

2.7 Child Protection Policy for Queen Mary's School

1. PURPOSE

This Child protection policy is written in accordance with the Children Act 2004, Independent Schools Inspectorate Regulations (March 2009), DSCF Guidelines, and with reference to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) along with publications Working Together and Every Child Matters.

2. AIMS

This policy ensures that the school recognizes and implements the following points:

- 2.1 Safe recruitment procedures and practices in checking the suitability of all staff members, in compliance with Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education.
- 2.2 To raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- 2.3 To develop, monitor and review procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse (refer to Appendix 1 of this policy).
- 2.4 To support pupils who have been abused in accordance with guidelines (refer to Appendix 1 of this Policy)
- 2.5 To establish and maintain a safe environment in which children can learn and develop, be encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- 2.6 A support network for children so that they know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- 2.7 Opportunities in the PSHCE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognize and stay safe from abuse.

The school recognizes that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, safe and predictable element in their life. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may appear withdrawn. In these circumstances, the school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, secure environment and gives the pupils a sense of being valued
- The school ensuring that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are still valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Information sharing, in so far as if a pupil suffering abuse leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and key workers are informed where appropriate.

The Child Protection Policy is available to all staff members, in all roles, both electronically and in hard copy in the school handbook. It is also available to parents. In addition, we recognize, understand and implement the obligations placed on the school in terms of Child Protection which is promoted in the school prospectus, the pupil planner and the Parents handbook.

The school operates a strict safer recruitment system in accordance with NSCL on-line training. All members of staff, in all roles, are CRB checked at enhanced level, and

Revised: 09 April 2010

appropriate records kept in personnel files in adherence with the Data Protection Act. During the interview process, the successful applicant will be seen by the Head of Department, and then by a member of staff who has completed the on-line Safer Recruitment training. The Head of Administration then ensures that identity checks are conducted, references and qualifications are verified, and CRB disclosures are obtained. Once all this is in place a contract can be issued. In addition the application form was revised in 2008 to ensure that it covers any gaps in employment.

The Designated Child Protection Officer at Queen Mary's is Mrs Deborah Hannam Walpole (Deputy Headteacher). She is supported by The Senior Housemistress Mrs Amanda Hickling and the School Secretary, Mrs Carolyn Collin. The Assistant Housemistress' are also CP trained.

The Governor responsible for Child Protection is Dr. E. Harford-Cross.

The INSET and induction programmes ensure that all staff members, including the Headmaster, understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated CPO.

3. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

At Queen Mary's, our child protection policy, in conjunction with our pastoral care and behavioural policies, should enable all members of the school community to feel supported in a safe, caring environment. Our policy includes:

- **Procedures for Child Protection**

To develop, in conjunction with the governors, child protection policies and procedures which promote the care and welfare of pupils.

To communicate child protection policies and procedures to parents.

To enable children to learn strategies to protect themselves.

To develop and maintain effective working arrangements with statutory agencies and other support services who have a shared responsibility for the protection of children.

- **Record keeping and monitoring of pupils**

To devise a record keeping system that enables child protection records to be kept confidential and under lock and key.

To monitor the progress of any children whose names are on the Child Protection Register and contribute to the implementation of the care protection plan.

To devise and implement curriculum and management programmes for those pupils.

To decide who is the most appropriate person from the school to attend case conferences and write reports as requested by the Social Services Department.

Revised: 09 April 2010

- **Preventative Work**

To integrate into the schools' development plan a curriculum that promotes children's self-esteem and teaches them how to protect themselves.

To organise the schools' environment and facilities in such a way that there are reduced unsupervised areas where pupils may be exposed to abuse and ensure that there are sufficient quiet areas where pupils may talk in confidence with adults.

To provide pupils, parents and staff who become involved in child protection issues with support.

To address problems of bullying as soon as they are reported and to ensure that a bullying policy is in place and, regularly reviewed.

- **The need for child protection may emerge in two ways**

A child may make a direct disclosure to a member of staff. Any suggestion from a child that he/she has been abused must be taken very seriously indeed and investigated thoroughly and promptly.

Action:

i) Listen to the child. Don't ask leading or probing questions that might contaminate the evidence. (The child concerned should be told that the allegation will be referred, in confidence, to the appropriate people. It is important that he/she is aware that the matter will be dealt with on a 'need to know' basis.)

Discuss immediately with Mrs Hannam Walpole.

ii) When a member of staff or member of the public is confident that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering significant harm, from neglect, physical injury, sexual abuse or allegation of abuse the matter must be referred immediately to the Social Services.

Action: Discuss immediately with Mrs Hannam Walpole

- **Need for immediate treatment**

If the child needs immediate medical treatment, this should be sought at once and he/she should be accompanied by a responsible adult to hospital and the Social Services informed that this has been done. If a child is taken to hospital, the school should let the Paediatric Department know that the child has an unexplained injury which could be the result of abuse and that the Social Services have been informed. The normal hospital procedure for child abuse will then be followed. The child should be identified at all times by his/her full name, date of birth and home address.

