



HALSTEAD
PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

The Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO) at this school is the Deputy Head – Miss M Eaton. She is also responsible for the Early Years Foundation Stage - EYFS.

Halstead broadly follows the Guidelines set out by Surrey County Council and complies with *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*. This policy is in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures and is available to parents on the school website or as a copy on request.

Report any concerns to the Headmistress/ Deputy Head immediately.

We are concerned about the subject of Child Abuse. All staff should be aware of the definitions and the procedures to follow should a suspected case occur. We should be aware of the value of records that must be kept, and the urgency of communicating any concerns to the Head or Deputy Head.

Should a member of staff suspect child abuse in any of the categories listed below, they should report their concerns to the Head or the Deputy Head immediately.

The definitions of Child Abuse are:

Physical Abuse

may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing harm to a child by fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing ill health to a child.

Emotional Abuse

is persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve: 'conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person, age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.'
Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

'involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.'

Neglect

'is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

The Head or Deputy Head would carefully consider the case. It will be a matter for their personal judgement as to whether the case needs to be taken further.

Even if the matter is not reported, it is essential that a record is kept of any relevant information. This record should be confidential and kept in a secure place (with the Head or Deputy Head) so that it is available should the case need activating. All responsible should make sure their names appear, and records are all dated. Records of such matters will be entered in a document called a **CONCERN LOG**.

If the Head or Deputy Head decides there is a firm cause for concern, then referral to Social Services would be done, initially by phone, and then confirmed in writing with the time and date of the call. This will occur within 24 hours of a disclosure.

Confidentiality should be stressed to all concerned and involved in dealing with the case.

The Head or Deputy Head will be notified of the outcome of the investigation, and invited to the case conference should one be called. Where applicable, the reporting teacher will be involved.

Should the child be placed on the Child Protection Register, the Head, Deputy Head and class teacher will be asked to monitor the situation.

In all cases of suspected or proven child abuse, procedures would be followed in line with the **MANUAL OF CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES**.
This manual is held in the school office.

Action to be taken if Abuse is suspected

1. On every occasion that a member of staff has reason to suspect that a pupil has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, the designated CPLO must be informed. Action to be taken – discussion with Head and then contact with Children and Families Case Manager as in point 2 below.
This includes any cases where the allegation is against a teacher or for dealing with abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil.
2. Having been informed the CPLO will contact their Children and Families Case Manager in the relevant Social Services Team who will discuss and advise on the next step(s) to be taken. Addresses and telephone numbers of the relevant teams are on the front inside cover of the Surrey Area Child Protection Committee 'Manual of Child Protection Procedures'.

3. Should the disclosure or suspicion of abuse involve a member of the School or staff, the CPLO must still refer the matter to the Social Services. It must also be reported to the Chairman of Governors. If, on the evidence, Social Services believe there to be sufficient grounds for further investigation, the Headteacher needs to give consideration to suspending the member of staff, pending the outcome of the investigation and seek the Governing Body's approval to the suspension.
4. In the exceptional case where the Headmistress is suspected, the staff member made aware of the allegations should report it to the Chairman of Governors and Chairman of Education Committee, notifying each that the other is being/ has been informed.
5. It is important that an accurate record is kept of all that has occurred, stating the facts of the injury, times, explanations and action taken and anything that has been reported by the child.
6. When a referral is made to the Social Services the CLPO must confirm in writing with the Case Manager of the Social Services Team the actions that have been taken and send a copy to the Chairman of Governors
7. School staff should **not** notify or make enquiries of parents with regard to suspected abuse, even if a pupil has been taken to hospital. Indeed, in some cases it could be counter productive to do so. Social Services, in accepting the referral, become responsible for determining what action is to be taken, including advising the parents.
8. When a pupil is in need of urgent medical attention and there is suspicion of abuse, the CPLO should take the pupil to the Accident and Emergency Department at the nearest hospital, having notified Social Services. There must at all times be a responsible adult in attendance with the pupil, whether from the school or Social Services.
9. Any visitor to the school, such as an Education Welfare Officer, Educational Psychologist or Therapist, who suspects that a pupil has been abused should follow the same procedure detailed above.

