



# READING BLUE COAT SCHOOL

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

### Statement of Intent

All school staff must provide a safe environment in which children can learn. The School recognises at all times the best interests of the child and always takes action to enable all children in the School to have the best outcome. This document sets out the steps and arrangements that the School makes to ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the School. The implementation of these arrangements is the key to safeguarding, so staff should not only be well aware of regulations and also carry out their responsibility to actively implement them.

In doing this the School refers to the following guidance from the DfE:

**Keeping Children Safe in Education** (September 2016) (KCSIE)

KCSIE incorporates the additional statutory guidance, **Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006** (June 2016)

KCSIE also refers to the non-statutory advice for practitioners: **What to do if you're worried a child is being abused** (March 2015)

**Working Together to Safeguard Children** (March 2015) (WT)

WT refers to the non-statutory advice: *Information sharing* (March 2015)

**Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales** (July 2015) (Prevent). Prevent is supplemented by non-statutory advice and a briefing note:

**The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and child-minders** (June 2015)

**The use of social media for online radicalisation** (July 2015)

The School aims to carry out early interventions in situations where children are in need and to ensure that primacy is always given to the needs of the child. This requires an integrated approach as safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. For safeguarding to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part within a child-centred approach. This is as for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children (WT 2015). We recognise that there is a need to differentiate between safeguarding children who have suffered or are likely to suffer significant harm and those who are in need of additional support from one or more agencies. The former will need to be reported to Children's Services immediately while the latter might lead to an inter-agency process based on the procedures of the Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB). It is the regulation of the WSCB that the School will follow and the DSL must ensure a good working relationship with the Local Authority Designated Officer and other staff who they liaise with at WSCB).

In addition due to the catchment area the School will liaise with Children's services in other local authorities such as Windsor and Maidenhead, Reading, Oxfordshire, Basingstoke and West Berkshire.

There may be children within the School who are at risk from abuse. All children, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs. All children have the right to protection from neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse, including child sexual exploitation, radicalisation

and female genital mutilation. RBCS recognises its legal and moral duty to promote the well-being of children and young people in its care, protect them from harm and where necessary respond to allegations or concerns of child abuse.

## 1. Introduction

1.1 Reading Blue Coat School (RBCS) Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is based on and reflects the principles of UK legislation and best practice. The welfare of our pupils is the School's paramount concern. As a School we **will** do all we can that is reasonable to ensure that our pupils are safeguarded travelling to and from school, during their time in school and whilst participating in organised co-curricular activities both on and off the school site. This duty of care extends to pupils from other schools and colleges who are visiting RBCS.

1.2 The government has defined the term 'safeguarding children' as:

'The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.'

1.3 This policy should be considered alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016 (as of 2016) as well as Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015.

In addition it should be considered alongside the following existing school policies :-

- PSHEE.
- Anti-Bullying
- Confidentiality
- School rules and Code of Conduct (in pupil planners)
- Health and Safety
- Use of Force to Control or Restrain
- Disability Policy and Accessibility Plan
- Learning Support
- Equal Opportunities
- Supervision of Pupils
- Educational Visits
- Safe Recruitment
- Children missing education
- Missing Child Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistle-blowing Policy Procedures (see Staff Directory and Code of Conduct)
- Visitors' Policy
- Visiting Speakers' Policy

1.4 The School, which includes all teaching staff, non-teaching staff, governors, volunteers and support services (including externally contracted staff) has a statutory duty to create and maintain a safe learning environment that

promotes and safeguards the welfare of children and young people. The statutory responsibility, in accordance with locally agreed inter agency procedures, requires that all those with responsibility for safeguarding pupils in the School must identify where there are child welfare concerns and take action to address them, in partnership with other organisations where appropriate.

1.5 Creating a safe learning environment means having effective arrangements in place to deal with a range of issues including safeguarding, child protection and pupils' health and safety. All RBCS staff have a crucial role in helping identify welfare concerns and indicators of possible abuse or neglect at an early stage. The school will exercise this commitment through its teaching and learning, co-curricular activities and pastoral care in enabling children and young people to have optimum life chances to enter adulthood successfully.

1.6 All members of the school community, including volunteers in this School, will at all times act proactively in safeguarding and child welfare matters, especially where there is a possibility that a child or young person may be at risk of significant harm. The School seeks to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of its responsibility for pastoral care. The School hopes that parents and pupils will feel free to talk about any concerns and will see school as a safe place if there are any difficulties at home.

1.7 Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously if they seek help from a member of staff, a consequence of which may be that a referral is made to an external agency in order to safeguard a child's welfare. Any suspicion that a pupil is at risk of significant harm through sexual, physical or emotional abuse or neglect will initiate a formal notification to the relevant authorities. The same meaning of 'significant harm' is applied in this policy as it is in Section 31, Children Act 1989 in that:-

'Harm' means ill treatment or the impairment of health or development, including impairment suffered from hearing or seeing the ill treatment of another.

