



Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School

Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

(including the Early Years Foundation Stage)

Responsibilities listed below are for the whole school, including the EYFS:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Michael Armitage Head of Pastoral Care
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Company Director with Responsibility for Safeguarding Matters:
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Most recent update and review by Michael Armitage, DSL September 2017

General Principles:

The safety and welfare of our pupils at Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School is our highest priority. We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for pupils, staff and visitors and promoting a climate where pupils and adults feel valued and respected and are confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others.

This policy is applicable to all 'on' and 'off' site activities undertaken by pupils whilst they are the responsibility of the School. It is made available to parents on the school website and a paper copy is available in the school office upon request.

Ravenscourt Park's Safeguarding Policy draws on the principles of the following documents:

Children Acts 1989 and 2004,

S175/157 of the 2002 Education Act

Education and Inspections Act 2006

Ofsted Guidance issued in 2011

[Teacher's Standards 2012](#)

[Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(effective September 2014\)](#)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children \(DfE March 2015\)](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE September 2016\) \(KCSIE\)](#)

[Information Sharing \(DfE March 2015\)](#)

[What to do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused \(DfE March 2015\)](#)

[Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults Who Work with Children and Young People in Education Settings \(2009\)](#)

[The Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales](#) (March 2015) including [non-statutory advice](#) and a briefing note on the [use of social media for online radicalisation](#)

Independent Schools' Inspectorate: Handbook for the Inspection of Schools, the Regulatory Requirements

[Procedures produced by the Local Borough Safeguarding Children Board \(LSCB\) for Hammersmith](#)

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1. Duty of Care

This school recognises its duty of care to work with other agencies in protecting children from harm and responding to abuse. In line with the statutory requirements as specified in the documents referred to above, regarding children's welfare, suitability of people working within the school and appropriate environments, we are committed to:

- Taking necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Promoting the good health of the children, taking necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when they are ill
- Managing children's behaviour effectively and in a manner appropriate for their stage of development and particular individual needs
- Ensuring that adults looking after children, or having unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so through thorough records of evidence of identity
- Maintaining records, policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the school to meet the needs of the children
- Ensuring adults looking after children have appropriate qualifications, training, skills and knowledge
- Ensuring that all staff (part time and non-teaching staff) have regular training in Safeguarding which is updated at least every two years, in accordance with advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- Ensuring that all staff (including part time, voluntary and non-teaching) have read and sign their agreement to comply with the School's Safeguarding Policy
- Ensure that all regular volunteers (4 days in 30, or once a week – working with the same children) complete thorough vetting process
- Ensure that the DSL, DDSL and Director with responsibility have relevant training in Safeguarding
- Ensure that the DSL and DDSL meet regularly for updates and conference of issues
- Organising staffing arrangements to ensure safety and to meet the needs of the children
- Ensuring outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys are safe and suitable for their purpose through risk assessments
- Ensuring staff in a one on one situation are clear on safeguarding procedures to protect all involved
- Planning and organising our systems to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs

As part of our commitment we will ensure that we are in possession of all pupil records from previous schools. We will in turn forward school records to prospective schools if there has been a safeguarding issue under separate cover from the school report, direct to the relevant safeguarding person. Any non-arrival and/or long term absence of pupils is followed up by the Head of Section.

2. Introduction

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's responsibility**. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure that their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests of the child**.

Recognising or suspecting that a child is being abused may be stressful and upsetting. It is easy for people to believe that it couldn't happen to children for whom they care.

Children are harmed in all sorts of families and in most instances the person causing the harm is well known to the child. It is important to recognise that abuse to a child can occur not only by the conscious act of abuse but by the omission of providing an adequate environment for the child to grow and develop.

All staff should be alert of the possibility that a child may be being abused and to know what to do should they be concerned about a child's welfare. This abuse, which may be emotional, mental, physical, sexual or neglect, may manifest itself in unusual and worrying patterns of behaviour and/or visible signs of injuries. This document outlines the procedures to be followed in those circumstances in which child abuse is suspected.

All staff should be familiar with the procedures for keeping a confidential, written record of any incidents and with the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (Hammersmith and Fulham): <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/sharedservices/lscb.aspx>

At Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School we recognise our duty of care is to work with other agencies to protect children from harm and respond to abuse. Our policy is to report all cases where the well-being of a child is threatened to the relevant Local Authority Children's Services or local police force and to log this information in the confidential Child Protection File.

All staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. It is therefore important that the school:

- Maintains an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- Ensures that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried;
- Supports children who have been abused, in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan;
- Includes opportunities in the PSHCE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse;
- Follows a policy of safe recruitment, checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers;
- Ensures all staff are familiar with the policy and follow procedures detailed in this document promptly when child abuse is suspected;
- Ensures all staff are trained in child protection, updated every 2 years and any part time or voluntary staff who work with the children are made aware of the arrangements;
- Designates a senior member of staff as Safeguarding Lead, along with a Deputy;
- Ensures that all staff that have access to children have very clear guidelines on how they should interact with children;
- Ensures the Board of Directors undertakes a rigorous annual review of the school's child protection policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged and corrects any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements without delay.

3. Role of the Proprietors

The Proprietors takes seriously their responsibilities under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and Section 87 of the Children's Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of

children and to work together with other agencies to ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation and that adequate arrangements are in place within the school to identify, assess and support those children where there are concerns about a child's safety and welfare. This is done in line with "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2015, through effective implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and procedures and effective communication and good cooperation with local agencies.

The Proprietors of the School will ensure that policies, procedures and training are effective and are compliant with the law. They must also have regard to this guidance to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are effective and comply with the law at all times.

The Proprietors will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep safe children who are looked after by the Local Authority. This includes ensuring that a designated member of staff has responsibility for their welfare and progress and has up to date assessment information from the Local Authority, the most recent care plan, contact arrangements with parents and delegated authority to carers, and that this information is available to the DSL. Please refer to the *Looked After Child Policy*.

The Proprietors will ensure that the school contributes to inter-agency work where appropriate, for example supporting pupils and staff with the implementation of child protection plans.

The Proprietors will consider how children may be taught about safeguarding, including online, through the curriculum and PSHE. Particular attention is paid to school practices to help children to adjust their behaviours in order to reduce risks, including the safe use of electronic equipment and access to the internet.

