

Wallington County Grammar School

SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY & PROCEDURE

CHILD PROTECTION - INTRODUCTION & POLICY

"THE WELFARE OF THE CHILD IS PARAMOUNT"

At Wallington County Grammar School the safety and welfare of our pupils is of the utmost importance. Because of the day-to-day contact with children, our staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. All adults working in the school must protect children from harm and abuse and be aware that any pupil may be at risk of harm or abuse. We have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of our students under the Education Act 2002 and Children Act 1989 through identifying any child welfare concerns and taking action to address them in partnership with families and other agencies where appropriate.

In addition to our child protection policy, we have policies to cover the roles of staff, pupils and parents in respect of health and safety, anti-bullying, restraint, racism and discrimination. We also ensure that issues of child protection are raised with students through the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHEE) curriculum. Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school and students and parents are informed about this and our other policies in the school Prospectus. There are a number of elements to our policy:

- Ensuring safe recruitment practice in checking the suitability of all our staff and volunteers to work with children;
- Raising awareness of child protection issues amongst all staff and volunteers and of what to do if they have concerns;
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse;
- Developing effective links with relevant agencies and co-operating as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences and core group meetings;
- Establishing and maintaining a safe environment in which children feel secure and are encouraged to talk freely about anything that concerns them;
- Ensuring children know there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried about anything;
- Including opportunities in the PSHEE curriculum to develop and equip students with the skills needed to recognise risks and stay safe from abuse;
- Supporting students who have been abused or may be at risk of harm in accordance with any agreed child protection plan;
- Ensuring we respond appropriately to any concern or allegation about a member of staff or volunteer; and
- Ensuring staff follow accepted "safe practice" principles when working with students

If there are Child Protection concerns the **London Child Protection Child Protection**

Wallington County Grammar School

Procedures (*London Safeguarding Children Board, 2007*) must be followed (available from the designated person). The Sutton Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) has adopted these procedures. This policy and procedure also accords with:

- DfES guidance - "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" (*DfES 2006*); and
- "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (*HM Government, 2010*).

If lower level concerns or needs (i.e. not child protection) are identified about a particular student the Sutton Common Assessment Framework (flowchart available at www.sutton.gov.uk) should be followed.

DEFINITION

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students relates to any child or young person (i.e. under 18 years of age) who has suffered from, or **may be at risk of** physical injury, neglect, emotional abuse or sexual abuse.

RECOGNITION

The first indication of concern about a student's welfare is not necessarily the presence of a serious injury. Concerns may be because of:

- bruises or marks on a student's body;
- remarks made by the student another student a parent or another adult;
- observations of the student's behaviour;
- unexplained changes in the student's behaviour or personality;
- evidence of disturbance or explicit detail about abuse or possible abuse in a student's play, drawing or writing;
- evidence of neglect, failure to thrive or exposure to unnecessary risks;
- unauthorised absence from school and / or
- information about the parent(s) / carer(s) of the child or their home background.

DESIGNATED STAFF FOR CHILD PROTECTION
--

Our Designated Person for safeguarding children is Du vessa Quinn and their deputy when they are absent is Jonathan Wilden. They are responsible for child protection issues. Any member of staff concerned about a student should tell the Designated Person immediately. If they are unavailable you should talk to whoever is deputising or to the Head Teacher. We also have a nominated governor for child protection who is Brenda Morley and their deputy is Paul Huitson. The Designated Person has a responsibility to:

- liaise with the nominated governor, the local authority Education and Children and Family Services, Police and other agencies on individual child protection cases;
- act as the contact person within the school, providing advice and support and

Wallington County Grammar School

ensuring that all staff (including temporary, supply staff and volunteers and members of the governing body) are aware of their role;

- be responsible for co-ordinating action within the school on child protection issues;
- discuss individual cases with staff on a “need to know basis” to protect children's right to confidentiality;
- oversee the planning of any curricular or other provision in relation to child protection matters;
- with any other relevant staff (e.g. class teacher, tutor, year head), represent the school at child protection meetings and be a member of a “Core Group” if required;
- ensure staff are familiar with this Policy and Procedure, the London Child Protection Procedures, and DoE (*previously DCSF and DfES*) guidance;
- raise awareness about child protection on an ongoing basis;
- together with the head teacher and local authority safeguarding children training officer, arrange child protection training for **all** (i.e. including ancillary) staff at least once every three years (and for new staff commencing work between whole school training sessions or absent for such sessions arrange attendance at induction sessions arranged by the local authority);
- ensure that they (the Designated Person and the deputy) receive update training at least every 2 years; and
- attend the Sutton Child Protection Designated Person Support Group once each term.

THE ROLE OF INDIVIDUAL STAFF

Everyone in the school must be alert to the possibility that any student, regardless of race, religion, culture, class or family background, could be the victim of abuse or neglect and must be familiar with these procedures. Concern about a student must be discussed with the Designated Person immediately so that if necessary, a referral can be made without delay. In urgent situations, referral must not be delayed.

