



Safeguarding and Child Protection



Senior School DSL
Mrs Caoimhe Pettingell



Prep School DSL
Mr Nick Robinson



Early Years DSL
Mrs Janet Regan



Deputy DSL
Mr Matthew Robinson

West Buckland School (this refers to Senior School, Prep School and EYFS) fully recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in its care. This responsibility encompasses the following principles:

- To protect children from harm (maltreatment)
- To prevent impairment of children's health and development
- To ensure that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care thus enabling those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

West Buckland School addresses its commitment to these principles through:

Prevention - ensuring all reasonable measures are taken to minimise the risk of harm to children's welfare. These include:

- Ensuring safer recruitment practice*
- Ensuring through training that all teaching and non-teaching staff are aware of and committed to the Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures
- Adopting a code of conduct for all staff*
- Establishing a positive, supportive and secure environment in which children can learn and develop, together with a School ethos which promotes in all pupils a sense of being valued, listened to and respected
- Including in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PHSE which equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and which will help them develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life
- Providing pastoral support that is accessible and available to all pupils and ensuring that pupils know to whom they can talk about their concerns.

(* refer to separate policies and guidance for full details; this guidance will follow the Independent Schools Standards Regulations and comply with guidance with regard to the DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service). All employees undergo a full enhanced DBS check).

Protection – ensuring all appropriate actions are taken to address concerns about the welfare of a child or children, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies especially the Police and Children's Social Care (Safeguarding Children Joint Chief Inspectors' Report Department of Health October 2002). These include:

- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving children and their parents/carers appropriately
- Monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm and to contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children.
- Safeguarding, in addition to child protection, encompasses issues such as pupil health and safety, bullying/cyber-bullying, appropriate medical provision, drugs and substance misuse. These have specific policies and guidance which should be read in conjunction with this document.

All staff, including volunteers, have a statutory obligation to report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) if there is suspicion of abuse of a pupil or if a pupil discloses abuse or allegations of abuse.

This is an inescapable, personal and professional responsibility by all staff for the protection of children from harm.

Staff could have their suspicion or concern raised in a number of ways, the most likely of which are:

- the conduct of a member of staff
- a child, parent or member of staff 'disclosing' abuse
- evidence of physical hurt that may or may not be accompanied by
- unusual or uncharacteristic behaviour by a child.

A full copy of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is available on the school website and on request.

PROCEDURE FOLLOWING DISCLOSURE

Receive:

- **Listen** sympathetically and with an open mind
- Stay calm, conveying this through word and action
- **Never promise confidentiality, only discretion. It is important that the pupil understands from the outset that if they choose to disclose information that indicates actual or potential harm to themselves or others, then certain actions will need to be taken. If necessary, pause a child before he/she has begun what you anticipate might be a disclosure and remind them**
- Allow the child to talk and finish their story. Let them tell you what they want and no more
- Do not ask any leading questions

Respond:

- Where necessary clarify what has been said
- Ensure that you have a full understanding of the facts as related by the pupil, perhaps by reporting back to the pupil for his/her confirmation
- Never ask leading questions
- When the pupil has finished make sure they feel secure. Explain what you will do next and (where appropriate) the referral process
- **Action must be taken immediately if the pupil is in imminent danger**

Reassure:

- Acknowledge their courage in talking to you and reassure them that what they have said will be taken seriously
- Remind them that the abuse is not their fault
- Reassure them but do not promise what you may not be able to deliver – ‘Everything will be all right now’ – it may not be.

Record:

- Record as much as you can remember as soon as possible (preferably immediately) afterwards, using the pupil’s own words as far as possible. Include who was present and the date, time and location of the incident or disclosure

Report:

- Refer the matter within 24 hours or sooner and **immediately if any pupil is in danger** to the DSL. Do not discuss with parents/carers. The DSL will agree with the Social Care team when parents/carers should be contacted and by whom.

You have now fulfilled your duty and you should **not take any further action** or reveal this information to anyone else. The DSL will be aware that you may need support following a disclosure. You may seek assurance from the DSL at a later stage that appropriate further action has been followed.

Action to be taken by the Designated Member of Staff

- Following the receipt of a report, the DSL and Headmaster will seek advice from the MASH (this may be done without giving names at first), and then follow the advice given. West Buckland School will not investigate allegations of abuse, but will instead always refer to the appropriate authority. In cases of serious harm the Police would be informed from the outset
- Agree with Children’s Social Care any necessary next steps in relation to:
 - informing a pupil’s parents
 - medical examination or treatment
 - immediate protection for the victim or a pupil who has given information about an abuser or a pupil against whom an allegation has been made
- Inform the pupil or adult who made the initial allegation of what the next steps are to be
- Inform the relevant Heads of the allegation and action taken
- Ensure long term protection support for all pupils involved

When there are reports of abuse involving a number of pupils against a pupil or other pupils the DSL will meet with appropriate staff following advice from the MASH and coordinate the matters in line with guidance from LSCB and ISI. The DSL will:

- If a pupil appears injured and/or distressed in anyway then medical attention may need to be received
- Follow procedure and refer to the MASH
- Ensure secure supervised spaces for all involved
- Involve the members of SLT trained to Level 2 as appropriate
- Follow guidance above with respect to each pupil in a secure supervised environment.

If there is an allegation against a person outside the school community the DSL will seek advice from external agencies and contact the parents as and when appropriate.

West Buckland School will always undertake to share their intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care with their parents/carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk or harm, or impede a criminal investigation.