

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

The governors and staff of Leicester High School for Girls recognise fully the contribution they make to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm.

All staff and governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual pupil.

This policy and procedures are consistent with

- The legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, as described in section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the DCSF guidance *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (January 2007)*
- The Leicester City, Leicestershire and Rutland Local Safeguarding Children Board. Full details of the LSCB procedures and practice guidance can be found at www.lscb-llr.org.uk
- Leicester City Council, Education Child Protection Procedures (January 2009)

Designated Child Protection Officers

Leicester High School has two designated Child Protection Officers

- The Assistant Head for child protection issues in the Senior School (pupils in Years 6 to 13 inclusive)
- The Head of the Junior Department for child protection issues in the Early Years Foundation Stage (pupils in Years F and R) and in the Junior Department (pupils in Years 1 to 5 inclusive)

There is also an appointed deputy for child protection (Head of Year 8) in the event of the unavailability of the designated senior Child Protection Officers..

Aims

The aims of this policy are

- To support each pupil's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence
- To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm
- To emphasize the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff
- To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Social Services

- To ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability.

As a school we fully support the Every Child Matters agenda, to ensure all pupils have the support they need to

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

Policies

We will ensure that

- The Assistant Head and the Head of the Junior Department, as designated Child Protection Officers, will undertake training in child protection and inter-agency working every 2 years
- The staff and Head will undertake child protection training every 3 years to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse, and the importance of responding to disclosures of abuse.
- All applicants for both teaching and non-teaching posts will receive a copy of the school's child protection policy as part of the information pack sent to all those who request details of a post.
- All applicants who are invited to interview will be questioned on child protection issues.
- All new members of staff (teaching and support) will be given a copy of our child protection procedures as part of their induction into the school, and will receive child protection training from the Assistant Head
- All volunteers will be given a copy of our child protection procedures as part of their induction into the school, and will receive child protection training from the Assistant Head
- All members of staff know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse.
- Appropriate child protection checks will be obtained and will apply to any staff employed by another organization and working with the school's pupils on another site.
- All parents are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through the parents' handbook.
- A member of the governing body (Margaret Banks) is appointed with responsibility for child protection.
- There are opportunities in curriculum activities and in PSHE and Citizenship that equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know to whom they can turn for help.
- The school operates safe recruitment procedures.

Responsibilities

The designated Child Protection Officers are responsible for:

- Adhering to the Leicester City, Leicestershire and Rutland LSCB Procedures and Policies with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse. Contact with the appropriate welfare agency should be made within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicions of abuse.
- Keeping written records of concerns about a child

- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely in a lockable filing cabinet in the Head's office and are therefore separate from pupil records.
- Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records
- Ensuring that any pupil currently on the child protection register who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to Social Services.

Contact Details

Suite 4
 Bridge Park Plaza
 Bridge Park Road
 Thurmaston
 Leicester
 LE4 8ZW

Tel: 0116 260 0004

Record Keeping Protocol

- Records will contain only factual information. Working notes passed by individual members of staff to the Assistant Head will be placed on file
- The Head, Deputy Head, Assistant Head and Head of the Junior Department only will have access to the records. If an outside agency becomes involved the Chair of the Governors may request to see the relevant records. Parents may (under DCSF Circular LA83/14) make a formal request to see their child's record but access may be denied.

Definitions

Child Abuse means

- Physical injury
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

Signs of abuse may be

- Obvious and sudden e.g. an injury
- Developing over a longer period of time e.g. unusual behaviour, changes in attitude or level of interest, isolation or introversion, weight loss

Staff may become concerned when

- A pupil tells them about ill-treatment which has happened to her or to a friend, brother or sister
- An adult claims that a child has been mistreated

Supporting Pupils

If a member of staff has a concern that a child has been mistreated either physically, emotionally, sexually or by neglect by an adult or by one or more pupils s/he should

- Take what is said seriously and reassure the pupil
- Listen carefully and react to what the pupil is saying with belief

- Make it clear that if physical or sexual abuse is disclosed such information cannot remain confidential
- Tell the pupil what the member of staff is going to do
- Report the conversation to the Assistant Head or the Head of the Junior Department as appropriate as the designated Child Protection Officers
- Write a signed and dated note of what has been noticed, said and done and give this to the Head
- Keep a regular watch on the pupil

It is also important that the member of staff does NOT

- Interrogate the pupil or ask leading questions
- Make promises which cannot be kept (to keep the matter secret)
- Contact the parents (this is the job of Social Services)
- Speak with anyone about whom allegations are made or to anyone other than the Head or designated Child Protection Officers.

