

# WREKIN COLLEGE

## CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

This policy is in line with Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Board (SCB) – Child Protection Procedures 2009, which are reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis.

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Protecting children is not the sole responsibility of one person or organisation but of us all.

Professionals must combine an open-minded attitude with decisive action, when alleged concerns about a child are clearly indicated.

The Governors and Staff of Wrekin recognise the contribution they make to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff have a full and active part to play in protecting our students from harm.

All staff must be conversant with this policy and the Child Protection Procedures document.

### CONTEXT

“Section 11 of the Children Act and section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places duties on organisations to ensure that their functions are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children” taken from HM Government [“Working Together to Safeguard Children” Chapter 2 2006](#).

**Safeguarding:** the ‘process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully’. [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006](#). HM Government.

### INTRODUCTION

- The protection of children is the responsibility of everyone. Primary responsibility for the care and protection of children rests with parents, but a range of services is available to help them in this task. Many referrals to agencies are made by parents seeking help for themselves. Relatives, friends and neighbours may also directly, (or encourage families to, seek) help or alert statutory authorities to children about whom they are concerned. All agencies with staff who are in direct contact with children and families must be involved.

For avoidance of doubt the role of governing bodies of maintained schools and non maintained special schools is set out in paragraph 2.18 page 14, [“Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education”](#), effective from January 1 2007. This guidance coupled with [“Working Together to Safeguard Children” 2006 Chapter 2, 2.12 page 66](#) is the blueprint for all inter agency working and should be available and accessible to all those responsible for children’s welfare. This policy reflects this guidance with the DCSF Status [“Statutory/strongly recommended”](#) these can be viewed at; [www.teachernet.gov.uk/childprotection](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/childprotection)

- The safety and protection of all children is of paramount importance to all those involved in Education. (Children Act 1989)
- Children can develop a special and close relationship with the School community and view them as significant and trustworthy adults. For the purpose of these policies and for avoidance of doubt, the School community includes all those that work at the School (teachers, support staff and governors) and parents and volunteers that play an active role regularly at the School.
- All of the School community believe that our School should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.
- It is not surprising therefore that a child, if they have been abused, may confide or disclose to a teacher or another member of staff.
- School staff are also in a unique position to notice any change in demeanour or circumstances, or notice injuries, marks or bruises when children are doing PE, games or swimming, which might indicate a child has been abused.

## THE POLICY

1. Life at Wrekin is based upon mutual respect; consideration of others and of self have equal value and the promotion of happiness and contentment for all members of the community is reliant upon ensuring that it is provided for each individual child and adult within the School.
2. Child protection is rooted in ensuring that the School organisation, its activities, staffing and procedures are aimed at providing an environment in which young people feel secure and happy and in which their individual needs are met.
3. We practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
4. We endeavour to raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
5. Child protection will have the highest priority in the School and as a minimum we will protect young people from physical, sexual or emotional abuse and ensure that they are not neglected.
6. We will also provide a range of opportunities and levels of support to enable each young person to express any fears, concerns or worries that they have either within or in the home environment.
7. We will support students who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.

8. If a young person expresses fears, concerns or worries or makes a disclosure these will be taken seriously and the child protection procedures will be sensitively instigated, always ensuring that the security, safety, happiness and well being of the young person remains the paramount consideration.
9. We will work appropriately with each child, their family and other agencies to protect in all cases the welfare of the child.
10. Our role is to refer with the information received and under no circumstances become the investigator.
11. We also work to the Safeguarding Children Board procedures for all staff who work with children, where allegations may be made by a child/adult of abuse in any form. All staff will adhere to the procedures drawn up by the Board in line with national guidelines and supported by the SCB managing allegations against those working with children, where this is managed by the SCB through the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The process for managing allegations can be viewed at [www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk](http://www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk)
12. The School will maintain a register of child protection issues and confidential files on individual children known to be, or suspected of, being at risk.

## STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS

Wrekin's policy is to follow Government legislative guidelines on child protection. This is contained in the following references, copies of which are kept within the School:

- o Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education.
- o Child Protection – Essential guidance from the local Child Protection Committee – Shropshire.
- o “Working Together To Safeguard Children” (Dept of Health, Home Office and DfES 1999 – revised 2006)
- o DfES/0027/2004 Safeguarding Children in Education
- o National Care Standards Commission – Minimum Standards No.3
- o The Welfare of Children in Boarding Schools (Social Services Inspectorate)
- o The Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations, Vol 4, Residential Care (Department of Health.)
- o The Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations, Vol 5, Independent Schools (Department of Health)
- o Working Together for the Protection of Children from Abuse, WO Circular 26/88
- o Working Together for the Protection of Children from Abuse: Procedures within the Education Service, DfES Circular 4/88, WO Circular 25/88

By following the guidance outlined above the School shows a commitment to good inter-agency co-operation and fully supports the sentiments and actions included in ‘Working Together’

In addition the School subscribes to 'Protecting Children Update'; a copy of which is kept in the Staff Common Room.

Wrekin's Child Protection Procedures are based upon the Procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the DCSF.

