member of staff for making such a report provided that it is done in good faith.

Procedures

Any member of staff suspecting or hearing a complaint of abuse:

- Must listen carefully to the pupil and keep an open mind. Staff should not form a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place.
- Must not ask a leading question, i.e. a question that suggests its own answer.

- Must reassure the pupil but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. The member of staff should explain they have to pass the information to the Head or Designated staff members who will ensure the correct action is taken.*
- Must keep a sufficient record of the conversation. The record should include the date, time and place of the conversation and the essence of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence. The record should be signed by the person making it and should use names and not initials. The record must be kept securely and handed to the Head or Designated staff members.*

Action taken by the Designated staff members

The Action to be taken will take into account:

- The procedures published by the DCSF – Safeguarding Children and Safer recruitment in Education*
- The nature and seriousness of the suspicion or complaint. A complaint involving a serious criminal offence will always be referred to the WSSD or the police without further investigation within the School.*
- The wishes of the pupil who has complained, provided that the pupil is of sufficient understanding and maturity and properly informed. However, there may be times when the situation is so serious that decisions may need to be taken, after all appropriate consultation, that override the pupil's wishes.*
- The wishes of the complainant's parents provided they have no interest which is in conflict with the pupil's best interest and they are properly informed. Again, it may be necessary, after all appropriate consultation to override parental wishes in some circumstances. If the Designated staff member is concerned that disclosing information to parents would put a child at risk, she will take further advice from the relevant professionals before making a decision to disclose.*
- Duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable.*
- The lawful rights and interests of the school community as a whole including its employees and its insurers.*
- If there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the Designated staff members may consult with SSD or other appropriate professionals on a no names basis without identifying the family. However, as soon as sufficient concern exists that a child may be at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made without delay within 24 hours. If the initial referral is made by telephone, the Designated staff members will confirm the referral in writing to SSD within 48 hours. If no response or acknowledgement is received within one working day, the Designated staff members will contact Social Services again.*

Referral Guidelines

The Designated staff members must make a referral to Social Services within one working day of the recognition of risk if there are signs that a child:

- Is experiencing or may already have experienced abuse or neglect*
- Is likely to suffer significant harm in the future*

The safety of children is paramount in all decisions in relation to the welfare of children, and members of the School staff should take all reasonable steps to offer a child immediate protection from an abusive parent.

External Agencies

Whether or not the School decides to refer a particular complaint to the SSD or the police the parents and pupil will be informed in writing of their right to make their own complaint or referral to the Social Services Department or the Child Protection Unit of the police and will be provided with contact names, addresses and telephone numbers, as appropriate.

*Wandsworth Council Social Services Department
020 8871 7961 – Stella Macaulay*

*Police Child Protection Unit
020 8247 7843*

Allegations against Staff, Volunteers or the Head

The procedures for dealing with allegations against staff/volunteers should aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff from false or unfounded allegations unless:

- The pupil is at risk*
- Other pupils are at risk*
- The member of staff's presence in school will impede an investigation*
- Suspension will not be an automatic response to an allegation. Full consideration will be given to all the options, subject to the need to ensure:
 - o *The safety and welfare of the pupil concerned*
 - o *The need for a full and fair investigation**

- The School is required to report to the Secretary of State, via the DCSF within one month of leaving the school any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children.*
- If any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) is dismissed or resigns before a disciplinary process is completed the Head Master should inform the person about the employers statutory duty to report the case to the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families. Failure to do so constitutes an offence and the school may be removed from the DCSF register of independent schools*
- If any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) is dismissed or resigns and a judgment is made that a disciplinary process would have been instituted if that person had remained in post the Head Master should similarly inform the person about the employer's statutory duty to report the case as above.*
- If an allegation is made against the staff, volunteers or the Designated staff members with responsibility for Child Protection, the member of staff receiving the allegation must immediately inform the Head or in his absence, the allegation should be passed directly to the Chairman of the School Governors.*
- If an allegation is made against the Head Master the member of staff receiving the allegation must immediately inform the Chairman of the School Governors without notifying the Head Master first.*

Allegations against Pupils

- *A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School during the investigation and the School's policy on behaviour and discipline will apply. Child protection concerns will be referred to the Local Area **(Wandsworth)** Child Protection Committee. Our contact for referrals is Stella Macaulay, Principal Education Welfare Officer (020 8871 7961).*

Monitoring

- *The Head Master and the Designated staff members will monitor the operation of this policy and the effectiveness of its procedures, and make an annual report on Child Protection to the School Governors. In addition, any deficiency or weakness that is noted in the School's child protection arrangements will be remedied without delay. The governing body whose nominated school governor is Alison Siddiqui will undertake an independent annual review of this policy and procedures and the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.*

*Reviewed: February 2010 AG/JG/MLeslie
Next review: August 2010*

APPENDIX A. Safeguarding children in Education

GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES

RECEIVE

- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is said
- Make a note of what has been said as soon as practicable

REASSURE

- Reassure the pupil, but only so far as is honest and reliable. For example, don't make promises you may not be able to keep eg "I'll stay with you" or "everything will be alright now"
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the pupil refers to it. For example, you could say:
 - o I believe you
 - o I am glad you came to me
 - o I am sorry this has happened
 - o You're not to blame. You are not alone, you are not the only one this sort of thing has happened to
 - o We are going to do something together to get help
(Based on NSPCC guidelines)

Do not promise to keep it a secret as your professional responsibilities may require you to report the matter. If you make this promise to a child and then break it, you confirm to the child yet again that adults are not to be trusted.