'Development' means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

'Health' means physical or mental health and 'ill treatment' means sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment that are not physical.

1.8 As a consequence of our safeguarding and child protection responsibilities the School:-

- Asserts that all member of the school community (including volunteers and governors) are an integral part of the child safeguarding process.
- Accepts totally that safeguarding children is an appropriate function for all members of staff, and wholly compatible with their primary pedagogic responsibilities.
- Recognises that safeguarding children in this school is a responsibility for all staff, including volunteers, and the governing body.
- Will ensure that all staff and volunteers are alert to the possibility that a child is at risk of suffering harm, and through regular and appropriate training know how to report concerns or suspicions.
- Will designate a senior member of staff (Deputy Head Pastoral) with knowledge and skills in recognising and acting on safeguarding and child protection concerns. He or she will act as a source of expertise

and advice, and is responsible for co-ordinating action within the school and liaising with other agencies.

- Will ensure compliance and due diligence linked to children missing education.
- Will ensure that staff with designated responsibility for safeguarding and child protection will receive appropriate training.
- Will share its concerns with others who need to know, and assist in any referral process.
- Will always refer concerns that a child may be suffering or may be at risk of suffering significant harm to the Deputy Head Pastoral, who will refer on to the relevant Children's Services.
- Will safeguard the welfare of children and young people whilst in the school, through positive measures to address bullying, especially where this is aggravated by sexual or racial factors, or disability or special educational needs.
- Will ensure that all staff are aware of the safeguarding and child protection procedures established by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) and, where appropriate, the Local Authority, and act on any guidance or advice given by them.
- Will ensure through our safe recruitment procedures that all paid employees, governors and volunteers who work in our school are suitable to work with children and young people.
- Will act swiftly and make appropriate referrals where an allegation is made that a member of staff has committed an offence against a child, harmed a child, or acted in a way that calls into question their suitability for working with children.

1.9 RBCS operates under the procedures of Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board ([www.wokinghamlscb.org.uk](http://www.wokinghamlscb.org.uk)). Their contact details are as follows:

- Referral and Assessment Team (Children's Safeguarding and Social Care Team): telephone 0118 908 8002 or email: [triage@wokingham.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:triage@wokingham.gcsx.gov.uk).
- Emergency Duty Team – out of office hours: telephone 01344 786543.
- Note that it may well be the case that the Wokingham Referral and Assessment team pass the concern on to another local authority depending on where the child lives.
- Thames Valley Policy: telephone 101.

## 2. The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

(From Annexe B of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016)

2.1 *Governing bodies, proprietors and management committees should appoint an appropriate senior member of staff, from the school leadership team, to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. This should be explicit in the role-holder's job description. This person should have the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post. They should be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and interagency*

*meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so – and to contribute to the assessment of children. (Annexe B KCSIE 2016)*

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the Deputy Head Pastoral, a position currently held by Mr Philip Wise. The DSL is central in ensuring that proper procedures and policies are regularly updated and embedded as part of the school's statutory safeguarding and child protection responsibilities. The DSL will act as a dedicated resource for all school staff, including volunteers and governors in matters relating to safeguarding and child protection. The DSL is the first point of contact for staff wishing to report safeguarding or child protection concerns. In the absence of the DSL, the School has a Deputy Designate Lead. This is Miss Natalie Evans.

Their contact details are as follows:

Mr P. Wise – Designated Lead – based in the SLT suite 0118 944 1005 EXT 860

[pdw@rbc.org.uk](mailto:pdw@rbc.org.uk)

Miss Natalie Evans – Deputy Designated Lead – based in the Lower School office 0118 944 1005 EXT 888 [nje@rbc.org.uk](mailto:nje@rbc.org.uk)

Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead; this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

### **Manage referrals**

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required;
- support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care;
- refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
- support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
- refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.

### **Work with others**

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- as required, liaise with the "case manager" (as per Part four) and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member); and

- liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies. Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.

### **Training**

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead should undertake Prevent awareness training.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments;
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
- are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

### **Raise Awareness**

The designated safeguarding lead should:

- ensure the school or college's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;

- ensure the school or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this;
- ensure the child protection 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 or college in this; and link with the local LSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.

### **Child protection file**

Where children leave the school or college ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

### **Availability**

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the designated safeguarding lead, to define what "available" means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such media is acceptable.

It is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

2.2 The DSL is not responsible for allegations made against staff; this is the responsibility of the Headmaster. There are two Deputy Designated Leads whom reports should be made in the absence of the Designated Lead in order that there is the required cover for the role at all times.

