



## **Child Protection Safeguarding Policy**

This policy has been compiled from and is in accordance with several extensive documents on Child Protection, which have been issued by Central Government including:

Every Child Matters - What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (DfES 2006)  
Every Child Matters – Safe Guarding Children and Safer Recruitment (Jan 2007)  
Every child Matters – Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006)

It also embraces the local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines, operating in accordance with the agreed inter-agency policy of Birmingham City Council Social Care and Health Department (Child Protection). It is made available to parents via the school website, with hard copies also available from the school office on request.

The policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school, including those working in the EYFS, as well as governors.

The contact details for referrals for all pupils are;

### **Birmingham CAF Coordinator**

Jon Needham [jon.needham@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:jon.needham@birmingham.gov.uk)  
0121 303 8117

### **CAF Regional Coordinator**

Rachael Easter  
0121 303 8117

### **Children's Social Care Emergency Duty Team**

0121 675 4806  
(In an emergency, outside normal office hours)

### **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

Carol Douch  
0121 675 1669

### **Local Social Care Office**

Attwood House  
72 High Street  
Harborne  
Birmingham B17 9NJ  
0121 303 1888

### **Independent Safeguarding Authority**

PO Box 181  
Darlington  
County Durham  
DL1 9FA  
0300 123 1111

## **Specific Responsibilities**

**Designated Child Protection Officer**  
**Designated Deputy Child Protection Officer**  
**Governor Responsible for Child Protection**  
**Chairman of the Board of Governors**

**Mrs. Jackie Cockerill**  
**Mrs. Debbie Edgington (EYFS)**  
**Mrs. Celia Bell**  
**Mr. Steven Heathcote**

## **Aims**

To promote the safety and welfare of every pupil and to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to:

- Safeguard all pupils
- Respond without delay in the event of a child protection issue arising.

## **Ethos, Philosophy and Statutory Obligations**

West House School's policy is founded on the philosophy that the welfare of the child is paramount and that a civilised society should have the protection of children from significant harm as a top priority.

The school makes every effort to produce and maintain an ethos in which the children feel secure. At the same time the school recognises that some children may be victims of neglect, physical, sexual, or emotional abuse.

As a small school, all members of staff have day-to-day knowledge of, and contact with, all pupils. They are, therefore, well placed to identify possible abuse and offer support to children in need.

Staff must at all times be vigilant to the signs and symptoms of child abuse. The school ensures that all children know that they may approach a member of staff if they are worried or in difficulty. The school has clear procedures, laid out hereafter, to deal with allegations of abuse or suspected cases of abuse.

Section 175 of The Education Act 2002 states that schools have a legal obligation to report concerns to the Social Services.

The Children's Act of 1989 lays a duty on the local authority to provide services for children in need. West House School is aware of the role of these social services and will endeavour to build up good relationships with the necessary outside agencies in order to secure effective co-operation in cases of actual or suspected abuse.

There is a duty on behalf of the school to inform the relevant social services department at all times. The social services department may choose to investigate such cases in order to prevent significant harm. The term "significant harm" covers ill-treatment and impairment of health or development. This may fall into one or more of the following categories:

- neglect
- physical injury
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse

Details of each of these categories appears hereafter.

West House School recognises that significant harm may take place:

- within the family
- in a peer group
- from a carer
- from a teacher

### **The School's Commitment to Safeguarding Children**

The school and the Board of Governors are committed to:

1. Ensuring that designated people with status and authority are appointed and receive training every two years. Mrs. Jackie Cockerill (Child Protection Officer (CPO)) and Mrs. Debbie Edgington (Deputy Child Protection Officer with specific responsibility for EYFS (DCPO)) currently hold positions as designated members of staff.
2. Ensuring that all staff and governors know the name of the designated person.
3. Ensuring that parents are made aware that a copy of this document is available for inspection in the school office and on the school website.
4. Ensuring that all members of staff are properly trained and supported. All members of staff, including trainees, volunteers etc. will have access to this policy, via the staff handbook, and the appropriate training and briefings. All new members of staff and volunteers will receive a copy of this document and a briefing on Child Protection directed by the Headmaster. Members of staff, including the Headmaster will receive training every three years.
5. Keeping written records of concerns about children (noting the date, the event and action taken) in a secure locked location.
6. Ensuring that the duty of care towards pupils and staff is promoted by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour and assisting staff to monitor their own standards and practice.
7. Working in collaboration with Birmingham City Council Social Care and Health (Child Protection) Department (Telephone Number 0121 303 1888).
8. Identifying and remedying any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements without delay.
9. Ensuring that all staff who come into contact with pupils have relevant and recent CRB checks and that assurance are obtained that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with the school's pupils on another site.
10. Operating safe recruitment procedures (including CRB checks and compliance with Independent School Standards Regulations). See Appendix B Policy for the policy and procedures regarding the safe recruitment of staff.

In the EYFS we will specifically:

1. Designate a practitioner to take a lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the EYFS setting and liaising with local statutory children's agencies as appropriate. Mrs. Debbie Edgington currently holds this position.
2. Inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living with, working with, or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place at the premises. Ofsted will also be informed of the action taken in response to such allegations as soon as reasonably practicable, but at least within 14 days.
3. If appropriate, the school will contact the child protection officer for the Early Years and Childcare Team – Marie Foster 0121 303 6754. In her absence, the school will contact the Child Protection and Review Unit at Sheldon on 0121 303 8454, and ask to speak to a principle officer.