- **Referral**

Formal referral may be necessary but it is wise initially to consult informally with the Social Services department. At this stage identification of the child and family is not required. The purpose of the consultation is for the enquirer to assess his/her own concerns and decide if a formal child protection referral should be made. It is important for accurate notes to be kept of these identified concerns and of all consultations made in the process of deciding on appropriate action.
- **Monitoring**

If no formal referral is made at this stage then a process of monitoring should be undertaken both inside and outside the classroom.

 - i) **Attendance and punctuality.** Identify any particular behaviour changes that are linked to different carers.
 - ii) **Contact with the child's parents.** Infrequent/frequent? Good quality contact/avoidance tactics?
 - iii) **Child's body language and behaviour.** Anxiety and/or low self esteem. Sudden changes in behaviour/demeanour and/or deterioration of performance. Difficulty in trusting or defiance of teachers. Strong need for affection sometimes expressed in physical terms. Changes in eating patterns, soiling, wetting. Marked signs of distress. Difficulties in walking, sitting. Soreness in genital or mouth areas, vague pains and aches possibly arising from psychosomatic illnesses. Bruising obvious? Unexplained physical injury or an injury that is inconsistent with the explanation.
 - iv) **Child's language.** Necessary to record exact words used. Knowledge of sexual matters beyond what would be expected for age of pupil. Play, drawings, writing all provide helpful information.
 - v) **Medicals.** Fear of medical examinations?
 - vi) **Physical Education.** Reluctance to change for P.E?
- **It is the responsibility of Mrs Hannam Walpole to make the referral to the Social Services.**
 - i) She should collect all the information needed to make the referral. It is important to write down the allegations made by the informant as far as possible in the original language used.
 - ii) Mrs Hannam Walpole should then telephone the local duty officer.

The Duty Officer will then ask for the information needed. The purpose of this notification is to enable further consideration of the situation to take place and for a decision to be made on the most appropriate action to ensure the safety of the child. Consultation between Mrs Hannam Walpole and the Social Services should take place as to whether and when the parents should be informed of this referral. Openness with parents has to be balanced against the need to preserve evidence in criminal cases or to safeguard the safety of the child.

iii) After the telephone call Mrs Hannam Walpole should:

- confirm the telephone call in writing.
- ensure that all staff who have been involved have maintained the correct records.

- **Investigation and Initial Assessment**

An immediate assessment of risk will be made by investigating agencies to ensure the safety of the child.

The chief function of the family support team is to protect the welfare and safety of the child.

Those participating in the initial strategy discussion may include the referrer, Social Services group manager, police representative and any other professional, relevant to the circumstances of the case. The purpose of this meeting is to decide on the next steps:

- i)** to take no further action
- ii)** to make additional enquiries
- iii)** to undertake a child protection investigation
- iv)** to take immediate action to protect the child from obvious and serious harm.

Once the initial enquiries and investigative work have taken place and the child's immediate safety has been resolved, a multi-agency case conference will be arranged if it appears that the child requires a formal child protection plan.

A school representative will be invited to this case conference where a child protection plan will be drawn up. The child may be placed on the child protection register which records those considered to be at risk..

- **Allegations against members of staff**

There is a need to act with enormous discretion at this point. Any allegation mistakenly made, for frivolous or malicious reasons, can jeopardise the career of a teacher and the welfare of his/her family. Equally, a genuine complaint, swept aside with little regard for the child making the accusation can put a child in a situation of danger.

- **Procedure for dealing with a child's accusation of alleged abuse by a member of staff.**

Should allegations of abuse by a member of staff be reported, the person receiving the accusation should speak to the headmaster. He should immediately contact the chairman of governors. The Headmaster would need to contact the social services department straightaway.

- **Procedure for dealing with a child's accusation of alleged abuse by the Headmaster.**

Should allegations of abuse by the Headmaster be reported, the person receiving the accusation should speak to the deputy head who should immediately contact the chairman of governors who would need to contact the social services department straightaway.

- **Re: Pre-Employment Checks See also staff recruitment policy section 3.1**

The Headmaster is responsible for the safety of the children at Queen Mary's and he should ensure that pre-employment checks are carried out on both newly appointed teaching and non teaching staff.

The school must make sure that at every point during the employment process the school's dedication to child safety is prevalent. This is shown in the advertisements, web page, communications, application forms, job descriptions, references, school policies and induction.

i) ISA Registration and Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (These are mandatory check.)

All applicants for employment must be made aware that they will need to be ISA Registered (as of Nov 2010) and undergo an Enhanced CRB check which forms part of the pre-employment process. Once a conditional offer of appointment has been made a potential member of staff should be asked to complete the necessary CRB disclosure forms. Confirmation of the appointment is subject to satisfactory disclosure. The CRB form number and date must be added to the Personnel Central Register and the CRB form must be kept in a separate file in a secure location (separate to the personnel files). All CRB's must be safely destroyed after six months. The school is responsible for the payment of the processing fee. Mrs Carolyn Collin is the 'lead signatory'.

ii) References

Two references are obtained prior to interview. The references will be contacted via phone to verify who they are and to check dates of employment. The references will then be sent a school reference proforma which will need to be completed. One reference will be obtained from the last employer and, if relevant, from the last employer where the job entailed access to children. On receipt of the reference it should be checked to ensure that the question has been addressed and answered properly.