2.3 The school will ensure that:-

- The DSL is in the Senior Leadership Team.
- All members of staff will be made aware of who the DSL is and the functions of that role as part of their induction training
- The DSL will act as a source of advice and coordinate action within the school in relation to safeguarding and child protection issues
- The DSL will liaise with external agencies and build good working relationships with colleagues from these agencies to support the School's safeguarding practices
- The DSL and their nominated deputy has access to and is able to attend appropriate training and support as required

- The DSL is responsible for referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies according to the procedures established by the LSCB.
- 2.4 4 The DSL, or the nominated deputy, will:-
- Make themselves known to all staff, volunteers and governors (including new starters and supply teachers)
  - Cascade safeguarding advice, guidance issued by the Local Authority, and changes in legislation to all staff, volunteers and governors
  - Ensure each member of staff, volunteers, governors and regular visitors (such as trainee teachers and supply teachers) are aware of and can readily access this policy. All school staff will sign to confirm they have read and understand the content and implications of this policy
  - Attend any child protection case conference as required by the Local Authority
  - Retain an effective and proactive working relationship with Wokingham WSCB
  - Attend relevant training and cascade information to school staff, governors and volunteers as appropriate; this includes multi-agency training as prescribed by the LSCB
  - Attend refresher training at least every two years
  - Complete *Prevent* training in the prevention of radicalisation and provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from radicalisation. In turn they will ensure that the School Staff will be trained in the Prevent Duty and risk assess and consider the possibility of pupils being drawn into radicalisation or extremism
  - The DSL will demonstrate a more detailed knowledge of *Prevent* awareness training, such as the online general awareness training module on Channel promoted in the non-statutory advice, and is able to provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from radicalisation.
  - The DSL will identify the level of risk and the most appropriate referral, which could include Channel or Children's Social Care.
  - *Prevent* requires schools to have clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers, whether invited by staff or by the pupils themselves, are suitable and appropriately supervised. Staff bringing in the Speaker will carry out a background check (either via a Google check or reference from another school) beforehand and a log of Visiting Speakers is kept. More information on this can be found in the Visiting Speakers Policy and Visitors Policy.
  - Ensure that school staff, volunteers and governors receive safeguarding and child protection training appropriate to their roles and responsibilities in the school at least every two years (Due dates; Staff Sept 2019, Governors June 2018)
  - Liaise with the Headmaster to inform him of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for the role
  - Ensure that this policy is updated in accordance with legislative changes and guidance and reviewed at least annually

- Specific concerns are children missing education, female genital mutilation (FGM), child sexual exploitation, radicalisation, so called honour based violence and forced marriage.
- If staff have concerns regarding these they should report them to the Designated Lead or Deputy-Designated Leads and in the case of FGM to the Police. Ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding procedures are remedied without delay
- Ensure that safeguarding arrangements are rigorously implemented where children are engaged in close one to one teaching, particularly in specialist performing arts, music lessons and sports provision.
- Liaise with the designated governor for safeguarding and child protection in advance of any policy and procedural changes
- Keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals and/or concerns
- Ensure parents/guardians are aware of the policy in order to alert them to the fact that the School may need to make referrals where there are concerns of abuse and/or significant harm
- Ensure that when a pupil leaves the School any child protection concerns are passed on to the new school
- Ensure that staff are aware that some categories of children (e.g. looked after children, children with disabilities) may be particularly susceptible to abuse.
- Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. This means the Governing Body and the School must ensure any that additional barriers are overcome. These barriers include assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability. Therefore in such cases further exploration is necessary and staff must ensure that they do this and report concerns. There is also the potential in particular for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs so staff must be alert to this. Staff must also be aware of communication barriers in finding out more information and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- Some children who have suffered or are likely to suffer significant harm and those who are in need of additional support from one or more agencies. It is important that staff differentiate between these two groups.
- In many cases further multi-agency collaboration is likely to be necessary. The former should be reported to Children's Social Care immediately (WSCB); the latter should lead to early help, interagency assessment and intervention using local processes, including use of the 'Common Assessment Framework' (CAF) and 'Team around the Child' (TAC) approaches.
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### 3. Designated Governor

- 3.1 The School's governing body has nominated a governor with responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. The nominated governor is Mrs Elaine Morgan. She can be contacted through the Chair of Governors Mr

Peter Bertram who can be contacted through the School reception [reception@rbcs.org.uk](mailto:reception@rbcs.org.uk) The Governors will ensure that sufficient resources are made available to the School and its staff to enable them to meet their statutory safeguarding and child protection responsibilities. The governing body will ensure that the DSL and their nominated deputy are given sufficient time to carry out their statutory duties and attend training that supports these responsibilities and promotes the School's safeguarding and child protection practices.

- 3.2 The governing body will review the School's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures at least annually and ensure that:-
- The School is fulfilling its statutory duties to safeguard the welfare of children at the school
  - Members of staff and volunteers are aware of current practice and procedures, and that staff receive training where appropriate
  - Safeguarding and child protection is integrated with induction procedures for all new members of staff, volunteers and governors.
  - The school follows the procedures agreed by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, and any supplementary guidance issued by the Local Authority
  - Only those who meet the safe recruitment standards set by the School shall be employed in the school, or work in a voluntary capacity
- 3.3 Governors will confirm in writing on an annual basis that they have read and understood the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Safeguarding will be a standing item at Governor's meetings and the School will maintain a RAG (red, amber, green) report to indicate the status of policies and procedures relating to safeguarding.