The Proprietors have appointed a senior member of staff to lead on safeguarding (Michael Armitage) who is on the Senior Leadership Team and who will liaise with the Local Authority and other agencies and is given the time and training to support staff on child welfare and safeguarding matters.

The Proprietors have appointed a Director, Theo Brehony, who is nominated to liaise with the Local Authority or other agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Head and is responsible for reporting such allegations directly to the LADO. Any allegations against staff or volunteers will be referred to the LADO. Where allegations are substantiated, referrals will be made as required to the DBS and National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL). This is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.

The Safeguarding Director is responsible for taking the lead in relation to responsibility for the School's safeguarding arrangements as well as ensuring the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual children through ensuring there are systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Proprietors must ensure that staff members always act in the interests of the child.

The Board of Directors undertake a rigorous annual review of the school's child protection procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. Each year the Proprietor will sign off the newly updated policy. The date for the next review is September 2017.

The Proprietors are aware that they have a legal duty to respond to requests from the DBS for information they hold already, but they do not have to find it from other sources.

Governing bodies and proprietors should recognise the expertise staff build up by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis. Opportunity should therefore be provided for staff to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and child protection policy.

4. The Responsibilities of staff:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the whole school is Michael Armitage. The Deputy DSL is Simon Gould. Their roles and the policy applies to all children within Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School including the EYFS.

All adults working in this school (including visiting staff, volunteers and students on placement) are required to report instances of suspected or actual child abuse or neglect to the DSL or, in his absence, to the Deputy DSL.

Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff should be reported to the Head. If the Head is unavailable, or the allegation is against him, the matter should be reported to the Director with specific responsibility for safeguarding.

All staff members must be aware of the child protection systems in school and all should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

Any staff member can refer their concerns to children's social care directly.

The Head

- Where an allegation is made against an adult (a paid member of staff or a volunteer) working at the school, the Head will refer the matter without delay to the LADO and to the police (if a criminal offence is suspected).

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the first point of contact for all staff with any concerns relating to children within Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School. This role also includes being the lead person with responsibility for safeguarding children in the Early Years setting where the DSL is also known as the 'Lead Practitioner'.
- The DSL is also the contact for external agencies who are pursuing Child Protection investigations and co-ordinates the School's representation at Child Protection conferences and Core Group meetings (including the submission of written reports for conferences). The DSL will make prompt contact with Children's Social Care where there are concerns that a child may be in need of help or at risk of harm.

Management and monitoring of Safeguarding policy and procedures

The DSL shall:

- Regularly liaise with the Health and Safety Committee to ensure a secure and safe physical environment for the children to minimise risk of physical injury and to identify areas which may be considered 'problem places';
- Produce effective, compliant Safeguarding Documents and ensure all staff are familiar with the contents and ensure these are updated and reviewed as necessary;

- Ensure the Safeguarding Policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this;
- Induct all staff on the school policies and procedures for dealing with suspected concerns regarding children's welfare as well as abuse/bullying ensuring all staff (including Early Years) have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues;
- Ensure that staff understand their responsibilities; are able to identify and are alert to the possible signs of abuse and neglect and that they act at the earliest opportunity responding in a timely and appropriate way by knowing the reporting procedures and referral process;
- Induct all staff on the need for professionalism and whistle blowing, reiterating our culture of safety and of raising concerns. Procedures for reporting and handling concerns, the provision of mediation and dispute resolution are detailed within this Safeguarding Policy.
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding documents are given, discussed, understood and agreement to comply obtained from all staff. Refer to the Induction Process for list of documents.
- Provide, maintain and securely store confidential records of any concerns logged on a Safeguarding form and any associated evidence;
- Keep a 'Welfare Log' where staff may record concerns regarding children as well as inappropriate behaviour towards them by children (see appendix);
- Regular reviews of cases that have been raised with the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, Head and Senior Leadership team;
- Ensure where children leave the school that their confidential child protection file is copied for any new school and transferred separately from the main pupil file;
- Ensure all staff have basic training in child protection which is reviewed every 2 years (copies of training undertaken is filed with Head of CPD);
- Undertake regular inter-agency training every 2 years in order to:
 - Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention
 - Have a working knowledge of how the LA conducts a child protection case conference
 - Be alert to the specific needs of all children in need.
 - Identify children at risk of radicalisation
 - Maintain high quality record keeping
 - Promote a culture of listening to children
- Ensure all staff have enhanced DBS checks, in liaison with the Bursar in accordance with the requirements set out in KCSIE. (See flow chart appendix).
- Ensure all staff (including temporary, supply, volunteer parents) read and sign Safeguarding Guidelines, having read this Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1 and Annex A) (DfE September 2016), as well as the Staff Code of Conduct. Each time Part One of KCSIE is updated, existing staff must be updated.
- Maintain links with other professional bodies and have a clear understanding of the Local Authority referral procedures with regular meetings throughout the academic year. The DSL will attend twice yearly meetings with inter borough schools directly after the Local

Safeguarding Board meetings for dissemination of information and agreed processes, as well as feedback for good practice.

- Where a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) has been put in place, liaise with the CAF representative to ensure efficient flow of information as necessary;
- Ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements or procedures are remedied without delay;
- Invite the Directors to carry out a thorough and robust audit of safeguarding policies and procedures annually;
- Provide the Directors with an annual review of the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:

The role of the Deputy is to support the DSL specifically in regular discussions about children and updating records as required and to take on the role of DSL in the absence of the nominated Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Board Director with specific responsibility for Safeguarding:

The Board Director with specific responsibility for Safeguarding is Theo Brehony.

The Director will:

- be responsible for undertaking rigorous annual reviews of the policies and procedures that apply to all areas of safeguarding and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.
- be responsible for receiving and discussing updates provided by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5. Staff Training

All staff must read at least Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Each time Part One is updated by the DfE, existing staff must be informed and asked to re-read the information.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy DSL must receive child protection training every two years. This should include inter-agency working protocols and training in the LSCB's approach to *Prevent* duties.

As part of their induction process, all new staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, will be provided with induction training that includes:

- the school's child protection policy including the whistleblowing procedure
- the staff code of conduct
- the identity of the DSL
- a copy of Part 1 and Annex A of KCSIE.

