

HIGHGATE SCHOOL

Policy on Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children (Child Protection Policy)

Advice and Guidance to staff on disclosures and reporting allegations are contained in the appendices to this policy and are also issued in summary form.

1 Introduction

The Governors, Headmaster, and staff of Highgate School fully recognise the contribution they must make to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. All staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting pupils from harm. We 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.

The aims of this Safeguarding Policy are:

- To support each child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence
- To raise the awareness of both teaching and support staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse;
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm; and to emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff, as between themselves and with senior management;
- To develop a structured procedure within the School which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse and to foster an environment and culture where those procedures will be readily invoked;
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the police and Social Services;
- To ensure that all adults within our School who have access to children have been subjected to the suitability checks required by the Criminal Records Bureau and Standard 4 of the Independent School Standards Regulations in respect of their suitability to work with children.

2 Legal Framework

Highgate School is aware of its obligation to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school as set out in Sections 157 and 175(2) of the Education Act 2002, and the statutory guidance documents, *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education* (1 January 2007), and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government, 2006). The School's safeguarding policy also applies to the EYFS. The Principal of the Pre-Preparatory School and her Deputy have safeguarding responsibilities within the EYFS setting and will liaise with the appropriate LSCB and Ofsted as appropriate. In line with national minimum standards, and consistent with the London Safeguarding Children Board procedures, the school has an appropriate policy on child protection and response to allegations or suspicions of abuse. The

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policy is known to staff, older pupils in positions of responsibility (as appropriate) and is made available to parents on request.

3 Procedures

Our child protection procedures and procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse are in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures. They are set out below.

3.1 Training

3.1.1 New staff

All new members of staff are provided with a copy of our child protection procedures as part of their induction into the school and attend child protection training. The training is provided either by senior staff who have attended appropriate training under the aegis of Haringey's Children's and Young People's Service, by this service's trainers, or by other appropriate training providers.

3.1.2 Designated teachers

In each section of the School we have a designated teacher (or teachers) in charge of child protection who undertake appropriate training and fulfil the function of a *Child Protection Officer*; see section 5. Support staff may report allegations or get advice from Ms Susy Prosser-Harries, who is the designated employee in respect of Safeguarding for the support staff.

3.1.3 On-going training

All full-time members of the teaching staff are given training (at whole school in-service training days) at least every three years in order to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and to know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse. A record of this training is kept by the School's Business and Safety Administrator and copies are available to the Designated Teachers.

Part-time teachers and volunteers are informed of the arrangements for child protection, including the procedure for reporting allegations. Part-time staff are required to attend in-service training in child protection every three years.

Teachers in positions of pastoral responsibility (eg Head Master, Housemasters, Assistant Heads, the Heads of Years 7 and 8, Senior Tutor - JS) attend training run by Haringey Children's and Young People's Service or other appropriate training providers. These teachers' training is updated every two years.

3.2.4 Support staff

All support staff are subject to police checks as part of the checks on their suitability to work with children. Training in child protection is provided for all employees, in addition to annual briefings at Foundation Meetings; support staff are required to attend training, along with

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teaching colleagues, in respect of the school's policy and procedures, including whistle-blowing and recognising abuse. For classroom assistants and technicians, who have unsupervised access to children, training appropriate to their particular work with children, is provided every three years, either by Haringey Children's and Young People's Service or an alternative and appropriate provider.

3.3 Informing parents

Parents are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures within information provided on joining the school. A copy of this policy is also made available to parents on request and this is explained in annual letters sent home to parents.

3.4 Safe recruitment

The School carries out all the required checks on staff in line with guidance laid down in *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*, a copy of which is available from the Head Master's Secretary or may be downloaded at www.everychildmatters.gov.uk or at www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications. The School's Recruitment and Appointments Policy gives details of the pre-employment checks undertaken by the School for the suitability of potential employees to work with children; this is also available from the Head Master's Secretary in response to legitimate safeguarding-related enquiries. The Head Master's Secretary also holds the list of senior staff who have completed NCSL Safer Recruitment Training.

3.4.1 Volunteers

Volunteers are provided with a copy of this policy (for which they must sign to indicate that they have received and read it) prior to undertaking any activity where they will have access to pupils (eg accompanying school trips) which highlights their responsibilities and the policy as it relates to them. The Designated Teacher will have regard to the guidance in *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education* (Section 4.56) in deciding whether a CRB Disclosure should be obtained in respect of a volunteer.

Parents (or guardians and carers) of pupils who receive foreign language exchange pupils are required to obtain a CRB Disclosure. Where criminal convictions are identified, these will be disclosed to the foreign school for onward transmission to the visiting family in advance of the exchange programme taking place. The School arranges for CRB disclosure, and warns parents of this obligation and intention to disclose any convictions when advertising for involvement in the exchange programme. More details on these requirements can be found in Appendix I of the School's Educational Visits Policy.