## 4. Recruitment Procedures

- 4.1 In order to ensure that pupils are safeguarded whilst at school, we will ensure that our staff, volunteers and governors are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised. All staff, volunteers and governors will be recruited by the procedures contained in the Safe Recruitment Policy. The School is committed to safer recruitment processes and senior staff who interview and recruit are safer recruitment trained so as to ensure safer recruitment questions are carried out in every interview.
- 4.2 We recognise that people who are deemed unsuitable to work with children and young people may endeavour to gain access through voluntary schemes and it is for this reason that the same recruitment procedures apply to all adults working in the School, paid or otherwise. Where a parent or other volunteer helps on a one-off basis, he/she will only work under the direct supervision of a member of staff, and at no time have one to one contact with children. Where a parent or other volunteer is to be in school regularly or over a longer period then they will be checked to ensure their suitability to work with children.

## 5. Induction and Training

- 5.1 As part of the School's induction procedures all new members of staff, including volunteers, will be given an overview of the organisation to ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure. In addition they will receive a basic safeguarding and child protection information pack containing *Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1) including Annex A*, the School Safeguarding Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct (this

contains the procedures on whistleblowing and the acceptable use of electronic communication by staff). **They must all sign a declaration and return this to the staff secretaries' office to say that they have read these documents.** The clear whistleblowing procedures in the staff codes of conduct and training given to staff means that Staff should carry out the key principles, mentioned in WT. These are that a school should have a culture of safety and of raising concerns. It should have a culture of valuing staff and of reflective practice.

The Head joins all members of staff and volunteers in a regulated activity in regular child protection training and that temporary staff and volunteers are made of safeguarding arrangements. They, like other staff who join midway through the School year are either trained by the DSL or Deputy DSL or using the Educare modules as part of the suite provided by the School's online training provider.

- 5.2 All staff and governors will attend mandatory training and refresher training in relation to safeguarding children to provide them with the necessary knowledge to fulfil their statutory responsibilities in line with LSCB advice. This training will be arranged through the DSL as a minimum every two years. The Second Master's Secretary will maintain a record of all safeguarding training.
- 5.3 On an annual basis all members of staff will be issued with a copy of the Safeguarding Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct and Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1). They will sign and return a sheet to confirm that they have read and understood these documents. **This means that all staff are asked to follow the same procedure at the start of each academic year as when they joined to ensure that they are aware of any updates to any of this documentation.**
- 5.4 All staff will receive training that gives them knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, to challenge extremist ideas and to know how to refer children and young people for further help.
- 5.5 Staff and governors with designated responsibility for safeguarding and child protection will be required to attend training appropriate to their role and specific responsibilities.
- 5.6 Staff who work on a one-to-one basis with pupils (e.g. peripatetic music teachers, sports coaches, etc) need to pay particular attention to the Safeguarding Policy and all guidance and training relating to safeguarding as pupils in their care are in a potentially vulnerable position. These colleagues should refer any concerns to the DSL as soon as possible and seek advice from him in any case of doubt. They are advised to avoid physical contact with pupils unless it is strictly necessary for pedagogical purposes. In such a case, they should also ask for the student's consent.
- 5.7 The school is aware of its responsibilities for training its pupils about safeguarding through the curriculum and PSHEE. This includes helping children adjust their behaviours in order to reduce risks and building resilience, with particular attention to the safe use of electronic equipment and the internet, as well as radicalisation. We will also inform pupils about the risks posed by adults or young people who use the internet and social media to bully, groom, abuse or radicalise other people, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- 5.8 The school will ensure that pupils are aware that there is always someone on hand who will listen to their concerns. We will help them understand that their tutor is a potential first point of contact, as he/she oversees their academic, social and co-curricular progress through the school. We will explain that the tutor is supported by a pastoral team, including the Heads

of Year, the Directors of Section, the Deputy Head (Pastoral), the Second Master and the Headmaster. We will also inform pupils about the procedure if they wish to meet with the School Counsellor and is available for one-on-one meetings with pupils. As part of their induction, all pupils will visit the Medical Department, so they know where to go if they are feeling unwell. We will also publicise via notice-boards and pupil planners the number of Childline (0800 1111) and other sources of support.

- 5.9 If there are children who are looked after by the local authority on the school roll, the school will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep them safe. This will include ensuring that a designated member of staff has responsibility for their welfare and progress and has up to date assessment information from the relevant local authority, the most recent care plan and contact arrangements with parents, and delegated authority to carers.

