Child Protection Policy & Procedures

Recruitment & Training

The School practices safe recruitment in checking the suitability of all teaching and non-teaching staff including:

- part-time, temporary and supply staff;
- visiting staff (such as musicians and sports coaches); and
- contractors working regularly during term-time (such as contract catering staff)

(together to be called "Staff") with the Disclosure and Barring Service and compliance with the Independent School Standards Regulations before starting work.

All governors, volunteers and any adult family members of staff (16 yrs +) who live on site are also vetted.

All staff including temporary staff and volunteers receives statutory training at induction on his/her responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and bullying and on the procedures for recording and referring any concerns to the Designated Senior Leader or Headmaster. (All staff are required to read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, Department of Education, March 2015. All staff receive a copy of the schools child protection policy, staff code of conduct and identity of the DSL.) All staff attend a refresher training at least every three years in accordance with the requirements of the LSCB led by the Designated Senior Leader or his Deputies. Volunteer staff who work with children are made aware of the school’s arrangements. People with particular responsibilities in relation to child protection issues update their training at least every two years. The DSL is trained to Safeguarding Children Designated Person Level 3 as is Deputy DSL Andy Dix. The training ensures that the DSL:

- Understands the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments
- Has a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Ensures each member of staff has access to and understands the school's or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Is alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- Is able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals
- Obtains access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them

All members of Shiplake College staff are committed to:

1. Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern.
2. Providing all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, with the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
3. Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers (see Appendix 1).

4. Ensuring that all governors, staff and volunteers take all concerns and allegations of abuse seriously and respond appropriately, making a referral to children's services and in emergencies or if a crime may have been committed, the Police.

5. Providing an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected and feel confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to.

6. Providing suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties.

7. Using the curriculum to provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, assertiveness and decision making so that pupils have a range of contact and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.

8. Working with parents and pupils to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children, including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations.

9. Making children and parents aware of the existence of this Policy and the procedures in place.

10. Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the school's procedures and lines of communication.

11. Monitoring children and young people who have been identified as 'in need' including the need for protection and keeping separate confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals.

12. Developing effective supportive liaison with other agencies including contacting them within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse.

13. Following safer recruitment, selection and vetting procedures which are in accordance with the school's recruitment policy. Moya Flynn (HR) and Mr Neil Walne (Bursar) are currently trained in safer recruitment procedures.

Procedures

Purpose and aim of the procedures

The purpose of these procedures is to ensure that staff and volunteers have guidance on the procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a pupil may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm. These procedures apply to all Staff, governors and volunteers working or assisting at the School.

Designated Senior Leader

The Designated Senior Lead (DSL) is the Deputy Head Pastoral, Nick Brown and can be contacted on 0118 9405 230. He is the senior member of staff responsible for matters relating to child protection and welfare. Parents are welcome to contact the Deputy Headmaster if they have any concerns about the welfare of any child in the School, whether these concerns relate to their own child or any other. If preferred, parents may discuss concerns in private with the child's tutor or the Headmaster who will notify the Deputy Head in accordance with these procedures.

The Deputy Designated People are Mr Andy Dix, (0118 9405205) Ms Sarah Krause, (0118 970 4790) Mr Grant Lawson (0118 970 4791) and whose role is to support and report any to the Child Protection Officer. Mr Andy Dix will act as DSL in the absence of the Mr Nick Brown. The governor with responsibility for Safeguarding is Mr Ian Howell.

Training for these position holders is updated at least every two years by OSCB or a similarly recognised safeguarding agency.

The Designated Senior Leader is responsible for:

1. Co-ordinating the child protection action within the school.
2. Liaising with other agencies and professionals.
3. Ensuring that procedures are followed, including the reporting and referral processes.
4. Acting as a consultant for Staff to discuss concerns.
5. Making referrals as necessary.
6. Maintaining a confidential and secure recording system.
7. Ensuring that the School is appropriately represented at inter-agency meetings, in particular child protection case conferences.
8. Managing and monitoring the School's part in any child protection/care plans.
9. Organising and/or delivering the training/briefing of all Staff, as well as GAP assistants, and the prefect body.
10. Ensuring that when a pupil, who is on the Child Protection Register is the subject of a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) referral, leaves the School their information is transferred immediately to their new school and that the pupil's social worker is informed.