All staff will receive refresher Safeguarding Training each year. This will either be provided 'in house' by the DSL or by a member of the Tri-Borough Safeguarding Team. The training will include the LSCB's approach to *Prevent* duties.

6. Setting the context

All those who come into contact with children have a duty to safeguard and promote their welfare. Pupils' worries and fears must be taken seriously if they seek help from a member of staff. However, staff cannot guarantee confidentiality as concerns may lead to referrals to the appropriate agencies in order to safeguard the child's welfare.

Definitions

6.1 Definition of Child Abuse

Child Abuse refers to a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

6.2 Significant Harm

Some children are in need because they are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm. The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children. The Local Authority is under a duty to make enquiries, or cause enquiries to be made, where it has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm (s47 of the Children Act 1989).

6.3 Child in Need

Children who are defined as being 'in need', in accordance with the Children Act 1989, are those whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services (s17(10) of the Children Act 1989). The critical factors to be taken into account in deciding whether a child is in need under the Children Act 1989 are what will happen to a child's health or development without services, and the likely effect the services will have on the child's standard of health and development.

6.4 Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, including:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying without showing any signs; and
- communication barriers may exist causing difficulty with investigating what the underlying issues are.

6.5 Types of abuse and neglect (from KCSIE 2016)

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse is any form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (eg via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), 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 maltreatment 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, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect: 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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

6.6 Signs and Indicators of possible abuse

Recognising that a child may be being abused can be very difficult. Abuse or possible abuse may come to the attention of staff through one or more of the following indicators:

- The child telling someone about the abuse
- Extreme mood swings
- Depression and withdrawal

- Lethargy, unwillingness to be involved
- Unwillingness to communicate
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment which is needed
- Constant minor injuries
- Unexplained bruising
- Physical signs, such as an injury which arouses cause for concern
 - Bruise marks in or around the mouth
 - Black eyes, especially if both eyes are black and there are no marks to forehead or nose
 - Grasp marks
 - Finger marks
 - Bruising of the ears
 - Linear bruising (particularly buttocks or back)
 - Bruises of differing ages
 - Bite marks
 - Burns (including cigarette burns) and scalds
- General physical disability
- Unresponsiveness in the child
- Soiling and wetting
- Change in behavioural patterns
- Attention seeking
- Apprehension
- Antisocial behaviour
- Unkempt appearance
- Sexually precocious behaviour
- Sexualised drawings and play
- Sudden poor performance in school
- Poor self-esteem
- Self-mutilation
- Running away or going missing
- Reluctance to return home after school
- Resistance to PE (undressing)
- Difficulty in forming relationships
- Confusing affectionate displays
- Poor attendance – repeated infections etc.

In addition, staff should be alert to inappropriate behaviour by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example, inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities or inappropriate sharing of images. Any concerns about the inappropriate behaviour of an adult working in the school must be reported immediately to the Head.

7. Specific Safeguarding Issues

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example NSPCC offers information for schools and colleges on the [TES website](#) and also on its own website www.nspcc.org.uk. As with all safeguarding issues involving children, the DSL should be informed at the earliest opportunity.

Government guidance on the issues listed below can be found on the gov.uk website:

- [bullying including cyberbullying](#)
- [domestic violence](#)
- [drugs](#)
- [fabricated or induced illness](#)
- [faith abuse](#)
- [forced marriage](#)
- [gangs and youth violence](#)
- [gender-based violence/violence against women and girls \(VAWG\)](#)
- [mental health](#)
- [trafficking](#)
- [children who run away or go missing](#)

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

A child going missing from school or home is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. All staff are informed of the separate procedures to be used for searching for, and if necessary, reporting, any pupil missing from school. These procedures have regard to relevant statutory and LSCB guidance in respect of School attendance (November 2016); children missing from home or care (January 2014); Children Missing Education (September 2016).

Please see the School's separate Attendance Policy and Missing Pupil Procedure for further details. These procedures include

- (a) safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, which help identify the risk of abuse and neglect and which help to prevent the risks of the child going missing in future;
- (b) the requirement (A) to record any incident, the action taken and the reasons given by the pupil for being missing; (B) to notify the local authority when the school is about to remove or add a pupil from or to the school admission register at a non-standard transition point; and (C) to make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of a child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register if the deletion is under regulation 8(1)(h), namely that the child has been continuously absent from the school for a period of twenty school days or more.

All staff are aware of their roles to protect children from going missing in education.

It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

- [**Child sexual exploitation \(CSE\):**](#)

CSE is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds

some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- Children who regularly miss school or education or don't take part in education.

Any concerns that a child is being or is at risk of being sexually exploited should be passed without delay to the DSL. The School is aware that a child may not be able to recognise the coercive nature of the abuse and may not see themselves as a victim. As a consequence the child may resent what they perceive as interference by staff. However, staff must act on their concerns as they would for any other victim of abuse.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place include knowing both that the family belongs to a community in which FGM is practised and is making preparations for the child to take a holiday, arranging vaccinations or planning absence from school. The child may also talk about a special procedure/ceremony that is going to take place. Indicators that FGM may already have occurred include prolonged absence from school or other activities with noticeable behaviour change on return, possibly with bladder or menstrual problems. Some teachers have described how children find it difficult to sit still and look uncomfortable, or may complain about pain between their legs, or talk of something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about.

There is a mandatory reporting duty for all teachers in respect of FGM. Where a teacher discovers (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, he or she must personally report it to the police. Those failing to report such cases to the police will face disciplinary sanctions.

Unless there is a good reason not to, the teacher should also consider and discuss the case with the DSL and involve CSC as appropriate. A teacher is not under this duty if: (A) s/he has reason to believe that another teacher has already reported the case;

(B) in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence). For example, staff may hear about the possibility of FGM happening or having happened to a pupil's family member, e.g. sister/female cousin:

- A teacher may hear reference to FGM in conversation between pupils;
- A child may confide that a sister/cousin is to have a 'special procedure' to become a woman;
- A child may report that their sister/cousin is going out of the country for a prolonged period;
- A child may disclose the worry about a sister/cousin being at risk;
- Parents may withdraw a child from any learning about FGM.

(C) and/or (c) where the woman is 18 or over.