## 6. Procedure in the event of a disclosure or allegation

- 6.1 Any adult who is informed of any incident or has a suspicion that a child or young person is being subjected to physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect, either at school, at home or other environment must immediately report the information to the DSL. In the event of an allegation against a member of staff, the information should be reported directly to the Headmaster. Details of the procedures for staff dealing with a disclosure, reporting, recording and conducting interviews are in section 7 below. Allegations about the Headmaster should go directly to the Chairman of Governors without informing the Headmaster; the contact details are available on request or on the School's website.
- 6.2 Concerns may be raised if:-
- Information is received from a child or young person, or if any person has suspicions that a child may be at risk of harm or significant harm, or
  - Anyone observes injuries that are unexplained or appear to be non-accidental, or
  - A child or young person makes a direct allegation or discloses that they have been abused, or
  - A pupil makes an allegation against a member of staff, volunteer or governor

## 7. Practical Advice for staff

- 7.1 Teachers and other school staff are particularly well placed to observe pupils in a variety of settings in the school environment. It is through these different levels of contact that school staff are well placed to notice changes in pupil's behaviour, demeanour and responses. There can be a whole range of reasons why these changes occur and in situations where a child/young person is experiencing abuse these outward signs may be an indicator of hidden anxiety and trauma.
- 7.2 Categories of Child Abuse

There are four recognised categories of child abuse. They are not necessarily exhaustive nor are they mutually exclusive.

**Neglect:** Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from

physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

**Physical Abuse:** Physical abuse 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 feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

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

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

### 7.3 Symptoms of Abuse

Many of the following symptoms may occur for reasons other than abuse and inevitably some pupils who have been abused will not display any of these symptoms. The distinctions between the different aspects of abuse are manifestly not rigid, but they should be useful as a guide.

#### Neglect or Emotional Abuse

The pupil:

- Looks extra-thin and poorly
- Complains of hunger, lacking energy
- Has repeated accidents, especially burns
- Is left alone at home inappropriately
- Is repeatedly unwashed, smelly
- Is kept away from school medicals
- Is reluctant to go home, especially at weekends
- Is unusually 'hard' or 'detached' when told off
- Is unable to socialise with peer group
- Is not dressed appropriately for the weather
- Is often late for school or is absent from school

#### Physical Abuse

The pupil has:

- Injuries that are not adequately explained by the pupil

- Current bruising/injury with a long history of bruises and accidents
- Injuries getting progressively worse or occurring in a time pattern (e.g. every Monday morning)
- 'Grip' marks on arms or 'slap' marks (cheeks, arms, legs)
- Long marks which could be from a belt or cane; stub marks from a cigarette
- Bruising on both sides of the ear. Any symmetrical bruising is suspicious
- Teethmarks from a bite; bruised eyes, especially if both at once.
- A reluctance to go home, especially weekends
- Constant attention seeking behaviour; overpleasing/compliant behaviour
- May be reluctant to get undressed in PE
- May be often late for school or absent from school

#### Sexual Abuse

##### The pupil:

- May repeatedly display overt sexualised and/or provocative behaviour
- May frequently run away from home
- May appear unhappy or isolated
- May have aggressive eruptions
- May be kept away from school medicals
- May have persistent problems with sleeping, nightmares, bedwetting
- May struggle with anorexia, bulimia, or excessive 'comfort eating'
- May be reluctant to go home
- May be reluctant to get undressed in PE
- May often be late for school or absent from school

#### 7.4 Dealing with Disclosures of Abuse

Children/young people who have experienced abuse tell who they want, what they want and when they want. They tend to disclose when they feel safe or particularly vulnerable.

When a child/young person wants to confide in you:

##### Do

- Be accessible and receptive.
- Listen carefully.
- Take it seriously.
- Suspend disbelief.
- Control personal feelings – denial; anger; revulsion; despair; guilt etc.
- Reassure the child that they are right to seek help.
- Address the issue of confidentiality i.e., explain that you want to help, but that you must involve others.
- Contain disclosure without closing the child down.

- Find help quickly (i.e. See either DSL or their deputy or the Second Master as soon as possible).
- Make a careful written record of what was said (see below).

Do not

- Jump to conclusions.
- Ask leading questions.
- Try to get the child to disclose.
- Speculate or accuse anybody.
- Make promises or guarantee confidentiality.
- Keep secrets.

## 7.5 Reporting and Recording

When there are concerns about a child/young person in respect of possible abuse, with the exception of allegations against staff, it is important that the DSL is informed as soon as possible. It is essential that there is a clear, accurate record of how the concerns came to light, what they were and what happened next. Good practice would suggest a need for clarity and attention to detail.

The following model should assist.