A Description of the Different Categories of Abuse

There are four areas that are specified as headings under which concerns may be identified:

**Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which 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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing
them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment 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, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Neglect:** 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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

In addition, the school recognises its responsibility in raising awareness of, and looking for signs of the following:

**Child Sexual Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly ‘consensual’ relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

**Female Genital Mutilation**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 16-17 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines referred to above. Staff should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children’s social care.

**Preventing Radicalisation**

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, which received Royal Assent on 12 February 2015, places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children’s services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (“the Prevent duty”). This guidance will be updated further to reflect the implications of the Prevent duty, which is expected to come into force later in 2015. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 will also place a duty on local authorities to ensure Channel panels are in place. The panel must include the local authority and chief officer of the local police. Panels will assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, following a referral from the police and where considered appropriate and necessary consent is obtained, arrange for support to be provided to those individuals. The Act will require partners of Channel panels to cooperate with the panel in the carrying out of its functions and with the police in undertaking the initial assessment as to whether a referral is appropriate. Schools and colleges which are required to have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education are listed in the Act as partners of the panel. The relevant provisions of the Act will come into force on 12 April 2015 but many local authorities already have Channel panels set up in their area.

**How to Recognise the Signs of Abuse**

It is the responsibility of the member of Staff, trustee or volunteer to recognise signs of abuse and to refer these concerns to the Child Protection Officer. All lists of signs and symptoms of child abuse should be treated with caution.

At times there will be straightforward explanations for injuries or behaviour. What is essential is that the member of Staff/trustee/volunteer shares his/her concerns with the Child Protection Officer.

Signs and symptoms to look out for:

1. Repeated minor injuries
2. Children who are dirty, smelly, poorly clothed or who appear underfed
3. Children who have lingering illnesses which are not attended to, deterioration in school work, or significant changes in behaviour, aggressive behaviour, severe tantrums
4. An air of ‘detachment’ or ‘don’t care’ attitude
5. Overly compliant behaviour
6. A ‘watchful attitude’
7. Sexually explicit behaviour (e.g. playing games and showing awareness which is inappropriate for the child’s age), continual open masturbation, aggressive and inappropriate sex play
8. A child who is reluctant to go home or is kept away from school for no apparent reason
9. A child who does not trust adults particularly those who are close
10. ‘Tummy pains’ with no medical reason
11. Eating problems including overeating and loss of appetite
12. Disturbed sleep, nightmares, bed wetting
13. Running away from home, suicide attempts
14. Self-inflicted wounds
15. Reverting to younger behaviour
16. Depression, withdrawal
17. Relationships between children and adults which are secretive and exclude others
18. Pregnancy

These signs are not evidence themselves but may be a warning, particularly if a child exhibits several of them or a pattern emerges. It is important to remember that there may be other explanations for a child showing such signs. Abuse is not easy to diagnose, even for experts.

How to Respond:

To signs or suspicions of abuse

Concerns, however mild, should be taken to the Designated Senior Leader (DSL) who will advise further action. In the absence of the DSL any concerns should be referred to the Headmaster.

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children’s social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If a referral is made, the DSL and Headmaster should be informed.

The DSL and the Headmaster will monitor and review the actions of each other.

The Designated Senior Leader (in conjunction with the Headmaster) will then take the appropriate steps.

To complaints of abuse

A member of Staff, trustee or volunteer suspecting or hearing a complaint of abuse should:

1. ensure the child is safe and, if in distress, cared for.
2. listen carefully to the child and keep an open mind. Let the child talk freely - don't interrupt. The member of Staff/trustee/volunteer should not take a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place.
3. not ask leading questions (i.e. a question which suggests its own answer). Keep questions open and to a minimum.
4. reassure the child but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. The member of Staff/trustee/volunteer should explain that the information will need to be passed to the DSL or Headmaster, who will need to ensure that the correct action is taken. Privacy and confidentiality should be respected, but if doing so leaves a child at risk of harm, the child’s safety has to come first.
5. keep a sufficient record of the conversation. The record should:
   1. include the date, time and place of the conversation
   2. include the essence of what was said and done by whom
   3. include and in whose presence.
   4. be signed by the person making it
   5. use names, not initials
   6. be kept securely and handed to the Designated Senior Leader or Headmaster as soon as possible.

6. follow the additional procedures set out below depending on whether the allegation is made against a member or Staff/trustee/volunteer or against a pupil.