3.4.2 Other staff working with Highgate pupils

The School requires appropriate checks to be made on staff employed by other organizations working on the school site and likely to have unsupervised access to children. The School's Educational Visits Policy requires trip organizers to check with other organizations (eg residential centres, museums) to verify that their employees working with our pupils have undergone satisfactory checks on their suitability to work with children.

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3.5 Allegations against staff or volunteers

We are aware that a pupil or member of staff or a volunteer may make an allegation against a member of staff or a volunteer. All staff and volunteers must be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues or volunteers. ***If such an allegation is made, the member of staff or volunteer receiving the allegation will immediately inform, as appropriate, either the Head Master (or in his absence, the Principal Deputy Head), the Principal of the Junior School or the Principal of the Pre-Preparatory School.*** The Principal on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Head Master; he or his deputy will contact the LA Lead Officer for Child Protection. If the allegation made to a member of staff or volunteer concerns the Head Master or a Principal, the designated teacher will directly inform the Chair of Governors who will consult with the LA's Lead Officer for Child Protection. The School will follow the LSCB procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which is available in from the Head Master's Secretary. The Chair of Governors, John Mills, may be contacted through the Secretary to the Foundation, Mr JC Pheasant.

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3.6 Allegations of abuse and instances of abuse by one or more pupils against another

The school's Code of Conduct and Behaviour Policy makes clear the expectations on pupils of acceptable behaviour towards other pupils. Where a pupil (or a member of staff or a volunteer) makes an allegation about the behaviour of a pupil or pupils against another pupil, and this is deemed to be or could be deemed to be a form of abuse, the allegation must be reported to the Designated Teacher. S/he will take advice from the appropriate LADO in putting in place the measures necessary to safeguard the pupil; this may mean involving external agencies.

3.7 Review

Procedures are reviewed annually by the Foundation Management Committee at its first meeting of the Lent Term (and more frequently where necessary) and updated as required. The Principal Deputy Head reports annually to Governors at the end of the Lent Term (and more frequently where required) on child protection procedures. The Principal Deputy Head is responsible for ensuring that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay. Safeguarding and Welfare is a standing item on all major School committees and staff are encouraged to bring any matters of concern to the attention of the Principal Deputy Head without delay. The Principal Deputy Head will have termly meetings with senior pastoral staff where the Safeguarding and Welfare Policy will be reviewed and revised as necessary. The basis for, and nature of, any changes will be published to all staff, and parents or pupils as appropriate.

An annual audit is carried out by an external assessor of the effectiveness of training. The assessor reports directly to a Governor, Ms Rachel Langdale and to the Head Master.

4 Responsibilities

The legal responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children lies with the Governors who are responsible for policy. They undertake an annual review of the School's policies and procedures (in the Lent Term or more frequently as required; see 3.1 above) and consider how the School's duties have been discharged. The Head Master and the staff are responsible for implementation.

Schools are required to report to the Secretary of State, via the Children's Safeguarding Unit in Darlington, within one month of leaving the school any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or pupil) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children. In this context, ceasing to use a person's services includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed-term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation, and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering. It is important that reports include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. Failure to make a report constitutes an offence and the school may be removed from the DCSF register of independent schools. The relevant legislation is contained in the Education (Provision of Information by Independent Schools) (England) Regulations 2003.

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5 Designated Teachers ('Child Protection Officers')

The designated person with lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues and liaising with other agencies is the Principal Deputy Head of the Senior School (Mr Todd Lindsay). In each section of the School, the designated teacher has the status and authority within the school management structure to carry out the duties of the post. In the Senior School it is the Assistant Head (Professional): Mrs Jessica Morelle; in the Junior School it is the Deputy Principal, Mr Lewis; in the Pre-Preparatory School it is the Deputy Principal: Mrs Tineke Mardell, who, as the Designated Teacher in the Pre-Preparatory School, is the practitioner who also takes lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the Early Years Foundation Stage and liaison with the local statutory agencies, and for the support staff it is Ms Susy Prosser-Harries. Not only do all designated persons have child protection training but they have training in interagency working, which is updated every two years and provided by Haringey Children's and Young People's Service.