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

### Headteacher and Governors

- The Headteacher and Governors are committed to working together to create and maintain a safe learning environment for the children and young people attending the School.
- The Headteacher and Governors will follow the specific guidance as set out in paragraph 2.12 of '[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006](#)' and will ensure that:
  - clear arrangements are in place to encourage, facilitate and support the reporting of child welfare concerns, including instances where students are missing from School
  - a Designated Person is available at all times whilst students are under direct supervision of School staff
  - provision is made for appropriate training, induction, support and supervision for Designated Persons and other members of the School's community and workforce
  - the School works with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and appropriate partner agencies proactively to safeguard students
  - records relating to safeguarding are kept safely and shared appropriately
  - appropriate safeguarding policies are adopted, monitored and evaluated which will include areas such as:
    - child protection
    - bullying, harassment and discrimination
    - use of force and restraint and behaviour management
    - health and safety including use of equipment and provision of first aid
    - use of the internet and social networking sites
    - school trips, placements, outdoor activities
    - drugs and substance misuse
  - the School premises are safe
  - appointments to staff positions and other roles within the School community are made following the safer recruitment guidance issued by the DCSF and all appropriate vetting checks have been completed (see safer recruitment section)
  - safer recruitment training, as designated by the National College for School Leadership, has been completed by appropriate members of selection panels (see safer recruitment section)

- the School's single central record of recruitment and vetting checks covering all staff and others identified by the School as having regular contact with children is kept up-to-date in line with Ofsted requirements
- the identity of visitors to the School is checked, a record made in the visitors book and that visitors are not left unsupervised within the School

## THE DESIGNATED PERSONS

The Designated Persons for child protection are:

Mrs Elaine Moore: Governor responsible for child protection

Mrs Stella Clarke: Deputy Head (Pastoral) – Senior Designated Person

Mr Stephen Hield: Senior Teacher

## RESPONSIBILITIES

- To ensure that they have received child protection training with refresher training at TWO yearly intervals – due on or before November 2011.
- To ensure that whole School child protection training is made available to all staff. Refresher training for teaching staff is at THREE yearly intervals – due on or before Lent 2012. Refresher training for support staff is at THREE yearly intervals – due on or before Lent 2010.
- To make known to the whole School community the location of the SCB website address [www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk](http://www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk) where the policies & procedures are on view; these are regularly reviewed and updated by the SCB.
- To have direct referral links with the [Social Care Safeguarding Team Helpdesk at The Mount in Wellington 01952 385700](#). For avoidance of doubt the Designated Person(s) should be the point of contact with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse. A formal written referral should not delay a verbal discussion so that immediate action can be taken if necessary. However, any referral should be confirmed in writing within 48 hours.
- To make it clear to all staff that if the Designated Person (s) or someone from the Senior Management Team is not available, then this should not delay in sharing any concerns about a child to the Social Care Safeguarding Team at The Mount.
- The Senior Designated Person (Mrs Stella Clarke – Deputy Head – Pastoral) keeps all written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to **make an immediate referral for action; this will include any e technology use issues that may cause indirect abuse to a child.**
- The Senior Designated Person will ensure that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from student records, ensuring that an indication of further record keeping in terms of child protection is marked on the students records.

- To ensure that they or a senior colleague are available to attend any Strategy/Resolution/Conference/Professionals or Planning Meetings as deemed necessary in the remit of child protection.
- To ensure that information regarding any student currently on a Child Protection Plan and deemed “at risk”, who is absent without explanation for two days, is shared with Children’s Services Social Care Safeguarding Team.

## THE STAFF

- All those in the School community, including supply teachers, visiting professionals working with students in the School (e.g. counsellor, Independent Listener) and those supporting School visits, are informed of the name of the Designated Person(s) and the School’s procedures for protecting children, for example, how to report their concerns, suspicions and how to receive, record and report disclosures:
  - during their first induction to the School
  - through a copy of this policy
- All staff need to be alert to signs of abuse. They should report any concerns or suspicions if not immediately, as soon as possible, that day to the Designated Person(s). If in doubt they should talk with the Designated Person(s), delay is unacceptable.
- We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All of the School community should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues. Unacceptable standards, conduct or behaviour should be challenged appropriately at the outset, and will not be tolerated.
- Provision to view the SCB website should be made accessible to all staff.

## DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

The needs and rights of children fall into the following main categories:

- The need for physical care and protection from preventable harm.
- The opportunity for physical and mental growth.
- The need for love and security and the opportunity to relate positively to others.
- The need for new experiences and help in relating to their environment by the way of organising and mastering age appropriate levels of responsibility.
- The need for intellectual development.

A parent must be able to meet these needs or help their child by ensuring they are otherwise met.

A child may be considered to be abused, or at risk of abuse, by its parents/carers when those basic needs are not being met. Careful professional and legal assessment are essential in determining when a child's needs are not being met to such an extent that it constitutes abuse.

## CATEGORIES OF CHILD ABUSE.

Child abuse can take many forms but they are usually divided into four categories:

- ❖ physical injury
- ❖ neglect
- ❖ sexual abuse
- ❖ emotional abuse

Physical Injury.

This can range from over-chastisement, slapping with the hand, a belt, a stick or other object, to shaking, punching or throwing a child across a room.