- Name and age of child/young person.
- Special factors (does the child have specific needs, irrespective of the concern that is being reported).
- Parents' names, addresses, telephone numbers (this includes any other people with parental responsibility).
- Is this report about your concerns or someone else's? (If so whose?).
- What triggered the concern?
- Detail the time, date and location where the most recent alleged incident(s)/occurrence/abuse has taken place.
- What is the exact nature of the concern? Physical, sexual, behavioural, indirect signs.
- If the child/young person identifies any injury sites, record and describe the injury/mark observed. Do not actively encourage the child/young person to show injuries at this stage.
- Have you spoken to the child/young person? If so, what was said? (Ideally questions asked and responses given should be recorded in direct speech, using the child/young person's own words as opposed to the adult equivalent.)
- Has the child/young person told anyone else, if so who, and when did they tell.
- Have you spoken to the parent? If so, what was said? (As above with regard to recording the conversation.) Parents should not be spoken to/contacted if they are the alleged perpetrator.
- Are other children/young people at risk, if so is it possible to obtain names, address, school attended?
- Is anyone alleged to be responsible? (Name/age/address where known.)

- Who else have you spoken to/consulted with?
- Sign, date and record the time of any notes made. If the notes were not made at the time it is important to state this and record the date and time they were made. Best practice dictates that notes should be made at the time.
- Members of staff, volunteers and Governors should refer concerns relating to the behavior of one or more pupils against another pupil if there is reasonable cause to suspect that the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. In such cases, the abuse will be referred to local agencies.

#### 7.6 Bullying and suspicions of abuse:

What if abuse is merely suspected?

The DSL should always be informed, even if abuse is merely suspected, with the exception of allegations against staff.

In the event of disclosures about bullying (pupil on pupil abuse), all children involved, whether perpetrator or victim, will be treated 'at risk.'

This includes cases where bullying may be passed off as banter. It also includes cases where there has been a disclosure or allegation involving sexting. In all cases the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator will be provided with support.

School staff will deal with bullying in different ways, depending on how serious the bullying is.

They might deal with it in school, eg by disciplining bullies, or they might report it to the police or social services.

Any discipline must take account of special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils involved may have.

Anyone can report bullying to the police but it is usually a good idea to go through the School channels first.

#### 7.7 Referrals by staff, volunteers or governors

The school will take any allegations of abuse seriously and the DSL, or his deputy, will follow up swiftly such allegations with Wokingham Children's Services. However **anyone can make a referral** if any member of staff, volunteer or governor feels that insufficient actions is being taken or that their concerns are not being taken seriously, they should refer the matter directly themselves to Wokingham Children's Services using the following contact details:

- Referral and Assessment Team (Children's Safeguarding and Social Care Team): telephone 0118 9088002 or email: [triage@wokingham.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:triage@wokingham.gcsx.gov.uk)
- Emergency Duty Team – out of office hours: telephone 01344 786543
- Thames Valley Police: telephone 101 (note that if a crime has been committed police will be informed from the outset).

Members of staff, volunteers or governors should call 999 in an emergency if they believe that a child is in immediate danger.

The priority is always the welfare of the child so members of staff, volunteers and governors should not be afraid to contact Children's Services or the

Police directly if they feel it is the best way to address risks and prevent issues escalating.

## 8. Allegations against members of staff

8.1 Allegations that a member of staff (including any volunteer and governor) may have:-

- Committed an offence against a child or,
- Placed a child/young person at risk of significant harm or,
- Behaved in such a way that calls into question their suitability to work with children/young person

Should be referred as soon as possible to the Headmaster. If the allegation\* is against the Headmaster the allegation should be referred straight to the Chairman of Governors without telling the Headmaster. If this happens the Chairman of Governors will handle the School's response. If the Head is absent, allegations should be passed immediately to the Chairman of Governors. The allegation will be dealt with in accordance with national guidance and agreements, as implemented locally by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The Headmaster (or Chairman of Governors) will refer such allegations without delay to the LSCB or the Police. The school will not undertake its own investigation of allegations without prior consultation with the local authority designated officer, or in the most serious cases, the police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. In borderline cases, discussions will be held informally with the LSCB without naming the school or individual.

Contact details for the LADO (Local Area Designated Officer) are as follows:

0118 974 61 41 [LADO@wokinghamcsx.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@wokinghamcsx.gov.uk)

The LADO gives advice to employers and others who are concerned about an adult who works with children (including volunteers and agency staff). Any concern or allegation should be reported to the LADO within 24 hours. In cases where the adult is not aware of the allegation it may not be appropriate to tell them straight away as it may prejudice any potential police investigation. In these cases the LADO will provide advice.

If there is an allegation, the Headmaster (or in his absence, Chairman of Governors) will contact the LADO immediately (within at least one working day) to discuss the allegation, consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action including any involvement of the police. Discussions will be recorded in writing, and any communication with both the individual and the parents of the child/children agreed. A decision will be taken as to whether the circumstances of the case warrant suspension or whether alternative arrangements should be put in place. The school will give due weight to the views of the LSCB in deciding whether suspension is appropriate.