Members of the Board of Governors are made aware of the school's protection procedures and receive a report of any training undertaken by members of staff. The Board of Governors will be informed of any incident involving the use of child protection procedures.

A member of the Board of Governors, Mrs. Celia Bell, will be responsible for undertaking an annual review of this policy and will be required to undertake training in child protection every three years. She will consider the efficiency with which the related duties have been carried out and will report to the Board at least annually.

### **Curriculum**

West House School recognises that it has an educational role to play in child protection. RE and PSHE lessons all include topics which develop knowledge and understanding about families and the right of children to be safe and well cared for. (In the EYFS the same issues are covered in Topic of the Week and Knowledge of the World). These topics should encourage pupils to keep themselves safe and develop good caring skills for the future. Staff should be aware that such subjects could cause distress and need to be approached with sensitivity.

### **Procedures**

#### **Disclosures – Staff Responsibilities**

In the event of confidences being shared or offered to someone, staff should be aware that, legally, a child can be interviewed only once over child protection issues. The school will never initiate an investigation. Usually, the police or social services try to ensure that the interview takes place under video conditions or, as a minimum, in the presence of an expert witness. If a child reveals that he has already been interviewed by a teacher, then the evidence may be regarded as contaminated. Therefore, staff must be clear about what constitutes listening to a disclosure and what constitutes an interview.

Should a child wish to make a disclosure, the teacher should be receptive and an opportunity to do so should be given priority. A child may never summon up the courage to approach an adult again if the opportunity is lost.

The teacher should never promise confidentiality beforehand as, legally, this may prove impossible. A compromise could be to say, "Naturally, I would not gossip about your secret, but, if we need help to sort it out, I may need to tell someone else." If a pupil refuses to go along with only that reassurance, the disclosure should not take place. The teacher can only suggest that the pupil takes a time to think and then comes back or contacts a help-line.

A situation like this, where disclosure does not take place, should be reported to the CPO who should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to discuss their doubts or concerns. This may be done tentatively and without giving names in the first instance. The Headmaster should be informed.

If disclosure does occur, staff should:

- Stay calm and reassuring.
- Listen quietly and believe what the child says.
- Avoid judgmental reactions and protestations, either in expression or verbally.
- Encourage the child by telling him/her that he/she was right to confide in someone, and that you will try to help him/her.
- Make it clear that you realise that what he/she is doing is hard for him/her and that you are pleased that he/she trusts you.
- Try to let the child tell his story as free narrative. Questions should be linked and open-ended, for example:
  - Has something happened to you?
  - Can you tell me what happened?
  - Where did it happen?
  - When did it happen?
  - Was anyone else present?
  - Can you tell me about it using your own words?
  - What upset you? (After being told the child was upset.)
- Make no promises.
- Find out whether they have told someone else.
- Avoid pressing for details or asking leading questions.

In terms of the younger children (such as those within the EYFS), if a staff member notices an injury, or someone reports an incident or a child says something significant, they must refer the matter to the CPO or DCPO who should contact the LADO to discuss concerns. Again, this may be done tentatively in the first instance. The Headmaster must also be informed.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality for the child, family (and any other individuals named in allegations) will be maintained. However, the duty to protect children overrides other principles with regard to confidentiality and children cannot be guaranteed absolute confidentiality when making a potential disclosure to a member of staff.

## **Supporting the Pupil at Risk**

The school recognises that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame.

The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

1. The content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
2. The school ethos which promotes a secure, positive, supportive environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
3. The school's behaviour policy which emphasises the importance of supporting vulnerable pupils.
4. Record keeping and notifying Social Services of concerns.

## **Record Keeping**

Staff must be aware that their evidence may be vital in the event of an investigation. Therefore notes on the disclosure should be made using 'Form 1 – Logging a Concern about a Child's Safety and Welfare' (an example of which appears at the end of this policy) as soon as possible, giving details of time, place and the number of people present. If, at any time, worrying changes are observed in a pupil, a specific and confidential record will be set up. This will include the name, age, address of the pupil, with timed and dated observations describing the pupil's behaviour/appearance objectively, without added comments or interpretations. If possible, the pupil's exact words will be recorded. The record will be signed and dated by the recorder.

Any such record should be passed to the CPO or the DCPO and will be kept in a separate file not accessible to the general staff. If necessary, the CPO or the DCPO will complete Form 2 – 'Front Sheet – Child Protection Record'. In all cases, the date of the record being taken and the name of the child will be recorded in a bound book.

## **How to Report Allegations against Staff and Volunteers**

### **Allegations made by another staff member**

Staff can raise any concerns they may have about another staff member or volunteer with the Headmaster. They can do this confidentially, although the Headmaster will refer the matter to the CPO as she will have received a higher level of training. Should staff have concerns relating to the CPO, the matter should be reported to the Headmaster and, in his absence, the Chairman of the Board of Governors. Should staff have concerns relating to the Headmaster, the Chairman of the Board of Governors should be informed.

### **Allegations made by pupils i.e. following a disclosure**

When an allegation of abuse is made by a pupil(s) against a teacher or volunteer the Headmaster should be informed immediately. The Headmaster will refer the matter to the CPO.