Neglect.

This can range from ignoring a child's development needs to not feeding or clothing him/her adequately and not properly supervising him/her.

Sexual Abuse.

This involves a child or adolescent in sexual activities that she/he does not understand, cannot give consent to and which are not acceptable in our society. This includes inappropriate touching, obscene photography, child pornography, as well as attempted or actual sexual intercourse.

Emotional Abuse.

This ranges from rejecting a child, refusing to show love and affection, or making a child unhappy by continually belittling or verbally abusing him/her.

## RECOGNITION OF CHILD ABUSE – SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

The following is a list of signs and symptoms that may be consistent with abuse; some children can exhibit one or more of these signs for other reasons. If there are concerns about a child displaying any of these indicators the concern should be shared with the designated Child Protection Officer in the School.

# PHYSICAL ABUSE

## PHYSICAL INDICATORS

Unexpected bruises/welts/lacerations/abrasions:

- On face, lips, mouth
- On torso, back, buttocks, thighs
- In various stages of healing
- Clustering forming regular patterns
- Reflecting shape of article used, e.g. belt, buckle, electrical flex
- On several different surface areas
- Regularly appear after absence, weekend or holiday
- Bite marks or fingernail marks.

Unexplained burns:

- Cigar or cigarette burns especially on soles, buttocks, palms or back
- 'Immersion' burns, where hands, feet or body have been forcibly immersed in very hot water
- Patterns like electrical burner, iron etc
- Rope burns on arms, legs, neck or torso

Unexplained fractures:

- To skull, nose, facial structure
- In various stages of healing

## BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Flinching when approached or touched
- Reluctance to change clothes for PE lessons
- Wary of adult contacts
- Difficult to comfort
- Apprehension when other children cry
- Crying/ irritability
- Frightened of parents
- Afraid to go home
- Rebelliousness in adolescence
- Reported injury caused by parents
- Behavioural extremes - aggressiveness, withdrawal, impulsiveness
- Regression or child-like behaviour
- Apathy
- Depression
- Poor peer relationships
- Panic in response to pain

## NEGLECT

### PHYSICAL INDICATORS

- Consistent hunger
- Poor hygiene
- Inappropriate dress
- Consistent lack of supervision, especially in dangerous activities for long periods
- Unattended physical problems or medical needs
- Abandonment

### BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Begging
- Stealing food
- Constant fatigue, listlessness
- Poor relationships with care-giver
- Frequent delays in picking child up from playground

## SEXUAL ABUSE

### PHYSICAL INDICATORS

- Difficulty in walking, sitting down
- Stained or bloody underclothing
- Pain or itching in genital area
- Bruising, bleeding, injury to external genitalia, vaginal and/or anal areas
- Vaginal discharge
- Bed-wetting
- Excessive crying
- Sickness

### BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Inappropriate sexual behaviour or knowledge for the child's age
- Promiscuity
- Sudden change in behaviour
- Running away from home
- Wary of adults
- Feeling different from other children
- Unusual avoidance of touch
- Reporting of assault
- Substance abuse (e.g. glue sniffing)
- Emotional withdrawal through lack of trust in adults
- Over-compliance with requests of others
- Frequent complaints of unexplained abdominal pains
- Eating problems
- Sleep disturbances
- Poor peer relationships
- Possessing money or 'gifts' that cannot be adequately accounted for

- Inappropriately sexually explicit drawings or stories
- Enuresis or soiling, especially at the end of the day
- Frequent non-attendance at School
- Avoidance of medical appointments

## EMOTIONAL ABUSE

### PHYSICAL INDICATORS

- Failure to thrive
- Delays in physical development or progress

### BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Sucking, biting, rocking
- Anti-social, destructive
- Sleep disorders, inhibition of play
- Complaint, passive, aggressive, demanding
- Inappropriately adult or infant
- Impairment of intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development

## INDICATIONS OF ABUSE IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE DISABILITIES/MEDICAL NEEDS.

Whilst any of the above indicators may identify that abuse is occurring or has occurred, some of them may have other causes. This is particularly important when students have social and communication problems associated with autism or specific medical problems. Some young people display specific indicators of abuse at all times and where these have been shown not to be as a result of abuse it is important to monitor any changes in a child's behaviour, physical condition, emotional state and sociability. Such changes may themselves indicate that abuse is taking place.

Staff should read individual student files to familiarise themselves with medical conditions that can present the same symptoms as abuse.

Because such judgements often require sophisticated knowledge and understanding all staff must err on the side of caution. It is better to discuss a hundred cases where no abuse is occurring than to miss one case because a wrong assumption has been made. If there is any worry or concern about a child it must be discussed with senior staff.

### **Children leaving the School**

The School will ensure that the new school receives all the necessary information relating to that child.

The School will inform the Education Welfare Office when a child of compulsory school age leaves the School. Tel: 01952 385225 (Sue Simcox)

## Safer Recruitment

- The Government is currently consulting on making safer recruitment training a requirement from 1 January 2010. The proposal is that from this date, at least 1 person involved in interviewing an applicant for a post of Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Teacher or member of the whole school support staff must have completed the safer recruitment training developed by the DCSF/NCSL. This will be part of our policy on child protection.
- All staff working in the School community will be subject to enhanced CRB checks and registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) upon its inception of registration requirements. Reference to this process can be viewed at: [www.isa-gov.org.uk](http://www.isa-gov.org.uk)

## Useful Telephone Numbers

Mrs Elaine Moore: Governor with responsibility for Child Protection matters. Contactable through School.