REACT

- React to the pupil only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but do not interrogate for full details
- Do not ask 'leading' questions, for example 'what did he do next?' (this assumes he did), or 'did he touch you?' Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child's) in any later prosecution in court
- Do not criticize the alleged perpetrator; the pupil may care about him/her, and reconciliation may be possible
- Do not ask the pupil to repeat it all for another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to. Reassure the pupil that it will be the Designated staff members or the Head. Try to see the matter through yourself and keep in contact with the pupil.

RECORD

- Make some very brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand, and write them up as soon as possible
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by a court
- Record the date, time, place, persons present and noticeable non-verbal behaviour, and the words used by the child. If the child uses sexual 'pet' words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into 'proper' words
- Draw a diagram or complete a body map to indicate the position of any bruising
- Record statements and observable things, rather than your 'interpretations' or 'assumptions', in other words record facts not opinions.

REMEMBER

- To follow your school's child protection policy and procedures and share your concerns with your designated child protection member of staff as appropriate
- Support the child: listen, comfort and be available
- Complete confidentiality is essential. **Share your knowledge only with appropriate professional colleagues.**
- Try to get some support for yourself if you need it
- Ensure that your behaviour or actions do not place pupils or yourselves at risk or harm or allegations of harm to a pupil for example, in 1 to 1 tuition, sports coaching, conveying pupils by car, engaging in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil, and so on.

Appendix B. DEFINITIONS AND SIGNS OF ABUSE

Categories of abuse

1. Neglect

Persistent or severe neglect, or the failure to protect a child from any danger, including cold or starvation. Extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

2. Physical abuse

Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

3. Sexual abuse

Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent.

4. 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 or rejection.

Possible signs of physical Abuse

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Improbable excuses given to explain 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
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Chronic running away

Possible signs of sexual abuse

Children from ages of 5 to 11 may:

- Hint about secrets they cannot tell*
- Say a friend has a problem*
- Ask if you will keep a secret if they tell you something*
- Begin lying, stealing, blatantly cheating in the hope of being caught*
- Have unexplained sources of money*
- Have terrifying dreams*
- Start wetting themselves*
- Exhibit sudden inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn*
- Stop enjoying previously liked activities, such as music, sports, art, scouts or guides, going on holiday, gym or other clubs*
- Be reluctant to undress for gym*
- Become fearful of or refuse to see certain adults for no apparent reason, show dislike of a particular baby-sitter, relative or other adult*
- Act in a sexual way inappropriate to their age*
- Act in a sexually inappropriate way towards adults*
- Draw sexually explicit pictures depicting some act of abuse*
- Seem to be keeping secret something which is worrying them*
- Have urinary infections, bleeding or soreness in the genital or anal areas*
- Have soreness or bleeding in the throat*
- Have chronic ailments, such as stomach pains or headaches*
- Take over the parent role at home, seem old beyond their years (if a victim of incest)*
- Become severely depressed, even attempt suicide*
- Have poor self-image, self mutilate*
- Continually run away*
- Regress to younger behaviour, such as thumb sucking, surrounding themselves with previously discarded cuddly toys*
- Show discomfort when walking*
- Say that they are no good, dirty, rotten*
- Be wary, watchful*
- Repeat obscene words or phrases which may have been said during the abuse*
- Attempt to sexually abuse another child*
- Talk or write about sexual matters*
- Find excuses not to go home or to a friend's house after school (places where abuse may be happening)*
- Be withdrawn, isolated, or excessively worried*

Possible sign of emotional abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags*
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive*
- Over-reaction to mistakes*
- Sudden speech disorders*
- 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*

DISCLOSURE AND OBSERVATIONS

Where a child volunteers information about possible abuse, or where staff see signs which cause them concern, they should:

- Seek information from the child with tact and sympathy;*
- Listen to the child without interruption;*
- Not ask leading questions of the child;*
- Make a signed note of the conversation, with the date, time, place and whether any witnesses were present;*
- Make no undertakings to the child of absolute confidentiality;*
- Not investigate suspected abuse themselves and report the matter directly to the Designated staff members*

NB There may be other reasons, aside from abuse, which might result in a change of behaviour. If in doubt contact one of the School's Child Protection Officers.

Referrals via the Head Teacher or designated Child Protection Officers only.