If an allegation is made against the CPO then the teacher/member of staff should inform the Headmaster immediately and, in his absence the Chairman of the Board of Governors .

If an allegation is made against the Headmaster the Chairman of the Board of Governors should be informed immediately.

In all cases of an allegation being made, there should be immediate consideration of whether a child or children is/are at risk of significant harm and in need of protection. If this appears to be the case, there should be **immediate** referral to Birmingham City Council Social Care and Health Department (Child Protection).

In all cases contact must be made with Birmingham City Council Social Care and Health Department (Child Protection) within 24 hours of a disclosure being made. The responsibility for this lies with the CPO, the Headmaster or the Chairman of the Board of Governors, in line with the reporting mechanism described above. However, should a member of staff feel that a matter has not been referred in accordance with this policy, they should make the referral themselves.

In all cases, advice should be sought from the LADO of how to proceed. However, the school will, unless advised otherwise, launch its own investigation in accordance with the guidance laid out hereafter.

Immediate consideration should also be given to any need for medical assistance and for seeking medical evidence of suspected or alleged abuse, again in accordance with local child protection procedures. In the case of serious harm, the police must also be informed from the outset.

Birmingham City Council Social Care and Health Department (Child Protection) is the lead agency for child protection investigations and key worker support after a child is identified as being potentially at risk. The school will support the department in preventative work, identification of concern and post-investigation support to pupils.

The social services department is responsible for contacting parents. The Headmaster (or, in the event of an allegation being made against the Headmaster, The Chairman of the Board of Governors) will discuss with social services how and when contact is made with parents and how to respond to parents.

Confidentiality should be maintained throughout this stage, in order that any subsequent investigation is not prejudiced.

### **Investigation of an Allegation Against a Member of Staff or Volunteer**

Immediately an allegation is made, the person responsible for handling the matter as indicated above should consider and initiate as necessary the following action, having contacted the LADO:

Obtain details of the allegation in writing, signed and dated or, where not practicable, obtain a written record of the discussion with the pupil or parent from the member of staff to whom the allegation was made. The written record should cover all the points raised by the pupil or parent and should be signed and dated by the member of staff to whom the allegation was made.

Subsequent investigations will be in accordance with the local child protection procedures. Early action to establish the nature of the allegation and to make an initial assessment of whether it should be investigated should be undertaken in such a way that it does not prejudice any such subsequent investigation. The investigation should be guided by the advice of Social Services. There must be no interference with evidence.

Initial enquiries should be undertaken as a matter of urgency, but not with the child in question, to check the practical details of the allegation and to establish the facts. This assessment is not an investigation to determine guilt or innocence. It may, however, involve making enquiries of staff or pupils on a confidential basis. The nature of the enquiries might include, for example:

- were the child/children and teacher in contact on that day?
- were there any witnesses?
- what were the precise times, dates, location?

A written record of these factual matters should be made using Form 3 – ‘Investigating an Allegation of Child Abuse’.

The investigating person should decide whether or not further action is indicated.

**Where the investigating person believes that the allegation is without foundation, he/she should:**

- consider whether the child might have been abused by someone else;
- take no further action under disciplinary or child protection procedures in relation to the teacher;
- inform the teacher of the allegation and the fact that no further action is to be taken under disciplinary or child protection procedures. The teacher may be accompanied by a teacher organisation representative or a friend;
- consider whether formal professional advice to the teacher is appropriate and the form it might take;
- inform the parents of the child or children of the allegation and the outcome; and
- consider appropriate counselling and support for the child or children who made the allegation(s) and, where appropriate, their parents; in particular, take into account a child’s special needs where a false or malicious allegation seems to have been made;
- prepare a report, setting out in conclusion that the allegation is without foundation, with reasons. Social Services should be informed of the decision and invited to propose further action should they wish to do so.

**Where the investigating person believes that it is necessary to investigate the allegation further, he/she should;**

- EITHER inform one or more of the agencies with statutory duties and/or powers to investigate and intervene, that is:

The Police

The Social Services Department

The NSPCC

- Such referral should be according to local child protection procedures and could be made by either the Headmaster, the CPO or the Chairman of the Board of Governors in the school;
- OR, where wholly satisfied that the child or children is/are not at risk of significant harm, or that a reportable criminal offence has not been committed, undertake further investigations at school level prior to considering the appropriateness of disciplinary action.
- Inform the child, children or parent making the allegation and explain the likely source of action;
- Ensure the child's or children's parents are informed of the likely course of action;
- Inform the teacher against whom the allegations is made and explain the likely course of action;
- Where the Chair of Governors of the school has not already been informed, do so.

### **Police Involvement**

In some cases the police might wish to interview the teacher against whom the allegation is made before any approach is made by the CPO. The police may act independently of the school, particularly where the alleged offence is unconnected with a teacher's professional life. Police officers should be given every assistance with their enquiries but confidentiality about the enquiries maintained in the teacher's interests.

Where the police are involved it would not normally be expected that police interviews would be undertaken on school premises and it would be expected that appointments are normally made for such interviews to occur at reasonable times.

### **Considering whether suspension is appropriate**

The Headmaster (potentially acting on a recommendation from the CPO) or the Chairman of the Board of Governors should not automatically suspend or recommend suspension of a teacher against whom an allegation is made unless the initial assessment of the allegation suggests that further investigation is necessary. Legal advice should be sought before a decision to suspend is taken. Suspension may be considered at any stage of an investigation.