Mrs Stella Clarke: Senior Designated Person. Tel: 01952 265600 (S), 01952 265685 (H), 07811 560504 (M)

Mr Stephen Hield: Designated Person. Contactable through School.

Mark Turner: Principal Officer Child Protection (Schools & Early Years). Tel: 01952 250421

David Goss: Principal Officer Child Protection. Tel: 01952 250421

Anne Cole: Safeguarding Advisory Service Manager. Tel: 01952 250421

Jane Weaving: Integrating Children and Young People's Services Manager (ISM Wellington). Tel: 07973 454572 or 01952 385576

## Useful Websites:

[www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk](http://www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk)

[www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)

[www.dcsf.gov.uk](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk)

Copies of the following are available in the Deputy Head's office for staff perusal:

DFES/OO27/2004 Safeguarding Children in Education

Working together to Safeguard Children - HM Government 1999 (revised 2006)

What to do If You are Worried a Child is Being Abused. HM Government 2006

Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults Working with Children and Young People in Education Settings – guidance document originally commissioned by DCSF (formerly DFES)

Related Policies and Procedures:

- Child Protection Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy and Procedures
- First Aid Policy
- Health Promotion Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure
- Self-harm Policy
- Controlled Drugs Policy
- Rewards and Sanctions Policy
- Permissible Sanctions Policy
- Use of Physical Intervention Policy
- Confidentiality of Information Policy
- Prefects' Policy
- Policy and Procedure in the event of a student going missing
- Procedure for Conducting Interviews
- Policy for Whistleblowing Procedures
- Complaints Procedure
- Recruitment Policy and Procedure

This policy is published on our website.

**COMMITMENT TO REVIEW**

This policy will be flexible to change and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to reflect where there are any changes in Government Legislation or any changes in the duty of statutory agencies in Child Protection and the wider Safeguarding agenda. If it is not appropriate to refine the policy during the year, then the Senior Designated Person for Child Protection will do this as a matter of course on a yearly basis.

SEC: Updated October 2009

**WREKIN COLLEGE**  
**STATEMENT ON SELF-HARM**  
(This policy applies to all students)

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Professionals must combine an open-minded attitude to alleged concerns about a child with decisive action when this is clearly indicated.

We believe that students involved in self-harm (e.g. cutting, anorexia, bulimia etc) are indulging in dangerous behaviour that we need to address in School.

All staff must be conversant with the Child Protection Policy and the Child Protection Procedures document.

#### **SELF-HARM – THE FACTS**

- The UK has the highest self-harm rates in Europe.
- One in ten teenagers deliberately hurt themselves and 24,000 are admitted to hospital each year.
- Four times more girls than boys end up in A&E after trying to harm themselves.
- Many young people who self-harm drink excessive amounts of alcohol.
- Many young people who self-harm report having difficult or abusive relationships, in most cases with their parents.
- The experience of bullying has been reported to be a problem that leads to self-harm, particularly for girls.
- Many young people who have been admitted to hospital following self-harm are discharged without any specialised follow-up.
- Self-harm rarely occurs as a 'one off' experience.
- Half the young people who commit suicide are known to have harmed themselves at least once in the previous year.

Source: Protecting Children Update May 2004

#### **SELF-HARM: THE POLICY**

Where staff suspect a child or young person is harming himself or herself they should operate Child Protection procedures.

Related Policies and Procedures:

- Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Anti-Bullying Policy and procedure

## WREKIN COLLEGE CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

(This procedure applies to all staff including support staff)

This procedure is in line with Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Board (SCB) – Child Protection Procedures 2009, which are reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis.

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### REPORTING TO THE DESIGNATED PERSON

Any concern must be discussed with Mrs Stella Clarke, the Senior Designated Person or, in her absence, Stephen Hield or another member of the SMT, as soon as possible, no later than the end of the morning or afternoon of that day.

### DISCLOSURE – IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO THE CHILD

It is vital that our actions do not cause further distress to the child or prejudice an investigation.

If a child starts to disclose abuse: -

- Re-assure the child that she/he is right to tell and is not to blame
- Listen to the child, if you are shocked by what is being said, try not to show it.
- Do not promise not to tell anyone else; explain that you have to make sure the child is safe and may need to ask other adults to help you to do this.
- It is important that you do not make promises that you cannot keep such as 'I'll stay with you all the time' or 'it will be all right now'.

**NO MEMBER OF STAFF SHOULD OFFER ANY CHILD CONFIDENTIALITY IN MATTERS WHICH COULD OR HAVE AFFECTED THE CHILDS PHYSICAL, SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL OR SEXUAL WELLBEING.**

- Do not interrogate the child in case you make their evidence inadmissible in court. It is our role to listen not to investigate.
- The pace should be dictated by the child.
- Let him/her tell you what she/he wants to and no more; she/he may need to disclose to a specialist later and too much detail given early may interfere with later investigations.
- Use open questions such as 'is there anything else you want to tell me?' or 'yes?' or 'and?'
- Accept what the child says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking 'why didn't you tell me this before?'