The school is aware that there are restrictions on the reporting of publishing of allegations against teachers and so will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity. These restrictions will apply up to the point where the accused person is charged with an offence of the DfE/National College for Teaching and Leadership publish information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case.

The school will report promptly to the DBS any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used for

regulated activity and where the DBS referral criteria are met, that is, they have caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child.

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 evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible (failure to make report constitutes an offence). 'Compromise agreements' cannot be used to prevent a referral being made to the DBS when it is legally required nor can an individual's refusal to cooperate with an investigation. Records will be kept of all instances of action in relation to safeguarding concerns and will be made available to inspectors.

When a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed if he/she had not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate, a referral will be made to the National College for teaching and Leadership (NCTL). A prohibition order may be considered for unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, or a conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence. Guidance as to whether a referral might be appropriate is available on the NCTL website.

The contact details for the Local Safeguarding Children Board are as follows:

- Referral and Assessment Team (Children's Safeguarding and Social Care Team): telephone 0118 9088002 or email: [triage@wokingham.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:triage@wokingham.gcsx.gov.uk)
- Emergency Duty Team – out of office hours: telephone 01344 786543.

## 9. Photographing Children

- 9.1 We understand that parents/guardians like to take photos or videos of their children participating in school events. This is part of family life and we will not discourage parents/guardians from celebrating their child(ren's) successes. However, we will not allow others to photograph or film pupils during a school activity without the parent's/guardian's permission.
- 9.2 We will use images of pupils on the School websites, for publicity, or press releases, unless we are informed by parents/guardians to the contrary. The School will not be held accountable for any photographs or video footage taken by other parents/guardians or members of the public at school functions.

## 10. Confidentiality

- 10.1 The School, and all members of staff at the School, will ensure that all data relating to pupils is handled in accordance with the requirements of the law, and any national and local guidance.
- 10.2 Any member of staff who has access to sensitive information about a child or the child's family must take all reasonable steps to ensure that such information is only disclosed to those people who need to know. Regardless of the duty of confidentiality, if any member of staff has reason to believe that a child may be suffering harm, or be at risk of harm, their duty is to forward this information without delay to the DSL or the LSCB. Further details are available from the Confidentiality Policy on the School's website.

## 11. Professional conduct of staff and volunteers

- 11.1 The School has a duty to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between staff, volunteers and pupils, and that all members of staff (and volunteers) are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.
- 11.2 At all times, members of staff are required to work in a professional way with children and they must behave in line with the Staff Code of Conduct (see appendix).
- 11.3 All members of staff must understand that any allegation that they have assaulted a child/young person, or placed a child/young person at risk of harm, or significant harm will be dealt with through a multi agency forum, involving the Police and Children's Services of the relevant Local Authority.

## 12. Physical contact and restraint

- 12.1 On rare occasions members of staff may have to make a physical intervention using 'reasonable force' with a pupil where it is necessary to protect that child or another person from immediate danger. If a physical intervention is applied it must not be in such a way that is likely or could be expected to cause an injury and must be applied within the guidelines as set out in the Use of Force to Restrain and Control Policy.

## 13. Prevention of Terrorism and Radicalisation

The school is aware of its responsibilities for helping ensure that pupils are not drawn into terrorism and acts of extremism. The Headmaster, DSL and Governor with responsibility for safeguarding will undertake training in this area and share information with staff and governors. The school follows statutory guidance and seeks to identify pupils who may be at risk or who display behaviour which suggests that they may become involved in such activities. In these cases, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will refer any concerns to other agencies as appropriate. We recognise that it will be necessary to ascertain the level of risk before identifying the most appropriate referral, which might include Channel or Children's Social Care. Staff who are concerned that a pupil may be at risk or radicalisation can report their concerns to the DSL or directly to the following agencies:

Thames Valley Police (101)

DfE Helpline (020 7340 7264)

[Counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk)

Decisions as to whether to seek support for a child about whom there are concerns relating to radicalisation would normally be taken in consultation with parents and pupils but their consent is not required for a referral if there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm. The school recognises that visiting speakers play an important role in school life in presenting new perspectives to pupils. It also recognises that such speakers can shape pupils' opinions and ideas and that they can therefore be in a position of considerable power and influence. We will therefore ensure that visiting speakers, whether invited into school by staff or by pupils, are suitable and that they are appropriately supervised. A member of staff will stay with visiting speakers at all times and opportunities will be provided for pupils to reflect upon speakers' words, especially if they relate to emotive or controversial topics.

The school recognises the role that the internet often plays in the radicalisation of young people. Its filtering system is therefore designed to prevent pupils gaining access to terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet through school systems.