Suspension should not be undertaken without good reason. Circumstances in which suspension occurs include:

- Where the allegations are so serious that dismissal for gross misconduct is possible;
- Where it is necessary for the conduct of the investigation to proceed unimpeded;
- Where children are at risk.

In all cases where suspension is being considered, the Headmaster or the Chairman of the Board of Governors should advise the member of staff or volunteer to seek assistance and advice from an appropriate source.

### **Where no action is taken to suspend**

The CPO, Headmaster or Chairman of the Board of Governors should explain to the member of staff or volunteer the circumstances which led to consideration of suspension and further explain any follow-up action which it is proposed to take.

A teacher may be accompanied by a teacher organisation representative or friend at this meeting. According to the circumstances of the case, appropriate assistance or advice may be offered to the teacher. According to circumstances, appropriate counselling services should be considered.

If a teacher has not been suspended but there are still has concerns about aspects of a teacher's conduct, a full investigation will be undertaken before making a decision about further action under disciplinary procedures.

### **An interview to consider suspension**

Where suspension of a member of staff who is being considered, an interview should be arranged in accordance with the following guidelines. Normally, the interview should be undertaken outside pupil contact time.\*

A member of staff or volunteer is called to an interview where suspension is a likely outcome should be advised to seek the advice and assistance from an appropriate organisation. Where the person is not a member of an organisation he/she may be assisted by a 'friend' who may be another member of staff at the school.

The member of staff or volunteer should be informed at the outset of the interview that an allegation has been made and that, at the conclusion of the interview, suspension might occur. The member of staff or volunteer, where accompanied, should be offered the opportunity of a brief meeting with the representative or friend before the interview or, in the absence of representation, should be offered the opportunity of a brief adjournment. It should be made clear, however, that the interview is not a formal disciplinary hearing but is for the purpose of putting forward a serious matter which may lead to suspension and further investigation.

The member of staff or volunteer should be given as much information as possible about the allegation and about the reasons for the suspension. They should be given an opportunity to make representations concerning the suspension. An adjournment should be offered prior to response.

If, as a result of the interview, it is considered that suspension is necessary along with a full investigation of the allegation, the member of staff or volunteer should be advised that he or she is suspended from duty. Written confirmation of the suspension should be despatched within one working day, giving reasons for the suspension.

**\*In accordance with the relevant ACAS Code of Practice, where the teacher is a trade union or safety representative, the interview should not be arranged without prior discussion with the relevant branch secretary or a full-time official of the trade union concerned. From the outset it should be established that the action being taken is not an attack on the functions of a trade union.**

### **After a decision to suspend pending investigation**

Where a suspension takes place, the Chairman of the Board of Governors should be informed formally, in writing. The Headmaster should report to the governing body that a teacher has been suspended pending investigation. It is inadvisable to provide more than the minimum information necessary to the governing body, as more than this would prejudice governors' impartiality in any subsequent hearing or appeal in disciplinary proceedings.

The pupil or parent making the allegation should be confidentially informed of the suspension. Where the pupil is under 18, his or her parents should normally be informed, so far as is consistent with child protection procedures.

Senior teachers in the school who need to know of the reason for the suspension should be informed so far as is necessary in the particular circumstances.

The Headmaster, in liaison with the CPO, should take a decision on informing other staff colleagues in the school of the suspension. The Headmaster should consider the extent to which it is necessary to make a statement to parents of children in the school, having considered the need to avoid unwelcome publicity.

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for the Headmaster or the CPO to provide immediate reassurance to parents and children in the school and there may be a need for information to continue to be provided during the course of an investigation to parents, children and other colleagues. Guidance should be sought on these matters from a senior local education authority officer or from Social Services or the police, as relevant and appropriate.

The Headmaster should consider carefully, and keep under review, decisions as to who is informed of the suspension and investigation and to what extent confidentiality can or should be maintained, according to the circumstances of a particular case. In a situation where a matter becomes common knowledge or the subject of general gossip, it may be desirable to provide an accurate statement for public information. The school should take advice from a senior local education authority officer on this matter as necessary.

### **Support for the teacher during the period of suspension**

Social contact with the teacher's colleagues and friends at the school should not be precluded except where likely to be prejudicial to the presentation of evidence.

Although it is the aim that all investigations should be conducted as speedily as possible consistent with establishing the full facts, arrangements should be made for the member of staff, or his or her representative, to be contacted regularly with information on progress and developments on the case. These arrangements should not stop the teacher, or his or her representative, contacting those conducting the investigation at any time.

A contact should also be in a position to provide the member of staff with information about developments at the school in general, according to the needs and wishes of the member of staff to be kept informed.

In some cases, it may be appropriate to ask the member of staff whether welfare counselling of the support of the local authority's medical adviser would be helpful, or to respond to a request of the teacher for such further support.

### **Support for others concerned**

Consideration should be given to what support may be needed for the child, children making the allegations and to their parents. Consideration should also be given to what support may be needed for others at the school, both staff and pupils, according to the circumstances of the alleged abuse. In some cases, therapeutic counselling from expert sources may be necessary.

### **The investigation**

There will be three possible routes for an investigation:

- By the police
- Under local child protection procedures.
- Under teacher disciplinary procedures.