- Do not criticise the perpetrator, the child may have warm feelings for them, but merely wishes any abuse to stop.
- It is fine to observe bruises but do not ask a child to remove their clothing to observe them.

Having made this point it is important to ensure that students who have learning difficulties, communication or emotional problems are provided every opportunity and means to express themselves and to do so in a framework characterised by security and support.

- When she/he has finished make sure she/he feels secure; explain what you are going to do next.

Obtain a Child Protection Concern form from the Staff Common Room and complete it. This will enable you to write a full account of what the child has disclosed and will ensure that further action can be swift and based upon fact. Attach any relevant handwritten notes. See below: Recording Information.

## **ACTION FOLLOWING DISCLOSURE**

On completing the Incident Form, or immediately before completing it, inform the Senior Designated Person – Mrs Stella Clarke or, in her absence, Stephen Hield or another member of the SMT, as soon as possible, no later than the end of the morning or afternoon of that day.

The Incident Form should be handed to the Designated Person or placed in a sealed envelope, marked “URGENT” for her/his attention, and given into the School Office.

## **DO NOT DISCUSS THE DISCLOSURE WITH ANYONE.**

The Designated Person will take the following action:

- An internal meeting to which relevant staff will be invited will be convened by the Designated Person and a decision taken whether or not to
  - a) seek further advice or information
  - b) refer to Social Services for advice

In the event of any serious incident or disclosure Social Services will be informed immediately (within 24 hours). Ofsted will also be involved.

- A detailed record of all relevant details will be kept by the Senior Designated Person in a secure place.

Relevant staff including the member of staff to whom disclosure was made will be informed of the action taken by the Designated Person.

Parents of a child who has made a disclosure may be contacted directly by Mrs Stella Clarke - Senior Designated Person or in her absence, Stephen Hield or another member of the SMT.

Staff must not discuss disclosures with parents unless specifically authorised to do so by the Designated Person.

**ANY DIFFICULT SITUATIONS MUST BE REFERRED TO THE DESIGNATED PERSON IMMEDIATELY.**

## RECORDING INFORMATION

Forms are available in the Staff Common Room to the right of the Child Protection Notice Board.

- Make some brief handwritten notes at the time or immediately afterwards. Record the date, time, place and context of disclosure or concern, recording facts and not assumptions or interpretation.
- Also record where you spoke with them and personal safety details such as 'I discussed the incident with the child in the Deputy Head's office with the door open' or justify if it were closed, but naming those who you told this to be the case. If alone, reason that rationale stating 'the child stated they would only confide in me if I was alone'.
- If you observe bruising or an injury try to record detail, e.g. 'right arm above elbow', 'bruise noticed on fleshy part of leg'.
- Note the non-verbal behaviour and the key words in the language used by the child (try not to translate into 'proper terms' ensuring that you use the child's own words). Body language should be noted to support any disclosure.
- It is important to retain on file signed original handwritten notes and pass them on to the Designated Person who may ask you to complete a Social Care Safeguarding Team referral form.

## SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND STAFF

### CHILDREN

- We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth and/or self blame.
- We will ensure that all children know there is an adult in the School whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty. We should not pry into a child's life but provide an environment in which the young people feel safe and secure and where they will have the maximum opportunity to speak freely about concerns and worries.
- In providing such a supportive environment students must understand that no member of staff can offer confidentiality that may lead to the protection of those who have been found guilty of abuse of any kind.
- Members of staff support students best if they themselves adopt high professional standards. Care needs to be taken about becoming over-familiar with the children and young people in

having conversations of types which could be misconstrued and by avoiding situations in which a child or young person is alone for long periods with a member of staff.

Staff should refer to the School's guidance around the School's code of professional practice.

- We recognise that the School may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have or who are at risk from harm. The School community will therefore establish an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn. We will ensure PSHE curriculum opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm.
- Our policy on bullying and racist incidents is set out in separate documents and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying or racism may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. These will be documented like all other incidents. Any bullying whether racist, emotional, physical, sexist, homophobic, cyber or in any other forms will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

## STAFF

- Staff (to whom the disclosure was made, who will be supporting the child and who might be attending, strategy and case conferences) would be able to liaise with the Designated Person, with the minimum number of people involved who have "a need-to-know basis" of detail.
- Of the staff not directly involved they will be informed on a "need to know basis".
- Staff may also need support either as a person who has received a disclosure or if an allegation has been made against them and subsequently needs investigation to conclusion. In both cases support should be offered.
- Staff should be advised to seek support from their Professional Association or Trade Union.
- The process of managing allegations against those who work with children can be viewed on the SCB website [www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk](http://www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk)

## CONFIDENTIALITY

All staff at Wrekin need to be aware of the following definition given to the term "confidential information" with respect to child protection.

'An obligation assumed by someone who receives information that she/he will only use it for some specified purpose and will not disclose it to others'.