To allegations of abuse against a member of Staff/trustee/volunteer

1. If a member of Staff, trustee or volunteer suspects, or is informed, about an allegation involving another member of Staff, trustee or volunteer, the School should not take action against the informer where he/she acted as a transmitter of information in good faith.
2. Any allegation against/involving a member of Staff/trustee/volunteer must be referred directly to the Headmaster.
3. In the instance of the allegation being made against the Designated Senior Leader the allegation must be reported directly to the Headmaster.
4. If the Headmaster is either absent or the subject of the allegation, this must be referred directly to the chairman of governors.
5. The Headmaster must inform the local authority’s designated officer (“LADO”) within one working day who will consult, if appropriate, with the Police and the Social Services.
6. The Headmaster will inform the Chairman of Governors.
7. The Headmaster and the LADO, in conjunction with the other agencies where appropriate, will discuss how to and who will inform the parents of the pupil(s) concerned.
8. The Headmaster must inform the member of Staff/trustee/volunteer who is the subject of any allegation as soon as possible after contacting the LADO – if other agencies are to be involved they need to be consulted about what information may be disclosed to
the member of Staff/trustee/volunteer.
9. The Headmaster should not interview or investigate in any way the member of Staff/trustee/volunteer implicated in the allegation.
10. If the member of Staff/trustee/volunteer is a member of a professional association or union they should be advised to contact that organisation at the outset.
11. The LADO will lead any investigation, usually in conjunction with the Police and/or Social Services.
12. All Staff need to be aware that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.
13. If the allegation concerns the Headmaster, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the chairman of governors without notifying the Headmaster first. The chairman of governors should then follow the above procedure.
14. In the event of an allegation against a member of Staff working with boarders and who is suspended pending an investigation that person will be moved into alternative accommodation away from children.
15. The School will report to the Independent Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) within one month of leaving the School, any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he/she is considered unsuitable to work with children. The School has a legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult; where the harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual; where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that individual has committed a listed relevant offence; and that individual has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left.
16. The School will also consider making a referral to the National College for Teaching and Learning (NCTL) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/her not resigned) under a prohibition order.
17. The DBS’s address is for referrals is PO Box 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA (telephone 01325 953795). Allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff will be dealt with according to the statutory guidance set out in part four of KCSIE.

To allegations of abuse against a pupil including abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil.

1. In the case of serious harm the police should be informed from the onset.
2. If a member of Staff, trustee or volunteer suspects, or is informed, about an allegation involving a pupil, the School should not take action against the informer where he or she acted as a transmitter of information in good faith.
3. The School will, as soon as reasonably practicable, notify the parents of a pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made of the fact that an allegation has been made but not the detail of that allegation and will give the parents the option for the child to be temporarily removed from the School premises while investigations into the allegation are underway.
4. In the case of a pupil who cannot be temporarily be removed from the School premises (e.g. because his/her parents are abroad and it is not possible for the pupil to stay with friends/relatives in the UK), the School may take such steps as the School, in its discretion, regards as appropriate during the investigation, including:
   1. whether the pupil should be secluded from lessons and/or House accommodation;
   2. what means of communication should be made available to the pupil, e.g. telephone, mobile phone, email and internet.
5. The School will take advice from the LADO regarding the allegation and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved including the pupil accused of abuse.
6. A pupil may be suspended from the School during the investigation and the School’s policies on behaviour (Behaviour – Code of Conduct and Behaviour – Discipline and Rewards – see staff handbook) will apply. For any suspected bullying concerns please refer to guidance in schools anti-bullying policy in the staff handbook.
7. If the School elects to suspend a pupil whose parents are abroad the pupil’s Education Guardian will be requested to provide support to the pupil and to accommodate him/her during the investigation.
8. If it is necessary for a pupil to be interviewed by the Police in relation to allegations of abuse the School will ensure that, taking into account the advice of the LADO, parents are informed as soon as possible and that the pupil is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult.
9. Where the abuse by one or more pupils occurs in the form of bullying, the school will follow the Anti Bullying Policy.

To allegations of abuse against someone not working or assisting at the School

A member of Staff/trustee/volunteer who suspects that a pupil is suffering harm from outside the School should seek information from the child with tact and sympathy using “open” and not leading questions. A sufficient record should be made of the conversation and it is important to report their concerns however mild they seem. The Designated Senior Lead will then, if appropriate, in consultation with the Headmaster or relevant Housemaster decide on the strategy forward.

Reporting and Recording

The member of Staff/trustee/volunteer reporting a concern will be asked to give a written account of the alleged incident. This will be kept as a record for possible future reference. It is understood that should a member of Staff/trustee/volunteer wish to share a worry, or need simple advice on how best to deal with an incident, it is important to report their concerns however mild they seem. The Designated Senior Lead will then, if appropriate, in consultation with the Headmaster or relevant Housemaster decide on the strategy forward.