If a member of staff is implicated the Head must be informed immediately.

Confidentiality

- The Assistant Head or the Head of the Junior Department, as designated Child Protection Officers, will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

Supporting Staff

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

Allegations against a member of staff / volunteer / Head

- If a pupil, a parent or another adult makes an allegation against a member of staff or a volunteer the Head must be informed immediately. The child cannot be guaranteed confidentiality.
- A dated and timed note of what has been disclosed must be written and passed on to the Head. The note should distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion.
- If the allegation concerns the Head the Chair of Governors must be informed.
- The Head or Chair of Governors as appropriate, will inform Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if
 - the child has, or may have, been harmed
 - the subject of the allegation may have committed a criminal offence
 - the subject of the allegation has behaved in a way which indicates and s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

- Where the Head and the LADO suspect that significant harm may have caused to the child the LADO will contact social services and a strategy meeting will be held. Where a criminal offence is suspected a meeting with the police will be convened.
- The Head and the LADO will discuss how the parents of the child should be informed during their initial consideration.
- The Head must notify the subject of the allegation as soon as possible. Where social services or the police will be involved, they will need to be contacted first so that there is an inter-agency agreement about what can and should be disclosed. The member of staff / volunteer should be advised to contact their union and be kept informed of the progress of the case. The Head should make detailed notes.
- Suspension should be considered only if the child is, or may be, at risk of significant harm, if there is going to be a police investigation or if the matter might lead to dismissal. If suspended, the member of staff / volunteer should be kept informed of developments at school. If not suspended, the Head will need to consider how to manage contact between the member of staff / volunteer and the child, or between the member of staff / volunteer and the whistle-blower will be handled.
- Within 3 working days of the CPS or social services deciding on a course of action all relevant information must be passed to the Head so that the disciplinary case can proceed.
- Where no formal disciplinary action is needed the Head should take action within 3 days. This may involve returning a person to work who has been suspended and reintroducing him/her to the child.
- If a disciplinary hearing is to be held, it must be heard within 15 days of the decision being made.
- If the subject of the allegation is dismissed because s/he is unsuitable to work with children, has acted in a way that constitutes misconduct or has a medical condition that raises concerns about the safety of welfare of children, the governing body must inform the Independent Safeguarding Authority within one month, the name of any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) leaving the school because s/he is considered unsuitable to work with children. The ISA address for referrals is PO Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA (tel: 0300 123 1111). In this context, ceasing to use a person's services includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed-term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training or volunteering. Reports must include as much evidence about the circumstances as possible. The subject of the referral must be informed and advised to retain any paperwork. The ISA will consider the matter and after investigating, may place the person on the Protection of Children Act List or on List 99. Where the allegations are shown to be false the LADO will consider referring the matter to social services so that they can investigate why the child made the allegation. The Head must decide whether or not to discipline the child.
- All records must be placed in the member of staff's file and kept for 10 years or until the person retires.

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Head of the Junior Department will act as designated Child Protection Officer for the EYFS and will:

- take responsibility for safeguarding children within the EYFS and liaising with local children's agencies as appropriate;
- inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working 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 on the premises and of the action taken in respect of these allegations;
- inform Ofsted of the above, as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days.
- inform local child protection agencies of any serious accident or serious injury to, or the death of, any child whilst in our care and act on any advice given.

Further guidance is available in the DCSF publication *What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – Summary*.

Guidance for staff

All members of staff should ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil, for example in one-to-one tuition, sports coaching, conveying a pupil by car, engaging in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil. Staff should ensure that they are never alone with a pupil in a room that has no windows or a door with a window in it. It is good practice for male members of staff to inform the Assistant Head if they are seeing a girl in a one-to-one situation.

Other related policies

The school also has the following policies which relate to child protection issues

- Anti-bullying
- Behaviour and discipline
- Health and safety
- Sex and relationships
- Race discrimination
- Recruitment Policy and Procedures, including appropriate child protection checks
- E Safety and Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy

Review

These policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated as required and always after the two-yearly Child Protection Officer training. Any deficiencies or weakness in the child protection arrangements are remedied without delay.

The governing body undertakes an annual review of the school's child protection policies and procedures during its October meeting. It will also review the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.