- If abuse is suspected, information should be given directly to the Designated Person(s) for child protection or, in their absence, to another member of the Senior Management Team.
- The personal information about all families is regarded by those who work in this School as confidential. All staff need to be aware of the confidential nature of personal information and will aim to maintain this confidentiality in all areas of the School.
- Staff should understand they need know only enough to prepare them to act with sensitivity to a child and to refer concerns appropriately. It is inappropriate to provide all staff with detailed information about the child, the incident, the family and the consequent actions.
- Staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly investigating agencies.
- If a child 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 cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for the welfare of that child.
- Within that context, the child should however be reassured that this will be shared on a “need to know” basis. If conversations need to take place and confidentiality is paramount to welfare, then these conversations will be held in appropriate settings and away from any general areas, where that confidentiality may be compromised. Further details on information sharing can be viewed at [www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters)

Whilst adhering to the principle of limiting the spread of information to the minimum numbers of people, at Wrekin all staff closely involved with a child, for whom there are child protection concerns, should know about the child’s circumstances, as it may affect practical matters such as;

- Who meets the child from School ;
- Who gives permission to go on School outings and educational visits;
- Who attends parents’ evenings;
- Who should or should not share a room at the School or on a trip.

Boarding, teaching, support assistants, therapy and visiting medical staff may all attend child protection conferences where they are likely to hear detailed information about family circumstances and abusive incidents. They may also receive minutes that record these meetings. Particular care is necessary to maintain the confidentiality of such information whilst ensuring that the issues that may impact upon the child’s life are communicated to all relevant staff.

There is a need to agree the School’s definition of confidentiality and the responsibilities that being privy to such information brings. Staff, unless directly asked and supervised, should never raise with a child, information to which they have had access. The child’s or young person’s feelings should be paramount and many prefer staff not to know about traumatic events in their lives. The importance of discretion in the handling of such information cannot be over-stated. Any infringement of this policy, for example by inappropriate discussion in inappropriate settings or the sharing of confidential information for a purpose not sanctioned by the School, will be regarded as a serious breach of professional conduct and would lead to disciplinary action against the members of staff concerned.

## DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.

Staff will be told in their separate team or staff meetings of present child protection concerns that impact on their work. This will be the duty of the Senior Designated Person. Such updates will take place on a termly basis or as a new concern is identified.

Child protection issues will be on the agenda of at least one staff meeting per term.

Access to the detailed child protection files will be through the Senior Designated Person. Requests for access should be limited to those staff who have a direct involvement with the student and need to know more about the circumstances.

Should the School's designated recipient of reports themselves be subject to allegation or suspicion then the Headmaster will take over the role of the Senior Designated Person.

## PARENTS

- Parents play an important role in protecting their children from abuse. The School is required to consider the safety of the child and should a concern arise, professional advice will be sought prior to contacting parents. If deemed appropriate parents will be contacted, and the School will continue to work with the 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 children and has a duty to refer cases to Social Care in the interests of the child. A child protection statement is included in the School's Parent Pack.

## RECORD KEEPING

- All records are retained in a 'Child Protection' file, separate from the child's main file. This is locked away and only accessible to the Designated Persons.
- The present policy for record keeping is to chronologically record concerns on a confidential file, including details of dates, times, staff involved and action taken. These are handwritten. Handwritten notes are never discarded.
- Copies of e mail streams are also useful additions which can clearly document sequential action. Again, these would be used alongside handwritten notes and by no means be regarded as a substitute action. It is preferable not to name children in an e mail, but if they are then this should be password protected.
- The records are reviewed termly by the Senior Designated Person and checked to be chronological, tidy, legible and factual in content, as records may sometimes be immediately required by Professionals.

- Upon releasing records the School will request ID Badges for release.

## DISCLOSURES INVOLVING MEMBERS OF STAFF.

The School understands that a student may make an allegation of abuse against a member of staff.

If a student makes an allegation against a member of staff the procedure outlined above must be followed. In addition, note the following:

- No discussion with any other member of staff should take place.
- The child should not be questioned beyond establishing the points she/he wishes to make.
- The Headmaster (or in their absence the Deputy Head Pastoral) should be informed as soon as possible after the disclosure has been made.

If such an allegation is made:

- The member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headmaster.
- The Headmaster on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Senior Designated Person, the Deputy Head (Pastoral).
- The Headmaster will then discuss the content of the allegation with the Principal Officer Child Protection for Schools & Early Years, or in their absence the Safeguarding Advisory Service.
- If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headmaster, the Senior Designated Person, Deputy Head (Pastoral), will immediately inform the Chairman of Governors and she will consult with the Principal Officer for Schools & Early Years.
- If such an allegation is made, the member of staff subject to the allegation will be assigned a designated member of staff contact to support them through the process.
- Soon after the allegation is made, a decision will be taken as to whether a Joint Strategy Meeting needs to be convened to discuss the matter further.
- If it is decided at that meeting that an investigation should commence, this may be initially led by the Police and Social Services, prior to it being referred back to the Local Authority to investigate under agreed disciplinary procedures.

## WHISTLEBLOWING

- The School recognise that students cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

## DISCLOSURES INVOLVING OTHER STUDENTS.

1. If the disclosure involves another student the procedure outlined above must be followed.
2. Abuse by students in the School may be physical, sexual or emotional.