1. Report to the Designated Senior Leader or the Deputy DSL in his absence, as soon as practicable.
2. Record the date and time of the disclosure and put into some context how the child came to tell you what has happened/is happening.
3. Record verbatim what the child said, as soon as possible after the disclosure, keep the recording factual and objective.
4. Where there is visible bruising/injury, describe what you have seen and where on the child’s body. Do not ask children to remove clothing.
5. Describe your observations of the child, describing their emotional state and behaviour.
6. All information is confidential and once passed onto the DSL there is no right to further knowledge.
7. The Designated Senior Leader will report the disclosure or allegations to the Oxfordshire County Council’s Schools Safeguarding Team within 24 hours.
8. All information, including the above and details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved together with a note of any action taken and decisions reached, should be kept on a person's confidential personnel file and a copy provided to the person concerned (only after any investigation has been concluded).

9. The record should be retained at least until the person has reached normal retirement age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

All confidential issues relating to children and young people should be dealt with on a need to know basis. Therefore only information relevant for a particular purpose should be passed on to the recipient, who in turn may not pass this information onto another individual, without consulting the informant.

If a child does not consent to the disclosure of information, then the Designated Senior Leader can override the duty of confidentiality in order to safeguard the welfare of the child.

Only relevant members of Staff need to know the details of concerns relating to a child in need i.e. the Designated Senior Leader, Housemaster, medical staff and anyone involved in monitoring particular aspects of a child's behaviour.

Remember that instead of disclosing information unnecessarily, it is fine to say to the child that "a concern has been raised and it is being dealt with following the School's procedures." In general, we believe that parents should be informed about any concerns regarding their children. It is important that we are honest and open in our dealings with parents. However, concerns of this nature must be referred to the CPO or the Head who will decide on the appropriate response. In a very few cases, it may not be right to inform them of our concerns immediately as such action could prejudice any investigation, or place the child at further risk. In such cases, advice will be sought from the LADO.

Actions taken by School following a report of abuse

On receiving a report of abuse, the School (DSL) will contact the LADO within 24 hours and in consultation with him shall take appropriate steps, subject to:

1. ensuring the safety and welfare of the pupil(s) concerned; and
2. the need for a full and fair investigation.

There may be circumstances when the DSL will need to consult the LADO, the Police and/or the Headmaster before informing parents.

Monitoring

The Designated Senior Leader and relevant Housemaster will set a timescale for monitoring a child about whom a concern has been expressed (approximately half a term or 6–8 weeks). If no indicators are found or appear to develop, the monitoring will cease. If indicators and concerns continue, appropriate action will be taken and recorded. The Designated Senior Leader will also liaise with outside agencies as required.

As part of good practice, parents/carers should be advised that their child is to be monitored and involved in the process as much as possible. When a pupil on the Child Protection Register leaves the School their information will be transferred immediately to their new school and their social worker will also be informed.

Roles and Responsibilities of the School

The School is responsible for ensuring that all action taken is in line with Oxfordshire County Council's Safeguarding Children Procedure. The main role of the School in this procedure is to contribute to the identification, referral and assessment of children in need, including those who may have suffered, those who may be suffering and those who are at risk of suffering significant harm. The School may also have a role to play in the provision of service to Children in Need and their families.

All adults in School have a role to play:
- Protecting children from abuse
- Promoting the welfare of children
- Preventing children from being harmed

In situations where there are child protection concerns the role of the School is NOT to investigate but to recognise and refer.

Bullying

Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable and the school keeps a record of any incidents. Please see our school policy on anti-bullying for further details.

Complaints Procedure

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about our School but copies of the School's complaints procedures (Parental Complaints Procedures and Complaints Procedures) are available on the School website or on request from the School office.

Important Contact Numbers

Oxfordshire County Council’s Schools Safeguarding Team
• Barry Armstrong 01865 815 956 (Local Authority Designated Officer) (Barry.armstrong@oxfordshire.gov.uk)
• Alison Beasley 01865 323 457
• Out of Hours 0800 833 408

Oxfordshire County Council’s Locality Coordinator
• James Carter 01865 328 400

OSCB - Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board

Police Child abuse investigation Unit 01865 335 200

Ofsted
• Children’s services 0300 123 123 1 enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
• Complaints 0300 123 4666 (http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-parents-and-carers/how-complain)

NSPCC
• Helpline 0808 800 5000

Childline
• Helpline 0800 1111