Informal Advice

The Social Services Case Manager of the Social Services Team is always willing to discuss concerns informally and assist and advise the CPLO in coming to a decision as to whether to make a referral.

Disclosures From Children

If a child volunteers information about abuse to a member of staff, it may sometimes be done obliquely rather than directly.

An abused child is likely to be under severe emotional stress and the staff member may be the only adult whom the child is prepared to trust.

When information is offered in confidence, a member of staff will need to display tact and sensitivity in responding to the disclosure. A member of staff will need to reassure the child and retain his/her trust while explaining the need for action, which will necessarily involve other adults being informed.

Schools are advised to set up a system whereby if a child discloses abuse the child should not have to repeat the information to different people. Any such discussions with the child should, as far as possible, adhere to the following basic principles.

- a) Listen to the child rather than directly question him or her or suggest words for him/ her to use. Avoid asking leading questions.
- b) Never stop the child who is freely recalling significant events;
- c) Make a note of the discussion, taking care to record the timing, setting and the personnel present, as well as what was said.
- d) Record all subsequent events up to the time of the formal interview by the investigating team.

Staff should be aware that in the event of criminal proceedings being instituted, the records of any interviews with the child will at some stage be disclosed to the Crown Prosecution Service

Dilemmas of Confidentiality

Adults in schools may find a dilemma in a child's request for confidentiality in a circumstance where the adult may need to report on to the CPLO or to Social Services. We should never promise complete confidentiality in these cases- the adult has to tell the child honestly that they may not be able to keep the conversation confidential and explain why. This may sometimes result in the child choosing to close the discussion and that might be accepted as the child's right. Where adults have concern that a child is being abused or is at risk of being abused (whether the child says anything or not) they have the responsibility to report their concerns to the CPLO.

Adults in schools are used to handling confidential information about the children, and it may create conflict when they are required to disclose that information. In cases of actual or suspected abuse where the procedures are being used, the best interests of the child are paramount and confidentiality cannot be held to if it in any way hampers the conduct of the investigation.

Advice to staff

Comforting girls: it is important to 'cuddle' a distressed or unhappy child. In KS1 staff may sit a child on their lap to comfort them as long as other staff are in the vicinity and the doors are open. In KS2 staff sit next to a girl that needs comforting and put an arm round her. Male staff must avoid all physical contact and handle any contact initiated by a child very carefully.

Changing underwear for KS1 girls: during break time any girl who needs her underwear changed is taken to the Yr 1 & 2 cloakroom by a member of pre-prep staff on duty. The other person on duty is informed so that they are aware the child is being changed. All doors are left open. If the pupil is in Nursery or Kindergarten, the member of staff telephones the staff room for another member of Pre-prep staff to collect dry clothing from their cloakroom and stay to assist with changing. This is not necessary with Yr 1 & 2 girls.

After 3 o'clock when their classroom assistants have left for the day, Yr 1 & 2 teaching staff send a girl to collect an assistant from Nursery or Kindergarten to help with changing while they continue to teach the rest of the class.

Child Protection Training for staff

The CPLO and Headmistress are trained every two years in child protection and inter-agency working. All other staff receive training in child protection at least every three years. Part time and voluntary staff are made aware of the arrangements under their training.

The Headmistress, Deputy Head and Bursar are also trained in 'Safer Recruitment' as part of the NCSL scheme and the school operates safe recruitment procedures including CRB checks and compliance with Independent School Standards Regulations. See Recruitment policy (available in school office).

Appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to all staff employed by another organisation and working with the school's pupils on another site (for example a separate institution).

Parents/volunteers accompanying a residential trip will be CRB checked.

Referrals and Contact Details

Safeguarding 0300 200 1006

Out of hours: 01483 517898

The CPLO will report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) within one month of leaving the school any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children. Its address for referral is ISA, PO Box 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA (0300 123 1111).

Review

The governing body undertakes an annual review of the school's child protection policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.

Any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements will be remedied without delay.