## 14. Safeguarding Issues

- 14.1 All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues, some of which are listed below. Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger. These issues include:

**Preventing Radicalisation (the Prevent Duty)** – The School recognises the need to provide stability in the lives of children who may be at risk of radicalisation. Pupils can be vulnerable and exploited by others and staff will be alert to the signs of vulnerability and susceptibilities to extremist ideology and indoctrination. The Staff realise the need for a culture of vigilance to be present in the School to support Safeguarding. This includes being aware of changes in the attitudes of pupils that suggest they may be at risk of radicalisation.

**Gangs and Youth Violence:** The School realises that some pupils may be drawn into Gangs where they could encounter violence as part of the culture. As with radicalisation staff will be vigilant towards this threat.

**Children going missing from Education:** All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or who has been absent without the School's permission for a period of 10 school days or more. The School realises that a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. The School will inform the relevant local authority if there is a concern.

**Forced Marriage:** The School is aware that in some cultures children going missing in education could potentially be one indication of potential forced marriage. The School is aware of this and will be vigilant with regard to the pupils.

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):** Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. 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.

**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 Female Genital Mutation (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, or may have already taken place should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

All cases of FGM that are discovered by the school must be reported to the police in accordance with the Home Office mandatory reporting requirements (Oct 2015). The Thames Valley Police are contactable on 101.

Further information about all of these can be found online in the links in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016.

Bullying (including cyberbullying). All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Staff should be clear as to the school policy and procedures with regards to bullying and the anti-bullying code of conduct.

- 14.2 Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example, information for schools and colleges can be found on the [TES](#), [MindEd](#) and the [NSPCC](#) websites. School and college staff can access government guidance as required on the issues listed below via GOV.UK and other government websites:

## 15. 'Whistle Blowing' Procedure

- 15.1 Our school has a culture of safety and raising concerns, together with a culture of valuing staff and of reflective practice. There are therefore procedures in place for reporting and handling concerns, including about perceived poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime. In order to ensure that colleagues are confident that they can raise any concerns about the operations of the school without prejudice and without suffering as a result, a 'whistle-blowing' procedure is in place. The mechanisms and principles of this procedure are outlined in the Staff Code of Conduct and Staff Directory. The school will take seriously any concerns that are raised about its operations, especially if these relate to the welfare and well-being of our pupils.

WT stresses the importance of creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role, Staff may contact the Headmaster or Bursar or if not satisfied the Chair of Governors Mr Peter Bertram - who can be contacted through the School reception [reception@bcs.org.uk](mailto:reception@bcs.org.uk) and as KCSIE makes clear any member of staff may make a referral to external agencies if still not satisfied. Staff members are trained that when receiving a disclosure including explaining that

confidentiality cannot be promised. Staff are therefore part of a culture where they feel that they can raise concerns and if still not satisfied that their concerns are being dealt with appropriately by the School can contact the LADO or access resources such as the new NSPCC helpline which is available 24 hours a day to protect children. This number is 0808 800 500 or text 88858 or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)  
Staff may also wish to contact the DfE, ISI and Charities Commission in relation to Safeguarding.

Concerns should be reported to the Headmaster or DSL if there are handling worries, including about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime who will apply provision for mediation and dispute resolution where necessary. If there are concerns about the DSL they must be reported to the Headmaster or if they are about the Headmaster the Chairman of Governors.

The DSL provides training and support for staff to clarify this either directly or through the Educare system in order to ensure transparency and accountability in relation to how concerns are received and handled.

## 16. Review

- 16.1 This policy will be reviewed by the School's governing body and senior management team at least annually or sooner if it is necessary to reflect changes in guidance and legislation.
- 16.2 The school will contribute to interagency working through effective communication and good cooperation with local agencies.
- 16.3 If there is a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, the school will work with the LSCB to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This policy is available to pupils, staff, volunteers, governors and parents on the School's website and on request.

The nominated governor is Mrs Elaine Morgan. She can be contacted through the Chair of Governors Mr Peter Bertram who can be contacted through the School reception [reception@rbc.org.uk](mailto:reception@rbc.org.uk)

Author(s):	PDW
Date:	January 2017
Review Frequency:	Annually
Next Review Date:	January 2018
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Keeping Children Safe in Education</b> (September 2016) (<i>KCSIE</i>) <i>KCSIE</i> incorporates the additional statutory guidance,</li> <li>• <i>KCSIE</i> also refers to the non-statutory advice for practitioners</li> <li>• RBCS Missing Child Policy (October 2016)</li> <li>• Home Office Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information (October 2015)</li> <li>• The use of social media for online radicalisation (July 2015)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (July 2015) (Prevent).</li> <li>• <b>The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and child-minders</b> (June 2015) Prevent is supplemented by non-statutory advice and a briefing note</li> <li>• What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (March 2015)</li> <li>• <b>Working Together to Safeguard Children</b> (March 2015) (WT) WT refers to the non-statutory advice: Information sharing (March 2015)</li> <li>• Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (June 2016)</li> </ul>
Governor:	Mrs Elaine Morgan
Date of Governor Agreement:	