In all such cases, teachers should follow normal safeguarding procedures and discuss their concerns with the DSL immediately. The duty does not apply to non-teaching staff who should discuss any concerns that a child may be at risk of FGM with the DSL immediately.

- **Preventing Radicalisation** The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, which received Royal Assent on 12 February 2015, places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, known as "the Prevent duty".

The DSL is the designated Prevent Duty person responsible for co-ordinating action within the School and liaising with other agencies. Although the School assesses the risk to be low at present, the School will implement prevention measures such as applying appropriate restrictions to internet sites likely to promote terrorist and extremist materials, discussing these dangers with pupils when appropriate in suitable forums and providing training to staff to ensure that they are able to identify pupils at risk and know how to intervene.

In addition, an online general awareness training module on Channel can be found [here](#).

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerabilities which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online and with specific needs for which an extremist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people. Factors that may have a bearing on someone becoming vulnerable include, but are not limited to: peer pressure, influence from other people or via the internet, bullying, crime against them or their involvement in crime, anti-social behaviour, family tensions, race/hate crime, lack of self-esteem or identity and personal or political grievances.

Where a pupil or pupils have been identified as being at risk of radicalisation, the DSL must be informed and he will refer to Children's Social Care. CSC will involve the Channel multi-agency programme if considered appropriate.

The DSL will also assess and manage appropriately any risks identified in the vicinity of the School, including those posed by any visiting speakers. The School will work in partnership with the tri-Borough LSCB over such matters; the level of risk will determine the most appropriate referral. Further information is available from the government Channel guidance on radicalisation.

- **Sexting:** although children may not bring mobile devices into school until the final term in Year 6, staff should be alert to the issue of “sexting” between pupils. Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre (CEOP) has [specific advice](#) about this issue.

Sexting refers to both images and videos where:

- a person under the age of 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18;
- a person under the age of 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult; and
- a person under the age of 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18.

If a member of staff becomes aware of an incident involving sexting they should follow the safeguarding procedures and refer to the DSL as soon as possible. The member of staff should confiscate the device involved and set it to flight mode or, if this is not possible, turn it off. Staff should not view, copy or print the imagery.

- **Private fostering**

Children being privately fostered are required by law to be seen by a social worker. If a member of staff or volunteer becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement, where a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by someone to whom they are not related in that person's home, they should raise this in the first instance with the DSL. The DSL will then notify the Single Point of Access (SPA) who will check that the arrangements are suitable and safe for the child.

8. 'Peer on peer' abuse

Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways including sexting (see above) and specific gender-related issues such as girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

Allegations of abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil, when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, are taken very seriously.

If such an allegation is made, the member of staff to whom the disclosure is made will immediately inform the DSL, who will inform the Head. The DSL will consult with the relevant Children's Social Care referral point and the Designated Safeguarding Director where appropriate.

Suspension of the pupil against whom the allegation has been made needs careful consideration and the Head will seek advice from the LSCB before deciding on the course of action to be taken.

Pupils alleged to have sexually abused another pupil should be subject to a risk assessment for their continuing education on site, in consultation with the LSCB.

All children involved, whether perpetrator or victim, should be treated as “at risk” in recognition of the fact that children who are abusers may be victims of abuse themselves and will require additional support from the school and possibly other agencies. Support in school may include provision of an adult mentor from the staff and/or organisation of one-to-one counsellor from a trained professional.

9. What action should staff take if they suspect a child is being abused?

Remember it is not your responsibility to decide if a child has been abused. However, it is your duty to act on your concerns by referring them to the DSL. Some of the biggest failures in protecting children from abuse have occurred through omission rather than commission. When in doubt, always seek advice from the DSL.

It is our policy to refer all cases where the immediate safety of a child is threatened to Children’s Social Care without prior discussion or agreement with the child’s parent.

Staff who have concerns that a child is at risk MUST report them to the DSL without delay. Such discussion and agreement must not place a child at increased risk of significant harm

We differentiate between the safeguarding of a child who has suffered or is at risk of suffering serious harm and a child who is in need of early help / additional support from one or more agencies. The former would be reported to Children’s Social Care immediately; the latter should lead to inter-agency assessment using local processes including use of the “Common Assessment Framework (CAF)” and “Team around the Child” (TAC) approaches.

Ultimately it is the responsibility of all staff to

- take action by making a referral to the DSL so that the child can receive the right help at the right time to address risks and to prevent issues from escalating;
- recognise the early signs of abuse, neglect and radicalisation and refer to the DSL;
- keep clear records which should be passed to the DSL;
- listen to the views of the child;
- reassess concerns when situations do not improve;
- share information quickly; and
- challenge inaction.

Allegation against an adult:

There are two different routes of action depending on whether the allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer working at the school, or another adult who does not work at the school:

A. If a child has made an allegation OR you have your own concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff or volunteer who works at the school:

It is imperative that all who deal with allegations made against a teacher, other member of staff or volunteer maintains an open and inquiring mind and takes the allegations seriously. They must be dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child but also supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

The rights of the child and member of staff must be considered. However, where there is a conflict of interest between the adult and the child, then the child's interests must be paramount as required by the Children Act 1989.

1. Do not take any action that could jeopardise a police investigation, such as attempting to investigate the allegation of abuse or by asking leading questions.
2. Let the informant tell you as much as they want to without interruptions. Empathetic listening will assist in clarifying and eliciting information. Make full notes on the form, and ask them if they have told anyone else.
3. If your information comes from a child, don't make any promises of confidentiality. If the child asks you to keep it a secret, be very clear that in order for you to be able to help you cannot keep any information a secret. Instead say that you will pass this information on to someone who has been trained to deal with these situations.
4. Keep all forms/evidence secure whilst being completed, including any notes you may have made in rough.
5. Once you have completed the Safeguarding form, recording all relevant details of the concern, you must pass this on to the Head immediately. If the Head is unavailable, or the allegation is against him, then you should report your concern to the Director with responsibility for Safeguarding.
6. If there is reason to believe that a child (or children) has suffered, or is suffering, actual harm, then a referral must also be made to Children's Social Care. The Head will usually delegate this action to the DSL but may choose to do this himself and inform the DSL of his action.
7. There are legal restrictions on the reporting or publishing of allegations against teachers and schools must make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity. These restrictions apply up to the point where the accused person is charged with an offence or the DfE/NCTL publish information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case.
8. **Take no further action** unless requested by the Head or DSL.

