

Brockwood Park School Child Protection Policy

2011 -2012

Policy Statement

1. This policy has been authorised by the Trustees, is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers, is available to parents on request and is published on the School website. It applies wherever staff or volunteers are working with students even where this is away from the School, for example at an activity centre or on an educational visit.

2. Every student should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse which, in this policy, means any kind of neglect, non-accidental physical injury, sexual exploitation or emotional ill-treatment.

3. Brockwood Park School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expects all staff and volunteers and visitors to share this commitment. The School will take all reasonable measures to:

3.1. ensure that we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with students and young people with the guidance given in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations

3.2. ensure that we carry out all necessary checks on the suitability of the Trustees in accordance with the above regulations and guidance given in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education

3.3. ensure that where staff from another organisation are working with our students on another site, we have received assurances that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to those staff

3.4. ensure that all visitors to the school are vetted and authorised and are accompanied at all times.

3.5. follow the local inter-agency procedures of the [Hampshire] Safeguarding Children Board

- 3.6. protect each student from any form of abuse, whether from an adult or another student
 - 3.7. be alert to signs of abuse both in the School and from outside
 - 3.8. deal appropriately with every suspicion or complaint of abuse
 - 3.9. design and operate procedures which promote this policy and which, so far as possible, ensure that teachers and others who are innocent are not prejudiced by false allegations
 - 3.10. support students who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan
 - 3.11. be alert to the medical needs of students with medical conditions
 - 3.12. operate robust and sensible health & safety procedures
 - 3.13. take all practicable steps to ensure that the School premises are as secure as circumstances permit
 - 3.14. operate clear and supportive policies on drugs, alcohol and substance misuse in accordance with the School's agreements
 - 3.15. consider and develop procedures to deal with any other safeguarding issues which may be specific to individual students in our School
4. Every complaint or suspicion of abuse from within or outside the School will be taken seriously and in all proper circumstances will be referred to an external agency such as the social services department of the local authority (SSD), the child protection unit of the police (CPU) or the NSPCC. In each case, the matter should be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer, Hampshire, Barbara Piddington, 07903 649503.

The Designated Person

5. The School has appointed a senior member of staff with the necessary status ("**Designated Person**") to be responsible for matters relating to child protection and welfare. The main responsibilities of the Designated Person are:

5.1. To be the first point of contact for parents, students, teaching and nonteaching staff and external agencies in all matters of child protection.

5.2. To co-ordinate the child protection procedures in the School.

5.3. To maintain an on-going training programme for all School employees.

5.4. To monitor the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to child protection. These records are stored in a file in the Principal's office.

5.5. To liaise with the child protection officer appointed by the SSD (Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)).

6. The Designated Person in the School is Celeste Calvet, who may be contacted on the School number 01962 771 744 or the Foundation number 01962 771 525 She will:

6.1. Advise and act upon all suspicion, belief and evidence of abuse reported to her.

6.2. Keep the Principal informed of all actions unless the Principal is the subject of a complaint. In this situation, the Designated Person should consult with Gisele Balleys, one of the Trustees (who is not directly related to the Principal).

6.3. Liaise with the SSD and other agencies on behalf of the School.

7. The Designated Person has undertaken appropriate training and will attend refresher training at 2 yearly intervals.

Types of Abuse

9. Abuse can be:

- physical abuse, for example beating or punching;
- emotional abuse, for example rejection and denial of affection;
- sexual abuse, for example sexual assault or encouraging a child or young person to view pornographic material;

- neglect, for example failure to provide appropriate care including warmth or medical attention

Signs of Abuse

10. Possible signs of abuse include (but are not limited to):

10.1. The student says s/he has been abused or asks a question which gives rise to that inference.

10.2. There is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a student's injury; the injury is unusual in kind or location; there have been a number of injuries; there is a pattern to the injuries.

10.3. The student's behaviour stands out from the group as either being extreme model behaviour or extremely challenging behaviour; or there is a sudden change in the student's behaviour.

10.4. The student asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons.

10.5. The student's development is delayed.

10.6. The student loses or gains weight rapidly.

10.7. The student appears neglected, e.g. dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed.

10.8. The student is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by his/her parents or carers.

Duty of Employees

11. Every employee and director/trustee of the School is under a general legal duty:

11.1. To protect students from abuse.

11.2. To be aware of the School's child protection procedures and to follow them.

11.3. To know how to access and implement the procedures, independently if necessary.

11.4. To keep a sufficient record of any significant complaint, conversation or event.

11.5. To report any matters of concern to the Designated Person.

Procedures

12. Initial Complaint

A member of staff suspecting or hearing a complaint of abuse:

12.1. Must listen carefully to the young person and keep an open mind. Staff should not take a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place.

12.2. Must not ask leading questions, that is, a question which suggests its own answer.

12.3. Must reassure the young person but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. The member of staff should explain that they need to pass the information to the Designated Person who will ensure that the correct action is taken.

12.4. Must keep a sufficient written record of the conversation. The record should include the date, time and place of the conversation and the essence of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence. The record should be signed by the person making it and should use names, not initials. The record must be kept securely and handed to the Designated Person.

13. Preserving Evidence

All evidence, (for example, scribbled notes, mobile phones containing text messages, clothing, and computers), must be safeguarded and preserved.