The designated teachers are responsible for:

- Adhering to the LSCB, LA and School procedures with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse;
- Keeping written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral;
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from general pupil records;
- Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records;
- Ensuring that any pupil currently on the child protection register who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to Social Services. *In such a case, where the child is not at morning registration, contact is made as soon as possible to find out what explanation is given for absence. Depending on the response received, a referral will be made more urgently.*

6 Supporting 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. In these circumstances a child may feel any of the following: helpless, humiliated, self blame. Our School will support all pupils by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying;
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school;
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children;
- Ensuring that children have access to a source of counselling, either at school or through an outside agency;
- Notifying Social Services as soon as there is a significant concern, after discussion with the Haringey Children's and Young People's Service or the appropriate LA for the pupil concerned.
- Providing continuing support to a pupil who leaves the School, about whom there have been concerns, by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school.
- Gaining assurance that the employees of any other organization supervising pupils on a different site have undergone the necessary checks

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7 Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential, in the sense that they must not be generally discussed. The Head Master or relevant designated teacher will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff only on a 'need to know' basis. All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies, through the defined school channels, in order to safeguard children. All staff must be aware that they cannot guarantee confidentiality to a child when listening to any disclosure since an issue may need to be referred on.

8 Supporting Staff

We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the designated teacher and to seek further support as appropriate.

9 Prevention

We recognise that the School plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are always listened to;
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty, highlighting the role of the Chaplain in particular, in this regard;
- Ensure that the children in the Senior School are aware that there are Peer Counsellors to whom they can turn, as an alternative to an adult;
- Promote the good use of mentoring by peers in the house and form system
- Include in the curriculum opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

Links with other policies:

10 Physical Intervention

Staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. Staff should refer to the policy on physical restraint. We understand that evidence of physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under safeguarding or disciplinary procedures. Detailed guidance is provided in Appendix 3 of the School's Behaviour Policy.

11 Bullying and racist incidents

Staff should understand that, in dealing with allegations or incidents of bullying, it may be necessary to invoke safeguarding procedures. Detailed guidance on bullying and racist incidents and the procedures to follow are provided in the School's Anti-Bullying Policy.

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12 Health & Safety

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

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Appendix I: Guidance to staff

In order that staff do not place themselves or pupils at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil, staff must take care to:

- Avoid all situations where they are on their own with a pupil unless necessary and, in such situations, ensure that there is easy sight of the classroom (no closed doors) and that there is another member of staff or support staff in the vicinity. Such an arrangement is not always practicable in the Senior School Library. The Head Master is aware of this and an email protocol exists between the librarians and the Principal Deputy Head to reduce any potential risk.
- The School Nurses also have due regard for Child Protection issues and take steps to minimize risk while still providing effective medical care for pupils.
- A senior member of staff should always know and approve the arrangements whereby one-to-one tuition or coaching takes place. Last-minute or informal arrangements for one-to-one tuition or coaching should be avoided.
- Avoid using a pupil's personal email address for electronic communication other than for the exchange of homework or messages relating to homework. It is good practice to copy in a senior member of staff (eg housemaster) if e-communication is used. It is good practice to keep email contact formal and professional.
- Not use or collect pupils' mobile telephone numbers and avoid using texts. It is good practice to use a school mobile to make contact with a pupil (eg on a trip or school outing) and to collect and use pupil numbers only in the context of a planned, risk assessed trip. Such an arrangement may also be utilised by the Capital Projects Managers for the duration of a pupil's employment on the Capital Projects Team but all communication will be work related and take place during normal working hours. Numbers should not be stored on a personal mobile and pupils should not have access to teachers' personal mobile numbers (housemasters and other pastoral leaders may keep confidential paper copies of telephone numbers).
- For additional guidance on the use of technology for communication between staff and pupils, see the intranet document "Child Protection: email and mobile phone communications" under Foundation Policies for Staff.
- Avoid giving lifts to pupils, particularly one-to-one, other than in an emergency when a senior member of staff should be informed.
- Ensure all out-of-school contact with pupils is authorised by their parents or guardians and/or a senior member of staff.
- Seek advice from a senior colleague if a pupil's need to speak to you seems out of the ordinary or makes you feel uncomfortable

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Appendix 2: Disclosures and reporting arrangements

In the event of a pupil discussing an allegation of abuse with a member of staff, it is important:

- not to promise absolute confidentiality in order to elicit disclosure or further disclosure. The pupil should be advised that the chosen member of staff will listen carefully; will take any complaint seriously; will have the pupil's welfare uppermost in mind and may need – in that context and using the proper channels - to discuss any disclosure or allegations made by the pupil with other professionals.
- not to ask leading questions if possible. Allow the pupil to speak freely, and clarify rather than lead. Clearly, the age of the child and his or her ability to relay events cogently will be relevant in assessing what should be asked and how it should be asked.
- not to require the pupil to repeat distressing details, allowing for the fact that disclosures of abuse are of their nature distressing;
- to write down the details of the disclosure at the time (including questions and answers, if possible) or immediately afterwards , if it is not practicable to do so contemporaneously.

In the event of a member of staff needing to report a disclosure or a suspicion of abuse, the Head Master (or the Principal of the Pre-Preparatory or Junior Schools) should be informed immediately or, in his absence, the Principal Deputy Head. It is important that any member of staff should feel able to bring any suspicions about any person (whether suspicions about another member of staff, for example, or a parent of a pupil) to the Head Master, Deputy Head or Principals of the Junior and/or Pre-Preparatory School. Highgate School underlines the importance of staff being able to voice concerns about any child's welfare and an "open door" policy is encouraged in this important respect by the Headmaster, the Principal of the Junior School, and the Principal of the Pre-Preparatory School.