Follow up action to be taken by the Head (or Director with responsibility for safeguarding)

If the allegation meets any of the following criteria the Head should report it to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) the same day:

- a member of staff has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- a member of staff has possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- a member of staff has behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she is unsuitable to work with children.

Initial consideration

The LADO will discuss the matter with the Head and obtain further details of the allegation and circumstances in which it was made. The Head should not investigate the allegation at this stage. The discussion should also consider whether there is evidence /information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded.

If the allegation is not patently false and there is reason to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the LADO will immediately refer to Children's Social Care. In those circumstances the strategy discussion should include the Head.

If there is not cause to suspect that 'significant harm' is an issue, but a criminal offence might have been committed, the LADO should immediately inform the police and convene a similar discussion to decide whether a police investigation is needed. That discussion should also involve the school and any other agencies involved with the child.

Action following initial consideration

Where the initial consideration decides that the allegation does not involve a possible criminal offence, it will be for the employer to deal with it. In such cases, if the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the Head should institute appropriate action within three working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, the hearing should be held within 15 working days.

Where further investigation is required to inform consideration of disciplinary action, the Head and the school personnel adviser should discuss who will undertake that with the LADO. It may be appropriate for the disciplinary investigation to be conducted by a person who is independent of the school. In any case the investigating officer should aim to provide a report to the Directors within 10 working days.

On receipt of the report of the disciplinary investigation, the Head and the Company Director with responsibility for Safeguarding issues should consult the LADO within two working days to decide whether a disciplinary hearing is needed. If such a hearing is needed it should be held within 15 working days. Where Children's Social Care has undertaken enquiries to determine whether the child or children are in need of protection, the Head and Director with responsibility for Safeguarding should take account of any relevant information obtained in the course of those enquiries when considering disciplinary action. The LADO should continue to liaise with the school to monitor progress of the case and provide advice/support when required/requested.

Case subject to police investigation

If a criminal investigation is required, the police will aim to complete their enquiries as quickly as possible while still consistent with a fair and thorough investigation and will keep the progress of the case under review. A target date for case review should be set. The review will include the progress of the investigation and consultation with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Wherever possible, that review should take place no later than four weeks after the initial action meeting and, if the decision is to continue to investigate the allegation, a date for a subsequent review should be set at that point. (It is open to the police to consult the CPS about the evidence that will need to be obtained in order to charge a person with an offence at any stage.)

If the police and/or CPS decide not to charge the individual with an offence, or decide to administer a caution, or the person is acquitted by a court, the police should wherever possible aim to pass all information they have which may be relevant to a disciplinary case to the employer within three working days of the decision. In those circumstances the employer and the LADO should decide how to proceed. If the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the Head should institute appropriate action within three working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, the hearing should be held within 15 working days. In any case in which Children's Social Care has undertaken enquiries to determine whether the child or children are in need of protection, any information obtained in the course of those enquiries which is relevant to a disciplinary case should also be passed to the school. If the person is convicted of an offence the police must inform the employer straight away so that appropriate action can be taken.

For further information relating to allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff, refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 4 (Sept 2016).

Follow up action if a teacher has been dismissed or resigned prior to being dismissed

Where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed if they had not resigned) the Head will promptly refer the case to the DBS and to the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) as required.

B. If the concern is that a child may be at risk from an adult who does not work at the school:

1. Report to the DSL without delay.
2. Complete the Safeguarding form.
3. Tell the informant (if appropriate) that you will be passing this information on to people who can help.
4. Don't make any promises. If the informant asks you to keep it a secret, be very clear that in order for you to be able to help you cannot keep any information a secret. You will have to tell someone.
5. An allegation may lead to a criminal investigation. Do not do anything that could jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking the young person leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegation of abuse.
6. Let the informant tell you as much as they want to without interruptions. Empathetic listening will assist in clarifying and eliciting information. Make full notes on the CP form, and ask them if they have told anyone else.
7. Keep all forms/evidence secure whilst being completed, including any notes you may have made in rough.
8. Pass all documentation to the DSL as soon as possible. The DSL will refer the case to Children's Social Care and, if appropriate, to the Police.

Take no further action unless requested by the DSL.

Allegation against a child

If the concern is that a child may be at risk from another child (either at the school or from outside of the school)

1. Report to the DSL without delay.
2. Complete the Safeguarding form.
3. Tell the informant (if appropriate) that you will be passing this information on to people who can help.
4. Don't make any promises. If the informant asks you to keep it a secret, be very clear that in order for you to be able to help you cannot keep any information a secret. You will have to tell someone.
5. An allegation may lead to a criminal investigation. Do not do anything that could jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking the young person leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegation of abuse.
6. Let the informant tell you as much as they want to without interruptions. Empathetic listening will assist in clarifying and eliciting information. Make full notes on the CP form, and ask them if they have told anyone else.

7. Keep all forms/evidence secure whilst being completed, including any notes you may have made in rough.
8. Pass all documentation to the DSL as soon as possible. The DSL will refer the case to Children's Social Care and, if appropriate, to the Police.

Take no further action unless requested by the DSL.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and anyone may make a referral to external agencies. Indeed, if any member of staff has concerns about the safety or welfare of a child and feel they are not being acted upon by the DSL, Head or Director with responsibility for safeguarding it is their responsibility to take action by making a referral.

If anyone other than the DSL makes the referral they should inform the DSL as soon as possible.

10. CONTACT DETAILS FOR KEY PERSONNEL AND AGENCIES

Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Mr Michael Armitage (RPPS) michael.armitage@rpps.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Mr Simon Gould (RPPS) simon.gould@rpps.co.uk
Headmaster:	Mr Carl Howes (RPPS) carl.howes@rpps.co.uk
Director with specific responsibility	Mr Theo Brehony (Kew House School) theo.brehony@gardenerschools.com 020 8742 2038
Hammersmith & Fulham LSCB	020 8753 3914
H&F Children's Social Care	020 8753 6600
H&F LADO	020 7641 6108
DBS referral	
NCTL referral	
DfE helpline for non-emergency advice	020 7340 7264
DfE email address for non-emergency advice	counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk
Police (non-emergency)	101
Police (emergency)	999

11. Supporting children, promoting awareness and prevention

We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless, ashamed and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.