Members of staff should not investigate child protection concerns. This is done by Children's Social Services (in Sutton, the Children and Family Service) or the Police. However, if a student says something, it is vital to listen carefully, so you can record and report it accurately. Records will also assist other members of staff who may have concerns.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

Our students and their parents have the right to expect all staff to deal sensitively and sympathetically with their situation. It is important that information is only available to those who need to know it. Parents and where appropriate students should be told their right to confidentiality may be breached if information comes to light suggesting possible harm to a young person. Child protection issues relating to individual cases must not be subject to open discussion in the staff room or elsewhere in the school.

Members of staff should also remember not to promise to students to keep “secrets” (see

Wallington County Grammar School

procedure below).

WORKING WITH CHILDREN

We recognise that young people who are abused, neglected, or who witness abuse or neglect may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helpless, humiliated and a sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the student through:

- the content of the curriculum;
- the school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives students a sense of being valued;
- the school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school; we will ensure that students know that some behaviour is unacceptable and that they are valued and not blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
- liaison with other agencies that support students such as social services, the child and adolescent mental health service, the borough school attendance service and the educational psychology service; and
- ensuring that, where a student with a child protection plan leaves the school, their information is transferred to any new school or college immediately and that the social worker is informed.

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, TRAINING AND SUPERVISION OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

In our recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers we will at all times adhere to the Government guidance contained within "*Working Together to Safeguard Children*" (HM Government 2010) and "*Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*" (DfES 2006).

In particular we will ensure that our interview panellists are appropriately trained (safer recruitment training has been required for at least one person on an interview panel since January 2010), that we always follow up gaps in previous employment, that we always require specific references from employers for the last five years and that for all posts, paid and voluntary, the appropriate Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) disclosure.

We keep a central record of all staff with the date and outcome of their CRB check so at all times staff and pupils and parents can be assured this has been done.

CONTRACTORS AND OUTSIDE SERVICES

We expect all contractors providing services within the school whose staff have access to school premises to comply with this policy and the attached procedure. The contractor or individual must agree to this in writing.

In particular we require any contractor or organisation delivering a service on behalf of the school or using our premises to provide evidence they adhere to the above requirements in terms of recruitment, selection, training and supervision of their staff and any volunteers,

Wallington County Grammar School

in particular CRB disclosure checks. Checks are usually only required if a contractor's member of staff will be left unsupervised.

This policy and procedure will also apply to any organisation using school facilities. They must agree to this in writing.

Wallington County Grammar School

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURE

If concern arises about the welfare of a student the following procedure must be followed.

DO NOT DELAY

- tell the Designated Person as soon as you can - it may be necessary to interrupt a lesson to do this - do not leave notes in the Designated Person's pigeonhole as they may not get back to check their post until the end of the day once the child has gone home;
- early referral gives more time to offer help to the student and family before the situation becomes severe or serious;
- when the matter is already severe or serious, early referral gives more time for others to protect the student
- the Designated Person may consult the Borough School Attendance Service or Children's Social Services (in Sutton, the Children and Family Service).

MAKE WRITTEN NOTES

- at the earliest opportunity make a written record of your concerns - record facts accurately and be clear when you are expressing an opinion and the basis for this - these notes will help to ensure accuracy in recalling events later - notes should be legible, signed and dated;
- these notes must be given to the Designated Person as soon as possible.

CONCERN FROM SOMETHING THE CHILD SAYS

Listen - do not ask questions or interrogate. Consider interpreting services if English is a second language.

Remain calm - if you are shocked, upset or angry the student will sense this and this could stop them from saying more.

Reassure - the student has done nothing wrong - tell them it is alright to talk.

Do not promise to keep it secret - tell the student you cannot keep the matter secret and will need to take advice from someone who can help.

REFERRAL PROCESS

If a member of staff wishes to make a referral to Social Services or to the Police they should consult the Designated Person or deputy about how to do this. However, referral must not be delayed - if the Designated Person or deputy is not available a senior member of staff should be advised and the referral made (*see London Child Protection Procedures for details*). The Children and Families Service Referral and Assessment Service will be happy to discuss concerns even if you are not sure at that stage that a referral needs to be made.

REMEMBER

- if in doubt, consult;

Wallington County Grammar School

- do not ignore concerns, even if these are vague;
- your first responsibility is to the student; and
- if you need help or support to manage your own feelings, this can usually be provided.

CONTACT WITH THE FAMILY

Contact with the family should be discussed with the Designated Person, who may consult the Children and Family Social Work Service or the Borough School Attendance Service.

In cases where a minor physical injury causes concern, it is usual school practice to discuss this with the parent or carer. If the explanation suggests a non-accidental cause for the injury (or a failure to protect the student from harm), the (*student*) (as appropriate), parent or carer should be informed that the matter must be referred to the Children and Family Social Work Service.

In cases of possible neglect or emotional abuse, the concern may have built up over a period of time. There may have been discussion previously between school staff and the family about sources of help (e.g. the Children and Family Social Work Service), but if concerns persist, the Designated Person will need to refer to the Children and Family Service and will normally advise the family of this.

In cases where there are suspicions of sexual abuse, the Designated Person will seek immediate advice from the Children and Family Social Work Service before discussing this with the family.