Any investigation by the police or child protection agencies will take priority over an internal investigation by the school. An internal investigation running alongside a police or child protection agency enquiry is not likely to be good practice and should be held in abeyance pending the outcome of the external investigation.

'Working Together' recommends that there should be a Strategy Meeting to discuss and plan the conduct of an investigation under child protection procedures. It is desirable that the Child Protection Officer be involved in and contribute to such strategy meetings in cases of allegations against members of staff or volunteers.

### **Outcome of the investigation**

At the end of the investigation, a meeting should be arranged to inform the member of staff of the next steps. A member of staff may be accompanied or represented by an organisation, representative or friend.

If the outcome is a disciplinary charge, further action will be in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures.

Where it is decided not to proceed with any form of disciplinary action, a suspension should be lifted immediately. The CPO, Headmaster or the Chairman of the Board of Governors as appropriate should meet the member of staff to discuss the return to work.

Other than in the event of dismissal, the CPO should provide the opportunity for informal counselling. This could be used to give appropriate guidance, support and reassurance and to help rebuild, where necessary, a member of staff's confidence. There may also be a need for specific guidance and sympathetic consideration may need to be given to other employment options, in consultation with the local education authority.

On the conclusion of any investigation and any related disciplinary proceedings, the child or children who make the allegations and their parents should be informed of the outcome of the proceedings. This should be prior to a member of staff's return to

school if he or she has been suspended. In some circumstances, consideration should be given to the broader disclosure of details of the outcome, together with reasons, for example, where the issues are of general importance, have become common knowledge or have been the subject of general gossip and there is a need to provide accurate details for public information.

Appropriate counselling and support should be offered to the child or children who made the allegations and, where appropriate, their parents, on the teacher's return to school. In particular, this should take into account a child's particular needs where a false or malicious allegation has been made.

### **Records**

Documents relating to an investigation should be retained, together with a written record of the outcome of the investigation and, where disciplinary action has been taken, retained on a member of staff's personal and confidential file in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures.

If a teacher is dismissed, or resigns before a disciplinary process is completed, the Child Protection Officer should inform the teacher about the employer's statutory duty to report the case to the Department for Education Teacher Misconduct Section.

Where a pupil has made an allegation, a copy of the statement or the record made of it should be kept on the section of a pupil's personal file which is not open to disclosure, together with a written record of the outcome of the investigation.

If a person (employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) services are no longer used because they are considered unsuitable to work with children, it is the responsibility of the Child Protection Officer to report to the Independent Safeguarding authority (ISA) within one month. If the Child Protection Officer is the person in question, it is the responsibility of the Headmaster to inform the ISA. If the Headmaster is the person in question, it is the responsibility of the Chairman of the Board of Governors to inform the ISA.

In the above 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 a contractor; no longer using volunteers; resignation and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training or volunteering.

### **Voluntary Workers**

Workers joining the school in a voluntary capacity will receive a minimum of one hour training in issues relating to child protection from the CPO, The DCPO, or a member of the Senior Management Team.

Should training be arranged for the school staff during the period of voluntary work, volunteers will be invited to attend.

## **Children and Young People Who Abuse Other Children**

The school recognises that children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Such abuse is taken as seriously as abuse by adults and is subject to the same child protection procedures. Staff should not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.

In such instances, the needs of the victim and the needs of the alleged aggressor will be considered separately. The Child Protection Officer will carry out an initial investigation and take appropriate action, which may involve consultation with an outside agency. This may be the case if the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim or where the aggressor has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children.

In addition to safeguarding the identified victim, the Child Protection Officer will request that appropriate external agencies consider whether the alleged aggressor poses a risk to any other children.

In the event of the school becoming aware of a pupil engaging in sexual activity, the Child Protection Officer will immediately notify social services.

All staff have a duty to inform the Child Protection Officer should they have concerns relating to potential and perceived abuse of any pupil by another young person.

## **Safe ICT Usage**

The school ICT Policy highlights the appropriate use of ICT at school. Access to the internet is filtered and monitored by the school's Network Manager.

Any inappropriate usage should be brought to the attention of the CPO immediately. Should incidents be related to issues of child protection, they will be investigated and referred as appropriate to outside agencies. Evidence such as computers will be preserved.

## **Statutory Obligations**

Staff should be aware that any allegation should produce the same quality of response.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Off-Site Activities and Educational Visits Policy
- Policy on Pupil Restraint

**Implemented:** July 2001  
**Date:** September 2010  
**Review Date:** September 2011

## **Appendix A – Possible Signs of Child Abuse?**

Child abuse can be divided into several categories:

- **Persistent or severe neglect**  
Lack of the basic care that children need to survive. This can include the failure to protect the child from danger, cold, starvation and the failure of care resulting in significant impairment of health or development. It includes leaving children unsupervised for unnecessarily long periods of time or in potentially dangerous circumstances.
- **Physical abuse or injury or the failure to prevent physical injury**  
This can include hitting, shaking, squeezing, scalding, biting, giving children poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs and alcohol, suffocation and drowning.
- **Sexual abuse**  
Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child by any person able to exercise dominance. This may include all forms of actual or attempted sexual intercourse and involvement in the production of pornographic material and importuning.
- **Emotional abuse**  
Caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection in which children are made to feel unwanted, ugly, worthless or unloved. It can include threats, verbal attacks, taunting, shouting, or a constant lack of love or affection, which lead to a child's loss of confidence or self-esteem. As all abuse involves some form of emotional ill-treatment, this category should be used when it is the main or sole form of abuse.
- **Institutionalised abuse**  
A generic term which covers abuse which may involve a number of abusers, a number of children, and may encompass different forms of abuse. It involves, to a greater or lesser degree, an element of organisation.