14. Reporting

All suspicion or complaints of abuse must be reported to the Designated Person or if the complaint involves the Designated Person, to the Principal.

15. Action by the Designated Person

The action to be taken will take into account:

15.1. The local inter-agency procedures of the [Hampshire] Safeguarding Children Board.

15.2. The nature and seriousness of the suspicion or complaint. A complaint involving a serious criminal offence will always be referred to the SSD or the police without further investigation within the School.

15.3. The wishes of the student who has complained, provided that the student is of sufficient understanding and maturity and properly informed. However, there may be times when the situation is so serious that decisions may need to be taken, after all appropriate consultation, that override a student's wishes.

15.4. The wishes of the complainant's parents, provided they have no interest which is in conflict with the student's best interests and that they are properly informed. Again, it may be necessary, after all appropriate consultation, to override parental wishes in some circumstances. If the Designated Person is concerned that disclosing information to parents would put a young person at risk, or it is against the student's wishes, he or she will take further advice from the relevant professionals before making a decision to disclose.

15.5. Duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable.

15.6. The lawful rights and interests of the School community as a whole including its employees and its trustees.

15.7. If there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the Designated Person may consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or other appropriate professionals on a no names basis without identifying the family. However, as soon as sufficient concern exists that a young person may be at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made without delay. If the initial referral is made by telephone, the Designated Person will confirm the referral in writing to SSD within 24 hours. If no response or

acknowledgment is received within three working days, the Designated Person will contact Social Services again.

16. Referral Guidelines

A referral to the SSD or police will not normally be made where:

16.1. the complaint does not involve a serious criminal offence; and

16.2. a referral would be contrary to the wishes of a student complainant who is of sufficient maturity and understanding and properly informed, and contrary also to the wishes of the complainant's parents; and

16.3. the case is one that can be satisfactorily investigated and dealt with under the School's internal procedures. However, if during the course of the internal procedures, it appears that the situation is more serious, the Designated Person will again consider whether a referral should be made in accordance with section 15 above.

17. External Agencies

Whether or not the School decides to refer a particular complaint to the SSD or the police, the parents and student will be informed in writing of their right to make their own complaint or referral to the Social Services Department or the Child Protection Unit of the police and will be provided with contact names, addresses and telephone numbers, as appropriate.

18. Allegations Against Staff

The School has procedures for dealing with allegations against staff (and volunteers who work with children) that aim to strike a balance between the need to protect students from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded allegations. These procedures follow the guidance in chapter 5 of Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education.

Suspension will not be an automatic response to an allegation. Full consideration will be given to all the options, subject to the need to ensure:

- the safety and welfare of the students or student concerned; and
- the need for a full and fair investigation.

Where an allegation or complaint is made against the Designated Person or any other member of staff or a volunteer, the matter should be reported immediately to the Principal.

Where an allegation or complaint is made against the Principal, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform one of the Trustees without first notifying the Principal.

Detailed guidance is given to staff to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place students or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a student. This guidance is contained in the Staff Manual and the Code of Conduct.

19. Whistleblowing

All staff are required to report to the Principal or the trustees in his absence, any concern or allegations about school practices or the behaviour of colleagues which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm. There will be no retribution or disciplinary action taken against a member of staff for making such a report provided that it is done in good faith.

20. Allegations Against Students

A student against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School during the investigation and the School's policy on behaviour, discipline and sanctions will apply. The School will take advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all students involved including the student or students accused of abuse. If it is necessary for a student to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse, the School will ensure that, subject to the advice of the LADO, parents are informed as soon as possible and that the student is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult. In the case of students whose parents are abroad, the student's Education Guardian will be requested to provide support to the student and to accommodate him/her if it is necessary to suspend him/her during the investigation (as appropriate).

21. Suspected Harm From Outside the School

A member of staff who suspects that a student is suffering harm from outside the School should seek information from the young person with tact and sympathy using “open” and not leading questions. A sufficient record should be made of the conversation and if the member of staff continues to be concerned he or she should refer the matter to the Designated Person.

22. Informing Parents

Parents will normally be kept informed of any action to be taken under these procedures. However, there may be circumstances when the Designated Person will need to consult the LADO and/or the Head before discussing details with parents.

Confidentiality and information sharing

23. The School will keep all child protection records confidential, allowing disclosure only to those who need the information in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The School will cooperate with police and social services to ensure that all relevant information is shared for the purposes of child protection investigations under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 in accordance with the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Contact Numbers and resources

24. The telephone numbers of the Hampshire Council Social Services Departments are as follows:

Referral and Assessment Team

01962 869 313

Out of Office Hours Emergency Social Work Service (Including out of hours Child Protection Referrals)

0845 600 4555

The Hampshire Council Emergency Service Controller will take initial details and contact the appropriate out of hours officer.

Consultation Line (9.30am -
11.30am Tuesday and Wednesday)

This number is available for consultation,
advice or when you just want to talk over
a situation and case names are not
required

01962 876364

Hampshire Safeguarding Children Board

<http://www.4lscb.org.uk/hampshire/>

Hampshire Constabulary Child Abuse Investigative Unit

<http://www.hampshire.police.uk/Internet/Specialist+Units/crime/sid/caiu/index.htm>

The following numbers may be useful for students:

Childline 0800 1111

NSPCC 0808 800 5000