We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm. We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

We support all our pupils by encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as their relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying. We promote a caring, safe and positive environment and liaise with a range of support services and agencies involved in safeguarding children.

We have a strong pastoral tradition at Ravenscourt Park which is designed to foster the spiritual, cultural, moral and social development of all our pupils and encourages children to discuss any difficulties they may be experiencing with a member of staff. In class, discussions and activities take place focusing on a wide range of pastoral and PSHE issues. Throughout the school day, and across the curriculum, pupils learn about how to adjust their behaviours to reduce risk, whether this be physical or emotional. In addition to this the Computing Department works hard to teach pupils about the risks of using technology and the internet. Pupils also learn about appropriate social behaviour and how to treat others with respect.

Our aim is that by establishing and maintaining an ethos and environment where children feel secure, able to talk to their teachers and by equipping them with the tools they need to stay safe, we will go some way in preventing children coming to harm. We include within this our attitude and encouragement to teaching the children about British values.

How we listen to children

It may be that you have concerns about a child through your own observations or it may be a situation where a child comes to you as a 'friendly adult' to which they can talk. In either situation, it is vital that the child feels able to speak freely. To try and encourage the 'right atmosphere' it will help to consider the following:

- Establish a rapport with the child: try and put the child at ease as much as possible
- Find a time and place where there will be no interruptions.
- Let them know this will be a friendly enquiry rather than an investigation.
- You must be non-judgemental, whatever you are told.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing.
- Focus on listening to the child rather than asking questions: allow periods of silence for the child to collect their thoughts.
- Your body language should be non-threatening. Use a relaxed, but concerned pose and expression. AVOID PHYSICAL CONTACT UNLESS YOU ASK PERMISSION OF THE CHILD.
- Do not promise confidentiality, or to keep secrets. Instead, explain that you will need to pass this information on to someone who has been trained to help.
- Keep notes of what the child tells you and pass this on to the DSL at the earliest possible opportunity.

12. What happens following a referral about a child to the DSL?

On receiving the concerns with relation to children in need of help or who are the focus of concern, the DSL will:

- clarify any issues with the member(s) of staff raising the concerns
- provide the Head with a full briefing of the situation
- contact Social Services (for the Borough in which the child resides) for advice or referral within 24 hours.

Hammersmith & Fulham CSC: Local Safeguarding Children Board 020 8753 6600
hflscb@lbhf.gov.uk

- If there are serious concerns about a child's immediate safety the DSL will contact the police on 999.
- Informal advice may also be sought from Hammersmith & Fulham Council on 020 8753 6600. The school can refer to the Local Authority for guidance on thresholds and borderline cases.

Having received information about the concerns/referral, the Local Authority Children's Social Care (CSC) team will decide within 24 hours what further action should be taken and inform the school of their decision. If the referral has not been acknowledged within 48 hours it is the responsibility of the DSL to follow up the referral.

CSC, within the framework for the Assessment of Children in Need, will make an initial assessment and, dependant on the seriousness of the situation, may involve the police. The purpose of the consultation with the police is to discuss details of the referral and make a joint decision about what needs to be done and how quickly.

Remember that the protection of children from abuse must have first priority and even if your cause for concern or those of someone else proves to be unfounded, your action is justifiable if it is based on concern for the child's safety. Once you have reported your concerns, the decision about what further action, if any, should be taken is the responsibility of the Local Authority CSC team.

13. Keeping Records – Confidentiality

Information about safeguarding concerns in relation to a child is confidential. The DSL will ensure that any written information is kept in a locked filing cabinet and that conversations about the safeguarding concerns are kept to a 'need to know' basis. **NO RECORDS SHOULD BE KEPT ON THE SCHOOL INTRANET.**

The sharing of information between agencies should be done in accordance with any protocols in existence in relation to the Data Protection Act 1999.

However, the law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children in the public interest; that is, the public interest in child protection may override the public interest in maintaining confidentiality. Disclosure should be justifiable in each case, according to the particular facts of the case and legal advice should be sought in cases of doubt. See appendix for flow chart.

14. Physical contact with children in school

Many adults will be involved with pupils during the course of the school year. These will include the full and part time teaching staff, peripatetic teachers, teaching assistants, administrative and maintenance staff (including secretaries, cleaners, caretakers etc.), volunteers (parent readers etc.), governors, invited guests and speakers.

It is important that such adults recognise they can be in a vulnerable position with regard to their relationship with the children. To safeguard the welfare of staff and volunteers and to avoid misunderstandings, we encourage staff to behave as follows:

- Physical Contact - there may be occasions where a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. Examples of this would include when children are injured or unwell, missing a parent, upset about an incident in the classroom or playground, etc. It is perfectly normal for a

child to receive a cuddle, an affectionate arm around them or to sit on an adult's lap at these times. Staff should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same pupil over a period of time. Where a member of staff has particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should seek the advice of the Head of Section.

- Young children can also thrive from some form of physical contact when they receive praise and encouragement. This might be in the form of a cuddle, or pat on the back or arm that is carried out in the manner of a caring parent. These gestures should not be excessive or exclusive.
- It may also be necessary to have physical contact with a child who is reluctant to separate from their parent. This is always done with the permission of the parent and done in such a way to separate their child from their parent without causing physical injury. Where a member of staff has particular concern about the need to provide this type of support for a child regularly they should seek the advice of the Head of Section.
- Corporal punishment is prohibited and its use would constitute an offence and lead to disciplinary action.
- Where physical restraint is needed, use no more force than is necessary. (Under subsection 548(5) of the Education Act 1996, teachers may use physical intervention to avert 'an immediate danger or personal injury, or an immediate danger to the property of, or a person (including the child him/herself)'. Teachers' powers under section 4 of the 1997 Act to restrain pupils from engaging in certain activities remain in force. Where an employee has taken action to physically restrain a pupil they should make a written report of the incident to the Head of Section, who will in turn inform the parents of what action was taken and why. (See appendix for the Physical Restraint Record Form)
- Avoid being alone with a pupil in a secluded place. Should a pupil need to be spoken to in confidence, a room with a windowed door should be used and a colleague informed of the intended interview.
- Parent volunteers must not be placed in a position where they are alone with a child; they should always be in a public area of the school.
- Always avoid being alone with a child changing for sports.
- Avoid becoming personally involved with pupils and their families on extra-curricular activities. This could lead to accusations of favouritism or undue pressure being applied by the family.
- Keep a written record of uncomfortable situations that may be misinterpreted (e.g. letters of 'adoration' from pupil to teacher, inappropriate conversations) in the Welfare log and inform the DSL.
- Always share concerns about pupils. **DO NOT KEEP SECRETS.** Inform the DSL and enter details of concern in the Welfare Log.
- Transporting pupils in staff cars is not advisable under any circumstances.
- Pupils should not be given personal information about staff including mobile phone numbers
- Discourage the use of nicknames and teacher's first names
- Cyber communication – it is inadvisable to directly email and text message between staff and pupils. If it is unavoidable cc the parents and a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Gifts should be given fairly and equally, without preference
- Avoid speaking critically to pupils about other members of staff
- Always maintain a professional manner. Avoid teasing, sarcasm, favouritism and losing one's temper.