### **Practical Guidelines for Detecting Signs of Abuse**

These are important for people in regular contact with children. However, the possible indicators below are not fool-proof. Great care must be taken not to jump to hasty conclusions. Staff noticing such signs should discuss them with the school's CPO. Staff are reminded that the absence of obvious physical signs or symptoms of distress does not itself indicate that abuse has not occurred.

#### **Possible Signs of Neglect**

Constant hunger; tiredness; emaciation; destructive tendencies; poor personal hygiene and clothing; frequent lateness, earliness or non-attendance at school; compulsive stealing; no carer at home; low self-esteem.

#### **Possible Signs of Physical Abuse**

- **Physical signs:**  
Unexplained injuries or improbable explanations for injury; untreated or recurrent injuries; injuries with a pattern e.g. hand or finger injuries, belt marks; cigarette or other burns or scalds; bite marks; admitted injuries caused by excessive punishment.

- Behavioural signs:  
Fear of adult or carer including fear of going home; refusal to change for P.E., keeping limbs covered; fear of medical help; self destructive tendencies; aggression towards others; sudden unexplained changes in behaviour; learning difficulties; very low self-esteem, including failure to respond to praise; inhibitions; cowering.

### **Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse**

Developmental delay; admission of seemingly excessive punishment; overreaction to mistakes; sudden speech disorders; rocking, hair twisting or pulling; self mutilation; extremes of passivity or aggression; drug/solvent abuse; attention seeking; bedwetting.

### **Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse**

- Physical signs:  
5-12 years: urinary infections; chronic ailments; stomach pains; frequent headaches; eating disorders.
- Behavioural signs:  
Hints about secrets; saying a friend has a problem; beginning to lie, steal or blatantly cheat; unexplained sources of money; reluctance to undress for P.E.; excessive dislike of or refusal to see a particular person(s); refusal to go home; drawing of pictures depicting abuse; poor self-image; self-mutilation; taking over parenting role at home; regular running away; acting in a sexually inappropriate way for age.

## **Appendix B - Recruitment of Staff Policy and Procedures**

### **Aim**

West House School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The Governors are aware of their responsibility of appointing appropriate Teaching and Support Staff, and ensuring that all staff have the health and qualifications for the particular post. Of paramount importance is the responsibility to ensure that appointees are proper and fit persons to be in charge of, or working alongside, children.

The specific aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- To ensure that all job applicants are treated fairly in line with the relevant and related policies, including The Equal Opportunities Policy and The Policy on Disability and Discrimination;
- To ensure compliance with all relevant recommendations and guidance, including the recommendations of the Department for Children and Families (DCSF) in 'Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Educational Settings', the code of practice published by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS). It also has regard to the NCSL online learning module 'Safer Recruitment';
- To ensure that the school meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

### **Responsibilities**

The Headmaster is responsible for ensuring that the procedures laid out herein are followed on a consistent basis and that all necessary checks are carried out. The Headmaster has received appropriate training in safer recruitment and oversees all staff appointments including volunteers.

The Headmaster is also responsible for informing the Board of Governors of changes in policy and implementing those changes as a result of the change in Government in May 2010. The school acknowledges the shift of responsibilities from the DCSF to the DfE.

Mrs. Celia Bell is the member of the Board of Governors responsible for child protection and has received training in safer recruitment. She interviews candidates for teaching posts, along with the Headmaster.

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

## **The Appointment of Teaching Staff, Members of the Senior Management Team, Nursery Staff, Teaching Assistants and Non-Teaching Staff**

- Such posts are advertised internally and externally. Generally, external adverts are placed in the Times Educational Supplement and the local press, dependent upon the job in question. All adverts carry a statement of the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, along with the requirement for an appropriate CRB check to be undertaken as part of the appointment process. Additionally, adverts highlight a commitment to equal opportunities and the fact that CVs are not an appropriate form of application. Candidates are invited to contact the school for further details.
- An appointments panel, comprising the Headmaster and at least one other member, draws up a person specification, focusing on the skills and attributes for the job only and ensuring that there is no contravention of human rights, race relations and sexual discrimination/orientation.
- Upon request, candidates receive an application pack containing the following information: - Job Description and Person Specification, Application Form, Child Protection Statement, Equal Opportunities Statement, School Information, details of Interview Procedure and the Referee requirement.
- Applications for all posts will only be accepted on the standard application form. Any gaps in employment history will be explored prior to interview and, if necessary, explored at interview.
- References are taken up for those most closely satisfying the person specification. References must include the most recent employer and be contacted by the school directly. References accompanying an application form will not be accepted. References should be completed on the form provided by the school and the referee will be contacted by the school to authenticate the reference. In certain circumstances a referee may be contacted by telephone to provide the initial reference. Under such circumstances a full record will be kept of the reference provided.
- All posts involve an interview with the appointments panel. The secretary to the Board of Governors may attend to ensure that procedures are consistently followed for each interview. Those attending interview are requested to bring photo identification (Current Photo Driving Licence or Passport), proof of qualification and proof of address (A utility bill indicating name and home address) and confirmation of the right to work in the UK. Only original documents will be accepted.
- Where a candidate claims to have changed his/her name by deed poll or any other mechanism (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) he/she will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.
- Teaching posts may require candidates to teach a lesson and/or undertake a presentation to the appointments panel. Should this be the case, they will be informed via the application pack.
- The successful candidate is informed by telephone. This is followed by a written offer. Following written confirmation of acceptance on behalf of the candidate, the remaining interviewees are informed of the decision in writing. Any appointments are conditional upon an appropriate CRB/List 99 check, registration with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), assurance of health and physical capacity to work and satisfactory references.
- Unsuccessful candidates are offered the opportunity for interview feedback.

