

## **Blundell's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

Blundell's fully recognises our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of our pupils. This responsibility necessitates a child protection policy which applies to all staff, governors and others working in the school including part-time and voluntary staff.

There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment procedures in checking the suitability of staff to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with their child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the PSD curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- We will follow the locally agreed inter-agency procedures and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families to:
- Ensure we have a designated Child Protection Officer and Deputy who have received appropriate training (updated every two years) and support for their role.
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection who will undertake an annual review of the Child Protection Policies and Procedures, and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.
- Ensure every member of staff and the governors know the name of the Child Protection Officers and understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and for referring any concerns to the Child Protection Officers. They should be retrained every three years.
- Share information with the relevant agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare and develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately. Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff .
- Ensure that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.
- Ensure safe recruitment procedures are always followed.
- Report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) 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.
- Ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in Child Protection arrangements are remedied without delay.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection. Our full set of procedures are available to parents on request.

## **Blundell's Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures for all staff and senior pupils in positions of responsibility.**

*Child protection is the care and safeguarding of children from any form of harm or abuse.*

*Child abuse is the injury, exploitation or neglect of a child or young person at the hand of another.*

*Child abuse on a child can be inflicted by a physical response such as physical, sexual assaults or by failing to act to prevent harm such as neglect. Harm can also be inflicted emotionally. Abuse can be inflicted by the commission or omission of an act and can occur in family, institutional or community settings by those known to them or by strangers.*

All Schools are required by law to have a Child protection policy and related procedures. The Second Master ( Mr Thane) is the Designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) having responsibility for liaising with Children's Services and other relevant agencies over cases of child abuse. The Senior Mistress (Mrs Klinkenberg) is the Deputy Child Protection Officer (DCPO) and she can also be consulted and is available in the CPO's absence or in the case of an allegation against the CPO.

The Second Master holds a copy of the Devon Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures Handbook and the DfES documents *Working Together to Safeguard Children, Safeguarding Children in Education* and *What to do if you are worried a child is being abused*. These are also available on the internet at [www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk)

### **Child Protection requirements**

All teaching, domestic, and other staff should know what to do if they suspect that someone is being physically or sexually abused, or if someone tells them that this is happening. It is our professional responsibility to be alert to the threat of child abuse and to refer any suspicion of abuse to the CPO (The Second Master) or the Deputy CPO (The Senior Mistress). You should familiarise yourself with the procedures at Blundell's for dealing with a disclosure and the recording and referral of a suspected case.

Equally if you have any concerns about any school practices or the behaviour of colleagues which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm you have a responsibility to report it. The School will aim to provide immunity from retribution and no disciplinary action will be taken against staff for 'whistleblowing' in good faith.

Their Houseparents should also make senior pupils in positions of responsibility familiar with these guidelines

It is against the law not to report a case of child abuse to the statutory agencies. It is County Policy that all staff have the right to refer suspected cases of child abuse either to the Head Master or to the Area Education Officer if they feel the referral to the Child Protection Officer (CPO) has not been dealt with adequately. If staff have any concerns about the procedures that are being followed the designated Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) responsible for providing advice and monitoring cases can be contacted through tel: 0845 1110640.

Staff may also put concerns to the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) Tel : 08456 404040 or [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## **Procedures in a case of suspected abuse**

You may suspect a case of abuse from a variety of sources:

- i. A pupil discloses to you personally.
- ii. From behaviour of, or marks on, the pupil (e.g. bruises, welts, lacerations).
- iii. You ask the pupil if everything is all right and the pupil discloses abuse.
- iv. A pupil indicates through their schoolwork that they are being abused.
- v. A pupil tells you that he/she knows that another pupil is being abused.
- vi. A third party informs you that they know a pupil is being abused.

### **Dealing with a disclosure**

If a pupil starts to disclose abuse:

- Reassure the pupil that he/she is right to tell you, and is not to blame.
- Do not promise confidentiality, explain that you have to make sure the pupil is safe and may need to ask other adults to help you to do this. Tell them that you will only pass on information to the minimum number of people who must be told in order to ensure that the proper action is taken to sort the problem out.
- Do not interrogate the pupil or ask leading questions; let the pupil tell you what he/she wants to and no more; the pupil may have to disclose to a specialist later and too much detail now may interfere with later investigations.
- Do listen carefully. Where appropriate take notes during disclosure or write up immediately afterwards using the pupils own words.
- Take the child seriously, and try to remain calm and caring. Try not to allow your own feelings, such as shock or anger to surface.
- Do not attempt a detailed examination or remove a pupil's clothes to look further at an injury. Under no circumstances should photographs be taken of a pupil's injury. The pupil should only be examined by an appropriate doctor. If a pupil wants to show you his/her injuries, make sure that a colleague is with you as witness. Try to make sure that one of you is of the same sex as the pupil.
- Ask the informing pupil or adult what steps they would like taken to protect them now that they have made an allegation, and assure them that the school will try to follow their wishes. They have chosen you as someone whom they can trust so reassure them that you will personally take whatever steps you can to protect them from any retaliation or unnecessary stress. Make sure he/she feels secure.
- When the pupil is finished, explain what you are going to do next and make arrangements with the pupil to speak to them later.

### **Recording and referral**

- Immediately after the disclosure make an accurate handwritten record of what was said. Record as much as you can remember using the pupil's own words; write facts and information only - do not write opinion. Include the date and time of the interview, and sign them. Retain a copy, safely.

- Immediately and without delay inform the CPO or DCPO of what has happened. If CPO himself is the subject of allegation or suspicion, then the DCPO should be informed.
- Do not discuss what you suspect or have been told with other people.
- The CPO will usually seek to discuss the issue with the child, as appropriate to their age and understanding, and with their parents and seek their agreement to making a referral to social services unless the CPO considers that such a discussion would place the child at risk of significant harm.
- If the CPO is uncertain about the case they can without identifying the child in question, discuss their concerns with their peers or senior colleagues in other agencies.
- If a referral is necessary the CPO will inform the Head Master and will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer where appropriate, in accordance with Devon Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures.
- Any referral will be made within 24 hours in writing or with written confirmation of a telephoned referral within 48 hours.
- If the decision of the Children & Young Peoples' Services is that they do not need to take any further action, the matter will then be left in the hands of the Head Master.

### **Allegations of abuse made against members of staff, volunteers or the head.**

Children can be subjected to abuse by those who work with them in any and every setting. All allegations of abuse or maltreatment of children by a teacher or other member of staff must therefore be taken seriously and treated in accordance with consistent procedures.

**The criteria** in this area are not limited to allegations involving significant harm, or risk of significant harm, to a child. The following guidance will be followed in respect of any allegation that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

Teachers, other members of staff and volunteers should straight away report any concerns they may have about the behaviour of another member of staff to the Head Master or in his absence the Second Master. If the Head Master is the subject of the allegation or concern the Chairman of Governors should be contacted.

In dealing with any allegation of abuse made against a teacher or other member of staff it is essential that it is dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Once an allegation has been made against a member of staff the Head Master will need to make an urgent and immediate assessment of the allegation. If the allegation appears to meet the criteria above then the Head will need to inform the Local Authority Designated Officer and the guidance and procedures set out in the School's full policy *Dealing with allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff*, will ensue.