The Head Master will usually take notes of the disclosure or suspicion and, having ascertained the facts of the allegation (if known), will consult the relevant LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) immediately or as soon as is practicable and certainly within 24 hours. He will not conduct an investigation until the LADO has advised him whether a referral is necessary.

In the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff, both the Head Master and the LADO will have regard to the child's safety and to the potential for damage to the reputation and career of the member of staff where the allegation proves false. In this context, it is imperative that all teachers understand the need for discretion and tact: gossip can inflame difficult and sensitive situations. Where a teacher is suspended pending an investigation, it must be understood that such a suspension is a neutral act and does not suppose guilt on the part of the suspended teacher.

Contact details for Haringey LSCB and Referral Team are provided on the aide-memoire (a useful wallet-sized fold-out card summarizing key information on policy and procedures in respect of Child Protection); staff need to remember that, while Highgate lies in Haringey, it may be necessary to report to another LA, depending on the nature of the disclosure and the location of the child's home.

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Appendix 3: Definitions and signs of abuse

Staff are provided with a guide to definitions and signs of abuse during their training, as follows:

Signs of Physical Abuse

Physical Indicators:

- Unexplained bruises and welts on the face, throat, upper arms, buttocks, thighs or lower back in unusual patterns or shapes which suggests the use of an instrument (belt buckle, electric cord) on an infant in various stages of healing that are seen after absences, weekends, or vacations.
- Unexplained burns, cigarette burns, especially burns found on palms, soles of feet, abdomen, buttocks; immersion burns producing "stocking" or "glove" marks on hands and feet; "doughnut shaped" on buttocks or genital area.
- Rope burns.
- Infected burns indicating delay in treatment; burns in the shape of common household utensils or appliances.

Behavioural Indicators:

- Behavioural extremes (withdrawal, aggression, regression, depression).
- Inappropriate or excessive fear of parent or caretaker.
- Antisocial behaviour such as substance abuse, truancy, running away, fear of going home.
- Unbelievable or inconsistent explanation for injuries.
- Lies unusually still while surveying surroundings (for infants).
- Unusual shyness, wariness of physical contact.

Signs of Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators:

- Torn, stained or bloody underclothes.
- Frequent, unexplained sore throats, yeast or urinary infections.
- Complaints about pain and irritation of the genitals.
- Sexually transmitted diseases.
- Bruises or bleeding from external genitalia, vagina or anal region.
- Pregnancy.

Behavioural Indicators:

- The victim's disclosure of sexual abuse.
- Regressive behaviours (thumb-sucking, bedwetting, fear of the dark).
- Promiscuity or seductive behaviours.
- Disturbed sleep patterns (recurrent nightmares).
- Unusual and age-inappropriate interest in sexual matters.
- Avoidance of undressing or wearing extra layers of clothes.
- Sudden decline in school performance, truancy.
- Difficulty in walking or sitting.

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Signs of Emotional Abuse

Physical Indicators:

- Eating disorders, including obesity or anorexia.
- Speech disorders (stuttering, stammering).
- Developmental delays in the acquisition of speech or motor skills.
- Weight or height level substantially below norm. .
- Nervous disorders (rashes, hives, facial tics, stomach aches).

Behavioural Indicators:

- Habit disorders (biting, rocking, head-banging).
- Cruel behaviour, seeming to get pleasure from hurting children, adults or animals; seeming to get pleasure from being mistreated.
- Age-inappropriate behaviours (bedwetting, wetting, soiling).
- Behavioural extremes, such as overly compliant-demanding; withdrawn-aggressive; listless-excitabile.

Signs of Neglect

Physical Indicators:

- Poor hygiene, including lice, scabies, bedsores, body odour.
- Squinting.
- Unsuitable clothing; missing key articles of clothing (underwear, socks, shoes); overdressed or underdressed for climate conditions.
- Untreated injury or illness.
- Lack of immunizations.
- Indicators of prolonged exposure to elements (excessive sunburn, insect bites, colds).
- Height and weight significantly below age level.

Behavioural Indicators:

- Unusual school attendance.
- Chronic absenteeism.
- Chronic hunger, tiredness, or lethargy.
- Assuming adult responsibilities.
- Reporting no carer at home

For more details, staff are directed to the London Children Safeguarding Board procedures, a copy of which is available from the Head Master's Secretary or which may be viewed (and downloaded) at the London SCB website (www.londonscb.gov.uk).

http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/files/procedures/london_cp_procedures_v.3__10.01.08.pdf
[see Chapter 4 (p120 ff)]

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