- Records of age, gender and ethnic background are kept for all short-listed candidates.

### **Criminal Records Checks**

Due to the nature of the work, the school applies for criminal record certificates from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) in respect of all prospective staff members, governors and volunteers. The school will apply for either a Standard Disclosure or an Enhanced Disclosure depending on the level of contact with children.

Applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence may also be asked to apply for an equivalent disclosure, if one is available in the relevant jurisdiction(s).

### **Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders**

#### **Background**

The school will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. Appointment decisions are made on the basis of merit and ability, subject to the objective assessment criteria set out hereafter. A criminal record will not automatically debar an applicant from working within the school.

All positions within the school amount to ‘regulated positions’ as defined by the Protection of Children Act 1999 (amended by the Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000). As such, all applicants for employment at the school must declare all previous convictions (including those which would normally be considered ‘spent’ under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974).

A failure to disclose a previous conviction may lead to an application being rejected or, should the conviction come to light after employment at the school commenced, may lead to summary dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence.

The school will not employ anyone who is included on lists of individuals who are considered to be unsuitable to work with children, maintained by the DfE (formally DCSF), ISA or the Department of Health. In addition, the school will not employ anyone who is the subject of a disqualifying order in relation to convictions or charges for the following offences against children or adults: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence. If the school receives an application from a disqualified person, or is provided with false information in relation to an applicant’s suitability to work with children, or when serious concerns become evident through the application process, the matter will be reported to the Police, the ISA, the CRB and/or the Children’s Safeguarding Operations Unit.

#### **Assessment Criteria**

In the event that relevant information regarding previous convictions (or other sensitive matters) is volunteered by an applicant or obtained through the necessary checks, the school will consider the following factors in reaching a recruitment decision:

- Whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question;
- The seriousness of the conviction or the matter revealed;

- The length of time that has elapsed since the conviction or matter revealed;
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
- The circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the applicant.

The school will consider an applicant convicted of the following offences to be of an unnecessarily high risk: - murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence, serious Class A drug related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves driving responsibilities, it is the school's normal policy to consider it to be high risk to employ anyone who has a drink driving conviction within the last ten years.

### **Assessment Procedure**

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant or obtained through a disclosure check, the school will carry out a risk assessment with reference to the criteria set out above.

This will be signed by the Headmaster and a second senior member of the selection panel, before a position is offered. If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, he/she may do so by contacting the CRB directly.

In cases where the applicant would be offered the position, were it not for the disputed information, the school will, where practicable, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

### **Retention and Security of Disclosure Information**

The school will follow the guidance issued or supported by the provisions of the CRB Code of Practice on the use of disclosure information.

In particular, the school will:

- Store disclosure information and other confidential documents issued by the CRB in a locked, non-portable storage container, access to which will be restricted to members of the Senior Management Team;
- Not retain disclosure information or any associated correspondence for longer than is necessary. In most cases, the school will not retain such information for longer than six months, although the school will keep a record of the date of the disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure, the position applied for and the unique number issued by the CRB.
- Ensure that any disclosure information is destroyed by suitably secure means such as shredding;
- Prohibit the photocopying or scanning of disclosure information.

## **The Appointment of all Staff**

- All candidates attending interviews receive an expenses claim form.
- It is a condition of employment at the school that CRB disclosures for existing staff are updated every 5 years. The school reserves the right to request members of staff to apply for an updated disclosure within this 5 year period.
- The school will respond to requests from the ISA for information held on individual members of staff.
- A single central register of all recruitment and vetting checks having been carried out is kept for all members of staff. The register does not include information of a sensitive nature.
- If an applicant is appointed the school retain any relevant information provided on their application form (together with evidence of identity, qualifications, etc.) on their personal file.
- Where an application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will be retained for two years before being confidentially destroyed, unless the applicant has specifically requested that the school keeps their details on file.

## **Peripatetic Teachers**

- A number of self-employed peripatetic teachers work at the school. All such teachers are required to produce identification and relevant evidence of appropriate qualifications and checks before working with pupils. These are retained on file in accordance with the procedures for full time staff.
- The school occasionally engages the services of specialist coaches and teachers. In such circumstances they are required to produce identification and relevant evidence of appropriate qualifications and checks. These are retained on file in accordance with the procedures for full time staff.

## **Agencies for Supply Staff**

- Where supply staff are engaged by the school, confirmation that all appropriate checks have been carried out is required from the supply agency, no later than the day on which the member of staff is due to start their term of employment. The school will request that the agency alerts to any disclosure on a CRB certificate.
- The school reserves the right to request original documentation relating to identity, professional status, qualifications and an up-to-date CRB certificate.
- All supply agency workers will be required to produce photographic ID on arrival.