RECORDING

- all records relating to child welfare concerns will be kept on the students's file and the file will be kept secure - a chronology of concern should be kept;
- where there are concerns about a student, our file (if paper) is easily distinguishable from others where there are no concerns and our electronic files have an appropriate "flag" to indicate there are concerns about the student;
- we will keep written records of any concerns about students, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately;
- information from records will only be accessed by staff on a "need to know" basis;
- staff will need to know when a student is subject to a Child Protection Plan (previously the Child Protection Register), so they can monitor the student's welfare;
- records relating to the student's welfare will remain on the student's file as long as the student is a pupil at the school;
- when the student leaves the school, the new school or college will be advised in writing that our records contain information about child protection concerns even where these are no longer current. Records should be sent in a way that is lawful in terms of the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

CONCERN ABOUT A STAFF MEMBER, CARER OR VOLUNTEER

- allegations or concerns about a member of staff, worker or volunteer must immediately

Wallington County Grammar School

be notified to the head teacher (or the chair of governors if the concern is about the head teacher);

- the head teacher (or chair of governors) will always consult the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (contactable through the Children and Family Service);
- following consultation, the head teacher (or chair of governors) will decide on appropriate action:
 - ❖ immediate referral to the Children and Family Social Work Service
 - ❖ consideration of disciplinary proceedings
- it is important to bear in mind that although the concern may relate to an individual student, other students may also be at risk;
- the procedures in "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" (DfES, 2006) and the Sutton LSCB Procedure will be followed in such cases;
- when appropriate (see *guidance above*), consideration will be given to referral of a member of staff to the Independent Safeguards Authority (ISA) for consideration of the case.

HARM, FROM OR TO, OTHER CHILDREN

- abuse or concerns about a risk of abuse or harm by other young people is subject to the same safeguarding procedures as in respect of young people being abused by an adult;
- professionals responding should be alert to the risk a child may pose to children other than any "current" victim; and
- young people who harm others are likely to have considerable needs themselves (e.g. they may have been subjected to abuse, witnessed domestic violence or committed criminal offences).

In such cases there will usually be a need to refer the alleged perpetrator of harm to the Children and Families Service.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE VISITS

We will seek the consent of our host families to carry out checks with the appropriate local authority to ensure suitability. In the event that a host family has been subject of some kind of concern, unless there is a satisfactory resolution, the family will be regarded as unsuitable to receive or continue to host a pupil from overseas.

We will take reasonable steps to ensure that a comparable approach is taken our companion schools abroad. New guidance available, makes it the parent's responsibility.

REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE BY OTHER AGENCIES

- school staff have a legal duty to assist local authority Children and Family Social Care Services or the Police when they are making enquiries about the welfare of students;
- information about a student must therefore be shared on a "need to know" basis with other agencies;

Wallington County Grammar School

- when telephone requests for information are received, **always** maintain security by checking the telephone number listing for the caller and calling back to a switchboard number **before** giving information or confirming the student is on the school roll;
- always advise the designated person about such requests for information;
- requests for attendance at meetings about individual students (e.g. child protection conferences) should be notified to the designated person, who will arrange preparation of a report and attendance at the meeting;
- reports should contain information about the child's:
 - ❖ academic progress
 - ❖ attendance
 - ❖ behaviour
 - ❖ relationships with children and adults
 - ❖ family
 - ❖ any other relevant matter;
- reports should be objective, distinguishing between fact, observation, allegation and opinion;
- unless you specify otherwise, reports will normally be made available to the student's family.

PUPILS/STUDENTS SUBJECT TO A CHILD PROTECTION PLAN

- the school will be told by the relevant local authority Children and Family Social Work Service when a student is subject to a Child Protection Plan (previously the Child Protection Register) whether the London Borough of Sutton or another local authority;
- the name of the key social worker must be clearly recorded on the student's record;
- the school will participate fully in the work of Core Groups for these students to assist with the objectives of the Child Protection Plan for the student;
- when a student is subject to a Child Protection Plan, the school will report all unexplained absences even if only of a day;
- when a student is subject to a Child Protection Plan, the school will report all behavioural changes or other concerns to the key social worker; and
- when a student who is subject to a Child Protection Plan leaves the school all the child protection information will be transferred to any new school or college.

GENERAL ISSUES

All staff must observe the above policy and procedure at all times. They will be reviewed annually and as required in line with changes in local (LSCB) or national guidance.

SUTTON CONTACT DETAILS

LB Sutton Children & Families, Referral & Assessment Service (RAS) - 020 8770 4343/4263

LB Sutton (out of office hours) Children & Families Emergency Duty Social Work Team

Wallington County Grammar School

(EDT) - 020 8770 5000

LBS Child Protection Advisor (Quality & Performance Unit) - 020 8770 4532 (if unavailable ask for the deputy or contact the Referral and Assessment Service)

LBS Education, Safeguarding Children Adviser, Training and Development Officer - 020 8770 6262 (if unavailable contact the Referral and Assessment Service)

Adopted by Full Governing Body on 10th November 2010