15. Whistleblowing procedures

Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of the Senior Leadership Team or relevant agencies. Although it can be difficult, this is important where the welfare of children may be at risk. You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong, but may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings are natural, but they must never result in a child continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember, it is often the most vulnerable children who are targeted and they need someone like you to safeguard their welfare.

In terms of children's welfare and safeguarding, all staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. All teachers share responsibility for safeguarding children's wellbeing and maintaining public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties. Staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the School's safeguarding regime.

If a member of staff has reason to suspect that one or more of the following has taken place, then he/she should feel able to raise the concern with the Headmaster:

- Inappropriate or harmful conduct towards a child (or children), including but not confined to:
 - Bullying, humiliation, or any other kind of abuse;
- Contravening health and safety guidelines in place to protect children;
- Serious breaches of the school's Code of Conduct;
- Professional practice that falls short of normally accepted standards;
- Compromising pupils' welfare but in a way that does not meet the threshold for child protection intervention; or
- They have concealed or are attempting to conceal any of the above.

The School will fully support staff and do all it can to protect them from any adverse repercussions that may arise from whistle blowing. Allegations that prove to be deliberately fabricated and malicious will be dealt with through staff disciplinary procedures. However, no action will be taken against any member of staff who raises a genuine concern that proves to be unfounded.

The [NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/help/whistleblowing/) is available to staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

For further details of the School's whistleblowing procedures, please refer to Appendix 1 of the Staff Code of Conduct.

16. Appointing staff

Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School operates a safe recruitment procedure, as set out below, as specified in our Safe Recruitment Policy in line with the Independent School Standards Regulations (March 2015) and KCSIE (Sept 2016). The school takes all possible

steps to ensure that anybody who will be working at RPPS (either paid or as a regular volunteer) is thoroughly checked both to prevent unsuitable people from gaining access to children and to maintain the integrity of the teaching profession. To ensure safer, stringent staff recruitment, RPPS will action the following before a candidate takes up a position:

- **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)** Referrals are made to check on suitability for work as documented in our Safe Recruitment Policy
- **Identity** – proof of identity should be supplied in the form of a passport or similar official documentation with picture.
- **Academic Qualifications** – verification of qualifications should be done by looking at relevant certificates or diplomas, or a letter of confirmation from the awarding institution. If original documents are not available, a properly certified copy must be produced.
- **Professional and Character References** – these should always be taken up and directly with the referee. It is not good practice to rely solely on testimonials provided by the candidate or on employers who are not the most recent or current.
- **Previous Employment History** – Always obtain satisfactory explanation for gaps in employment history. If a candidate for a teaching post is not currently employed as a teacher, a check with the school at which they were most recently employed should confirm details of their employment and their reasons for leaving.
- **DBS checks** - The DBS is responsible for deciding whether an individual should be barred from working with children and vulnerable adults and for maintaining a list of those individuals who are determined to be unsuitable (the barred list). The DBS will consider cases that concern safeguarding matters (i.e. harm or the risk of harm to a child), barring individuals from working with children where appropriate. More detail about the role of the DBS can be found at Gov.uk.

Portability of an individual's DBS came into force on 17th June 2013. This means that any individual who has had a DBS check on or after this date can subscribe to the Update Service for £13 per year which allows them to take it with them from role to role within the same workforce. Each employer will then, with their permission, look at their current DBS Certificate to check it is the same level and type and do an online Status Check.

- **Prohibition check** - A prohibition order means that the person concerned is not allowed to undertake unsupervised teaching work in schools. Where an individual is prohibited, their details will appear on the Prohibited List. The Prohibited List is administered by the NCTL and can be accessed by current and prospective employers of school staff via the Employer Access Online System. This service also provides information about any teacher qualification held and whether induction has been passed. The service is offered free of charge to schools, local authorities and teacher supply agencies in England.

A prohibition order is likely to be appropriate when the behaviour of the person concerned has been fundamentally incompatible with being a teacher. The primary purpose of a prohibition order is to protect pupils. A prohibition order is a lifetime ban, though in some circumstances the teacher may be able to make a request to have it reviewed after a specified period of time.

For those members of staff taking on management and leadership positions of the level of Head of Department or higher, a prohibition from management check needs to be performed (from September 2015). This is done as part of the DBS check.

- **List 99** – this is a confidential list providing information on all people whose employment has been restricted or barred by the Secretary of State. DBS check of a person's suitability to work with children will contain details of whether they are included on List 99 and/or the Protection of Children Act List (maintained by the Department of Health).
- **Right to work in the UK** – proof is obtained that the candidate is eligible to work in the UK.
- **Health** – Anyone appointed to a post involving regular contact with children should be medically (physically and mentally) fit. Staff will be asked to sign a declaration to confirm they are medically fit to work with children at the time of appointment. Staff must inform their Head of Section if they are taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children and any staff medication must be securely stored at all times.
- **Disqualification by Association**- Under the Childcare Act 2006, schools cannot employ anyone in early years and relevant later years' provision who is disqualified from working with children under the Regulations, Childcare (Disqualification regulations 2009).

