



Child Protection Policy

DCPS is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for students, staff and visitors and to promoting a climate where children and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others.

The school's Child Protection policy draws upon the guidance contained in "Working Together under the Children Act 1989", DfES Circular 10/95.

Responsibilities and immediate action

All adults working in this school (including visiting staff, volunteers and students on placement) are required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Designated Senior Teacher with responsibility for child protection.

The Designated Senior Teacher is: Mrs E A Hill

The Designated Teacher is the focal point for school staff who have concerns about an individual child's safety and the first point of contact for external agencies who are pursuing CP investigations. The Designated teacher also co-ordinates the school's representation at CP conferences and the submission of written reports for conferences. When an individual concern/incident is brought to the notice of the Designated Teacher, they will be responsible for deciding upon whether or not this should be reported to the Social Services Department. Where there is any doubt as to the seriousness of this concern, or disagreement between the Designated Teacher and the member of staff reporting the concern, advice will be sought from the Headmaster.

In circumstances where a child has a suspicious injury which requires urgent medical attention, the CP referral process should not delay the administration of first aid or emergency medical assistance. If a pupil is thought to be at immediate risk (because of parental violence or intoxication, for example), Police intervention will be requested. Particular vigilance will be exercised in respect of pupils who are included on the Child Protection Register and any incidents or concerns involving these children will be reported immediately to Social Services (and confirmed in writing).

Where it is suspected that a child might be at risk of significant harm, nothing will be said to the child's parent/carer without the approval of the Designated Teacher and/or the Social Services Department.

In situations where pupils sustain injury or are otherwise affected by an accident or incident whilst they are the responsibility of the school, parents will be notified of this as soon as possible.

DCPS recognises the need to be alert to the risks posed by strangers who may wish to harm children in school or travelling to and from school and their homes.

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Recruitment

All staff recruited by the school will be subject to reference and Criminal records checks and teaching staff will be checked against the DfEE list 99 (or *DoH Consultative Index*), prior to their appointment. This school will only use employment agencies which positively vet their supply staff. Staff joining the school on a permanent or temporary basis will be informed of the Child Protection policy.

Volunteers

Any parent or other person employed by the school to work in a voluntary capacity with pupils will be subjected to all reasonable vetting procedures. Volunteers will work under the direct supervision of an established staff member and will be subject to the same code of conduct as paid employees of the school. Volunteers will at no time be given responsibility of the personal care of pupils.

Staff Code of Conduct

All staff are expected to adhere to a code of conduct in respect of their contact with pupils and their families. Children will be treated with respect and dignity and no punishment, detention, restraint, sanctions or rewards are allowed outside of detailed in the schools' Behaviour Policy. Whilst it would be unrealistic and undesirable to preclude all physical contact between adults and children, staff are expected to exercise caution and avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation. Where incidents occur which might otherwise be mis-construed, or where it becomes necessary to physically restrain a pupil for their own or others' safety, this will be appropriately recorded and reported to the Headmaster and parents.

Other than in cases of emergency, first aid will only be administered by qualified first aiders. If it is necessary for the child to remove clothing for this treatment, there should, wherever possible, be another adult of the same gender present. If a child needs help with toileting or washing after soiling themselves, another adult should be present or within earshot. If a male member of staff is providing any form of intimate care, a female colleague will be present. All first aiders and non-routine changing or personal care will be recorded.

For their own safety and protection, staff should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with pupils. Other than informal teaching situations; musical instrument tuition, for example, the door to the room in which the counselling or meeting is taking place should be left open. Where this is not practicable because of the need for confidentiality, another member of staff will be asked to maintain a presence nearby and a record will be kept of the circumstances of the meeting. All rooms which are used for the teaching or counselling of pupils will have clear glass panels in the door.

School staff should also be alert to the possible risks which might arise from contact with pupils outside of the school. Home visits to pupils should only take place with the knowledge and approval of the Headmaster. Visits/telephone calls by pupils to the homes of staff members should only occur in exceptional circumstances and with the knowledge and approval of the Headmaster.

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Complaints/Allegations Made Against Staff

DCPS takes seriously all complaints made against members of staff. Procedures are in place for pupils, parents and staff to share any concern which they may have about the actions of any member of the school staff. All such complaints will be brought immediately to the attention of the Headmaster (or Deputy Head), and investigated.

If the allegation involves what appears to be a physical assault, the Headmaster will take action in accordance with the school's staff disciplinary code. Where it appears that a criminal offence may have been committed, this will be reported to the Police service for investigation. In considering whether or not a referral to the Police (or to Social Services under Area Child Protection Committee procedures) is appropriate, the Headmaster may seek advice from the Nominated Governor with CP responsibility. Parents should also be advised of their independent right to make a formal complaint to the Police.

If the complaint concerns alleged sexual abuse, this will be reported by the Headmaster for joint investigation by the Police and Social Services.

If the complaint concerns alleged by the Headmaster, this should be brought to the attention of the Designated Teacher (unless this is the Headmaster, in which case the Deputy Head will be contacted) who will seek advice from the Nominated Governor.

The Nominated Governor with CP responsibility is: Roy Nicholson

Staff who are formally disciplined for the abuse of pupils (or who resign before disciplinary action can be instigated), will be notified to the Department for Education and Employment, for possible inclusion on their consultative index; List 99.

Records

Brief and accurate written notes will be kept of all incidents or CP concerns relating to individual pupils. Child protection records are not open to pupils or parents. CP records are securely kept and can only be accessed by the Designated Teacher and senior managers of the school.

When a pupil leaves the school, due to a family move or any other reason, all efforts will be made to identify the school to which they are being admitted and ensure that their educational records are sent without delay to that school if the school requests them.

If requested by Social Services or the new school requests them child protection records will be sent under a confidential cover.

Safety in the School

For the protection of staff and pupils, where possible, glass panels are fitted to the doors of classrooms in this school. No internal doors to classrooms will be locked whilst pupils are present in these areas.

Entry to school premises will be controlled by doors which are secured physically or by staff supervision. Authorised visitors to the school will be asked to wear their identity badges or

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be issued with school visitor badges. Unidentified visitors will be challenged by staff or reported to the Headmaster or school office.

The presence of intruders and suspicious strangers seen loitering near the school or approaching pupils, will be reported to the Police.

Curriculum

DCPS acknowledges the important role that the curriculum can play in the prevention of abuse and in the preparation of pupils for the responsibilities of adult life and parenthood. It is expected that all staff will consider the opportunities which exist in their area of responsibility for addressing personal safety and other CP related issues.

Complaints

All complaints arising from the operation of this policy will be considered under the school's complaints procedure.