The request for references must include the following:

'Under the provisions of the Children Act, I am required to ask you if you know of any reason why the applicant should not be given responsibility for the care of, or substantial access to, children. I should be most grateful if you could answer this question specifically'.

iii) Interviews.

At least one member of the interview panel must have completed the CWDC Child Safety Recruitment course. During interview birth certificates and educational / professional qualifications should be verified and unexplained gaps in employment history should be satisfactorily accounted for.

Appendix 1. Staff Guidelines

What is child abuse?

An abused child is a boy or girl, up to the age of 18, who has suffered from, or is believed to be at risk of suffering **significant harm**, (physical injury, neglect, emotional abuse or sexual abuse) due to the actions of his/her carers or others responsible for his/her care.

The question of whether harm is significant relates to the individual child's health or development compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.

Significant harm relates to the individual child's health or development compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.

Harm means ill treatment/impairment of health or development.

Health means physical or mental health.

Ill treatment includes sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical.

All Staff at Queen Mary's should be aware that there are 4 categories of 'Child Abuse' namely:

- **Neglect**

The persistent or severe neglect of a child, (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation) which results in serious impairment of a child's health or development.

- **Physical Injury**

Physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

- **Sexual abuse**

The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not fully comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent, or that violate the social taboos of family roles.

- **Emotional abuse**

The severe adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection.

It is important that all Staff are aware of these categories and are alert to possible outward signs of abuse. Members of staff who have concerns about a child should consult with Mrs Hannam Walpole.

Revised: 09 April 2010

Appendix 2 Crucial Contacts:

North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board
Jesmond House
31/33 Victoria Avenue
Harrogate
HG1 5QE
0845 034 9410

North Yorkshire County Council Children's Service: 01609 532 638
Outside normal working hrs (24hrs): 0845 034 9417

North Yorkshire County Social Care Unit
Mon – Thurs (8.30am – 8pm) Fri 9am – 5pm 0845 034 9410
Emergency Duty Team (all other hours) 0845 034 9417

LADO Contacts

Rosemary Cannell Education Child Protection & Safeguarding Manager/LADO –
Craven/Harrogate/Selby
Harrogate Education Office, Ainsty Road, Harrogate, HG1 7SN
01609 534974
rosemary.cannell@northyorks.gov.uk

Karen Lewis Education Child Protection & Safeguarding Manager/LADO -
Hambleton/Richmond/Scarborough/Whitby/Ryedale,
Thurston Road, Northallerton
01609 534200
karen.lewis@northyorks.gov.uk

School Doctor: Dr Jane Rajan – 08448 151030

Police: 08456060247

Hospitals: The Friarage, Northallerton – 01609 779911
Harrogate District, Harrogate – 01423 885959

NSPCC (Head Office) 0207 7825 2500
NSPCC Childline 0800 1111
NSPCC Adult helpline 0808 800 5000

School Counsellor Naella Grew – 01904 634910
07939035847

School Nurse Sharon Beaumont – 01845 575045
01765 640825
07709 239103

Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)
PO Box 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA Tel: 0300 123 1111

Revised: 09 April 2010

Appendix 3 'Every Child Matters'

'Every Child Matters'

The paper entitled Every Child Matters was initially presented to parliament in September 2003. This paper promoted the five key outcomes that were considered to really matter for the well-being of children and young people.

a. Being healthy

Physical and mental health: Pupils enjoy a good and healthy lifestyle so that they are physically healthy; mentally and emotionally healthy; sexually healthy; have healthy lifestyles; and are able to make choices, for example not to take illegal drugs.

b. Staying safe

Protection from harm and neglect: Pupils' welfare is safeguarded and they know how to stay safe from accidental injury and death; safe from maltreatment, neglect and sexual exploitation; safe from bullying and discrimination; safe from crime and anti-social behaviour; safe from exposure to violence.

c. Enjoying and achieving

Education and training: Pupils enjoy and make good progress in their learning, leisure and personal development. They are ready for school, attend regularly and enjoy school; achieve good educational standards at primary school; achieve personal development and enjoy recreation; achieve good educational standards at secondary school.

d. Making a positive contribution

Contribution to society: Pupils join in, take responsibility and play a productive part in the community. They engage in decision making; support the community and environment; choose not to offend, re-offend or engage in anti-social behaviour; choose not to bully or discriminate; develop self-confidence and enterprising behaviour.

e. Economic well-being

Achieve economic well-being: Children and young people enjoy a good start in life and are able to achieve their full potential and secure employment. They are prepared to engage in further education, employment or training on leaving school; are ready for employment; have a desire to live in a decent home and community; have the skills and ambition to access transport and material goods and to strive for a good income.