The Department for Education (DfE) guidance about what the Regulations mean for schools has statutory force and so schools are required to comply with it. In order for the schools to demonstrate compliance with the regulation, the Company requires staff to complete and sign the Staff Suitability Self-Declaration form and this is recorded on our central register.

Staff will routinely be asked to sign this self-declaration form every two years. However all members of staff have a duty to inform the Headmaster if their home circumstances change in the meantime that potentially makes them subject to disqualification by association.

- **Safe Recruitment** – as from April 2006, at least one member of the interview panel should have Safe Recruitment training. Appropriate child protection checks and procedures also apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with the school's pupils on another site (for example when on residential trips). For further details please refer to the school's Safe Recruitment Policy.

The Deputy Head will ensure supply teachers complete the 'Supply Safeguarding Induction Pack' which involves their providing proof of ID, their reading and signing agreement to abide by Ravenscourt Park's Safeguarding Policy and Professional Code of Conduct for Staff, as well as providing evidence of current and appropriate DBS checks.

A central register of recruitment and vetting checks is kept for all members of staff, (including volunteers and others brought into the school such as supply staff) by the school office. All staff (including temporary and voluntary) will be provided with the Safeguarding Policy and the Code of Conduct on induction.

The school will promptly report to the Disclosures and Barring Service (DBS) any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used for regulated activity and the DBS referral criteria are met, that is, they have caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child or because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children. 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 or volunteers
- resignation
- voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering.

It is important that reports include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. Failure to make a report constitutes an offence and the school may be removed from the Department for Education's register. The school will also make a referral to the [National College for Teaching and Leadership \(NCTL\)](#) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate. The reasons such an order would be considered are:

- unacceptable professional conduct,
- conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or
- a conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence.

Further guidance is published [here](#).

17. Use of Mobile Phones and Social Media (whole school policy including for the EYFS)

(This information also appears in the Staff Code of Conduct)

Staff should not use their mobile phone during directed teaching time or in parts of the school shared by pupils during their non-contact time. When staff are working in classrooms or teaching children, mobile phones should be turned off or switched to silent.

For any member of staff who is teaching an Early Years class in the Vicarage Building, their mobile phone should be stored in the lockable cupboard in the Creative Room. For other members of staff who teach Early Years, mobile phones should be stored in a locked drawer or cabinet.

Staff must not use personal devices such as mobile phones or cameras to take photos or videos of pupils and should only use work-provided equipment for this purpose.

All contact with children should be on a professional basis and members of staff should be prepared for their mobile devices to be open to scrutiny upon request from the Head.

Members of staff are forbidden to use social media for purposes of contact with any child.

Staff are required to keep a 'professional distance' from the parent body in this respect and are strongly advised NOT to enter social media exchanges with any parents.

Staff should avoid becoming personally involved with pupils and their families on extra-curricular activities. This could lead to accusations of favouritism or undue pressure being applied by the family.

Staff are reminded that the social media security settings of their own accounts should be considered to prevent 'browsing' parents and/or children scrutinising their online activity.

Email contact with children: There may be occasion when email is used between home and school for children/teacher (e.g. submitting homework tasks). If this is the case the staff member must inform a senior member of staff and copy that staff member and the child's parent in on any email correspondence. The level of communication in these instances must be kept to a minimum.

18. Related Policies and Documents:

- Staff Handbook
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Health and Safety Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- E-Safety Policy (including anti cyber–bullying)
- Looked After Child Policy
- Induction Policy
- Lost Children Policy
- PSHCE Policy
- School Behaviour Policy
- Safe Recruitment Procedures

19. Review

This policy and its procedures are reviewed annually by the DSL with the Headmaster, and the Director with responsibility for Safeguarding.

Last review date: September 2017

Appendix 1: Safeguarding Agreement

Please read the attached copy of our Safeguarding Policy as well as Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE September 2016) and the Staff Code of Conduct and sign agreement to the guidelines below to ensure consistency of behaviour toward children in our school:

- Do not have undue physical contact with a child. Should a child be hurt or in distress use common sense in your physical contact. Be sympathetic and caring but do not invite or have unnecessary or prolonged physical contact.
- On no account shall corporal punishment be used. This would lead to disciplinary action.
- Never at any time have 'secrets' with a child. If preparing a mother's day card, for example, tell the child it is a surprise for mummy, not a 'secret' to be kept between you.
- If a child needs to be undressed in the case of an 'accident' or an injury requiring further inspection, the child should be encouraged to undress them self, if possible in privacy. Do not stay with an undressed child alone in a closed room; leave the door open or ajar and stand with your back to the child while they are changing, if possible asking another adult to assist so you are not alone.
- You should use a school camera to take photographs and not use your own personal mobile device.
- On no account should private contact be made with a child via, for example email, letter or phone without the parent's knowledge and consent. If it is unavoidable, please cc the parents and a member of SLT.
- If you are concerned at any time about a child for whatever reason tell the DSL immediately. If you are concerned about a member of staff, tell the Head. You are not expected to make any judgements, but it is your responsibility to alert the DSL of any concerns you may have.

Safeguarding Agreement

I _____ in my capacity as _____
have read and understood the Safeguarding Policy, KCSIE part 1 and the Staff Code of Conduct and agree to follow the above guidelines at Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Please return completed slip to the school secretary, thank you.

Appendix 2: RPPS Safeguarding Recording Form

Person / staff with concern		Date:	
Name of child: Class: Age: Date of birth: Address:			
Details of person with concern: Position: Address: Tel. no.:			
Situation of concern received or witnessed Date: Time:			
Concern and nature of incident Summary of conversation and/or nature of concern			
Action			
Hammersmith & Fulham Family Services	Contact number: 020 8753 6600	Contact name:	

Appendix 3: Welfare Log

Date	Staff Name	Child's Name and Class	Class Teacher
Incident of Concern			
ACTION			
Date CT informed	Date SLT informed	Agreed Action	

Appendix 4: Physical Restraint Recording Form

Name of Pupil..... Class

A description of the build-up to the event including the reason why restraint was used (e.g. to prevent injury to others, self-injury, damaging property, or an attempt to leave the premises) and also including details of any adult witnesses (if applicable)

Describe how you went about restraining the child

Name of member of staff.....

Staff signature.....Date.....

Witness signature (if applicable) Date.....

Head of Section's signature.....Date.....

Parent's signatureDate.....