There will be a need to distinguish between actions that can be dealt with through normal disciplinary channels and those that constitute potential abuse where involvement of other statutory agencies is required.

The following guidelines are designed to help clarify the situation:

### PHYSICAL ABUSE

- A. A one-off small scale injury such as a bruise or mark on the skin following a disagreement between two students would not normally be regarded as abuse but would need to be recorded and dealt with through the disciplinary procedures currently applying.
- B. Systematic or regular physical injury sustained by a child from another who has not responded to normal disciplinary measures may constitute abuse and consideration would need to be given to see if implementation of the School's Child Protection procedures and/or the School's Exclusion Policy was warranted.
- C. Major physical injuries deliberately inflicted may involve immediate implementation of the Child Protection procedures as well as the temporary or permanent exclusion of the student who had inflicted the injuries. These situations would be decided after consultation with Social Services.

### SEXUAL ABUSE

- A. Any form of sexual contact in which one student has not given their consent constitutes abuse and the School's Child Protection procedures will be implemented.
- B. Where consent is given abuse may still occur if one or both of the students is under 16 or, in the case of homosexual acts, under 18.

- C. Sexual contact between students may not involve abuse but such contact in the School is forbidden if it involves the touching of the genitals.
- D. Abuse may still occur if students, irrespective of age, give their consent to engage in any sexual activity for which they have a limited capacity to make an informed choice.

#### EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- A. The systematic verbal bullying of one student by others can constitute abuse and has to be recognised as a serious matter. It will also be dealt with in accordance with the School's policy on bullying.

#### UNCONFIRMED WORRIES ABOUT POSSIBLE CHILD ABUSE

1. Very often staff have unconfirmed worries about students, but little real evidence, and so feel unsure about how to proceed. Many cases have shown that these unconfirmed worries are in fact the tip of the iceberg; that if information from one member of staff was placed alongside that of other professional then there may be a serious cause for concern.
2. It is therefore vital that even vague 'worries' are passed on at the earliest stage to the designated person (s) who are in a position to evaluate the information and to involve other agencies as appropriate.  
Incident sheets should be completed with staff clearly identifying what is fact and what is opinion.
3. Any unconfirmed worries should be recorded on an Incident Report Form. All incidents, suspicions or concerns should be recorded, dated and signed and passed on to the Senior Designated Person.

#### CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING

- All new members of staff will be given training and a copy of our child protection policy and procedures as part of their induction programme.
- The School's Designated Persons will show a commitment to their role by attending specialised courses at 2 yearly intervals – due on or before Nov 2011.
- Teaching Staff training at 3 yearly intervals – due on or before Lent 2012.
- Support Staff training at 3 yearly intervals – due on or before Lent 2010
- The Designated Persons are responsible for the briefing and training of all staff (teaching and support) with respect to Child Protection (Policy and Procedures).
- The Senior Designated Person, Mrs Stella Clarke, is responsible for briefing and training the School Prefects.
- The Senior Designated Person, Mrs Stella Clarke, is responsible for the Child Protection Policy and Child Protection Procedures document.

## CHILDREN LEAVING THE SCHOOL

The School will ensure that the new school receives all the necessary information relating to that child.

The School will inform the Education Welfare Office when a child of compulsory school age leaves the School. Tel: 01952 385225 (Sue Simcox)

## SAFER RECRUITMENT AND E SAFETY

- The Government is currently consulting on making safer recruitment training a requirement from 1 January 2010. The proposal is that from this date, at least 1 person involved in interviewing an applicant for a post of Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Teacher or member of the whole school support staff must have completed the safer recruitment training developed by the DCSF/NCSL. This will be part of our policy on child protection.
- All staff working in the School community will be subject to enhanced CRB checks and registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) upon its inception of registration requirements. Reference to this process can be viewed at: [www.isa.gov.org.uk](http://www.isa.gov.org.uk)
- Where appropriate, intervention will take place when anyone uses e-technology in an unacceptable fashion. Any monitoring software that is used within the School will be reviewed and checked regularly. On occasions unacceptable websites might be accessed inadvertently; if this occurs then this should be logged and reported to Senior Management and to the ICT Team. It is recognised at this School that all Information Technology, whether personal or work based, is a whole school issue and all staff has a duty to be vigilant. The Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board issued guidance "Raising Awareness in the Safe Use of ICT Systems" and "Use of Restraint in Schools" these are attached to assist staff to keep themselves safe.

## TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS IN SCHOOLS

- Recent good practice guidance from the Information Commissioners Office, on taking photographs in educational institutions will be followed. This is attached for information. In the interests of safeguarding a common sense approach on a case by case basis will be taken in this area. A full copy of the guidance can be viewed at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

FINALLY - FOLLOW THIS SIMPLE CODE.

- A. MAKE TIME FOR STUDENTS TO TALK
- B. LISTEN TO THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
- C. TAKE SERIOUSLY ANY DISCLOSURES AND RE-ASSURE THE STUDENT MAKING THEM
- D. RECORD INFORMATION
- E. REPORT INFORMATION
- F. DO NOT DISCUSS DISCLOSURES

Mrs Elaine Moore: Governor with responsibility for Child Protection matters. Contactable through School. Tel: 01952 265600

Mrs Stella Clarke: Senior Designated Person. Tel: 01952 265600 (S), 01952 265685 (H), 07811 560504 (M)

Mr Stephen Hield: Designated Person. Contactable through School.

Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board: Social Care Safeguarding Team Helpdesk at The Mount, Wellington, Telford. Tel: 01952 385700

Mark Turner: Principal Officer Child Protection (Schools & Early Years). Tel: 01952 250421

David Goss: Principal Officer Child Protection. Tel: 01952 250421

Anne Cole: Safeguarding Advisory Service Manager. Tel: 01952 250421

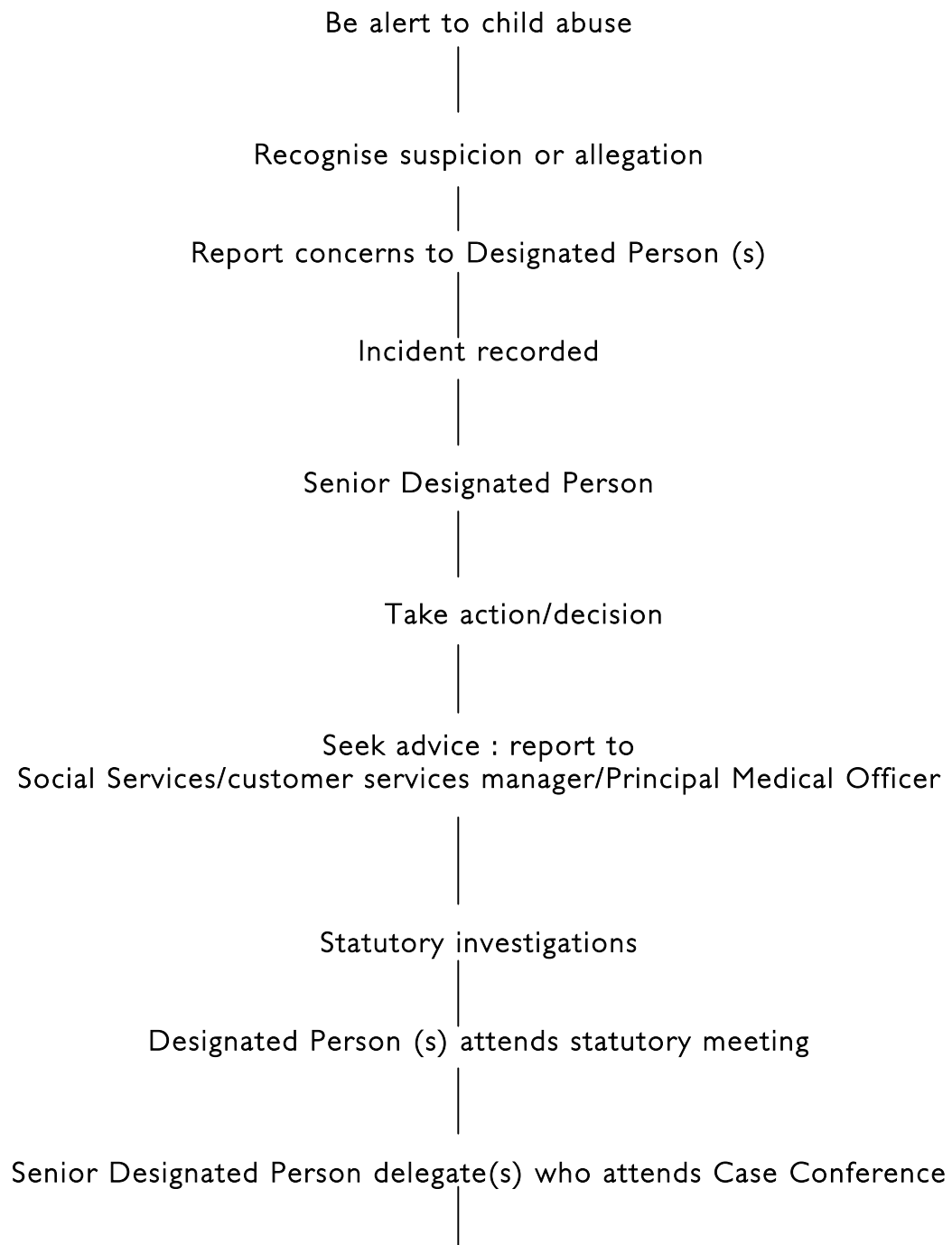
Jane Weaving: ISM Wellington. Tel: 07973 454572 or 01952 385576

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Child Protection Policy
- Health Promotion Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Anti-Bullying Procedure
- Permissible Sanctions Policy
- Rewards and Sanctions Policy
- Use of Physical Intervention Policy
- Confidentiality of Information Policy
- Prefects' Policy
- Policy in the event of a student going missing

- Conducting Interviews Procedure
- Policy for Whistleblowing Procedures
- Complaints Procedure
- Recruitment Policy and Procedure

## CHILD PROTECTION FLOW CHART.



Senior Designated Person and Head acts on resolution

SEC: Updated October 2009