## **Dismissal on the Grounds of Misconduct**

The school will report the dismissal of any member of staff or volunteer following a substantiated allegation to the DfE, the CRB and the police. The ISA will also be notified of anyone whose services are no longer used by the school because they are considered to be unsuitable to work with children. This will be done within one month of the person leaving the school. Where teachers are registered with the GTC, any misconduct referrals will be reported to that body.

### **Monitoring of the Policy**

This policy and its associated procedures are evaluated and reviewed either after an appointment or in light of changes in legislation.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Equal Opportunities Policy, the Policy of Promotion of Racial Equality, The Pay Policy and the Disability Discrimination Policy.

## **Appendix C - Staff Relationships with Pupils**

Members of staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age and gender of the pupils, taking care as to how their conduct may be interpreted. Demeanour and language require care and thought.

Situations where risk of possible concerns are raised:

- Provision of physical comfort to pupils.
- The use of necessary restraint (please refer to the 'Policy on Pupil Restraint').
- Sports and other subjects involving demonstration which requires touching.
- Administration of medicine and first aid.
- Private interviews with pupils.
- Individual or small group lessons.
- Transporting individual pupils (under no circumstances should a pupil be transported alone by a member of staff – for further information please refer to the 'Off Site Activities and Educational Visits Policy').
- Out of school activities.

Physical contact should be restricted to what is appropriate to the activity (P.E., games, drama etc.) and should be as visible as possible to others.

Avoid accidental/unnecessary physical contact. Innocent intentions may be misinterpreted, causing distress.

Any apparently sexualised behaviour exhibited by younger children should be discouraged in a sensitive, low-key but non-reinforcing manner, tone of voice, facial expression and physical distance.

Staff should use their discretion when a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance that may include physical comfort.

Staff should not become 'friends' with pupils on social networking sites.

## **Appendix D**

Contains the following forms:

Form 1: Logging a Concern About a Child's Safety and Welfare – Staff/Visitors

Form 2: Front Sheet: Child Protection Record

Form 3: Checklist for handling and recording allegations or complaints made against a member of staff or volunteer

Please photocopy the forms and use as required

**FORM 1**  
**(For use by all staff at West House School)**

**Logging a Concern about a Child's Safety and Welfare**

Pupil's Name:	d.o.b
Date:	Time:
Your Name: .....	..... Signature
Print	
Position:	
Note the reason(s) for recording the incident:	
Record the following factually:	Who?
	What?
	Where?
	When?
Offer an opinion where relevant (how and why might this have happened?)	
Substantiate the opinion. Note action taken, including names of anyone to whom your information was passed.	

Check to make sure your report is clear now – and will also be clear to a stranger reading it next year.

**PLEASE PASS THIS FORM TO YOUR DESIGNATED PERSON FOR CHILD PROTECTION. DO NOT PRECIPITATE FURTHER ACTION YOURSELF.**

**FORM 2**  
**(For use by CPO and Headmaster)**

**FRONT SHEET: CHILD PROTECTION RECORD**

Date file started.....

Name of child.....

Any other names by which child known, if relevant .....

.....

Date of birth.....

Address.....

.....

..... Postcode.....

Other family members (include full name, relationship e.g. mother, stepfather etc. For U18's, include age, if known).

Are any other child protection files held in school relating to this child or another child closely connected to him/her?

YES/NO

If yes, which files are relevant?.....

.....

Name and contact number of key worker (Social Care), if known

.....

Name and contact number of GP, if known

.....

**FORM 3 – Investigating An Allegation of Child Abuse**  
**(For use by CPO/EYFS CPO and Headmaster)**

**Checklist for handling and recording allegations or complaints made against a member of staff or volunteer.**

1. Name and position of member of staff who is subject of allegation/complaint:  
.....
2. Is the complaint written or verbal?.....
3. Complaint made by:.....Relationship to child:.....
4. Name of child:.....Age and d.o.b.....
5. Parents’/Carers’ name and address:.....  
.....  
.....
6. Date of alleged incident/s:.....
7. Did the child attend on this/these dates?.....
8. Nature of the complaint (continue on a separate sheet if necessary):.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....
9. Other relevant information:.....  
.....  
.....  
.....
10. LADO/Early Years Childcare Team contacted:..... Date:.....

11. Further actions advised by Children's Services.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Checklist**

**Yes No**

- Do you have details (either a written account or notes from a verbal account) of the alleged incident, signed and dated?
- Have you checked the incident could actually have taken place (i.e. was the child in the lesson; was the member of staff teaching the lesson that day)?
- Is there evidence of significant harm – e.g. a visible injury?
- Has a criminal offence taken place – e.g. has excessive force been used, that could be classed as an assault?
- Has the incident been reported to anyone else – e.g. the Police?
- Were there any witnesses to the incident – if so have you made a note of names?
- Are parents aware of the allegation?
- Is the member of staff aware of the allegation?
- Have you reported the allegation to the LADO (Carol Douch 0121 675 1669) or the Early Years Childcare Team (Marie Foster 0121 303 6754)?

**Remember, do not attempt to investigate the allegation yourself without first contacting the relevant body**

Your name and position: .....

Signature:..... Date:.....