

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

This policy forms part of the complete set of policies that relate to Safeguarding Children. The list of policies includes:

Safeguarding Policy	Fire Risk Policy & Procedure
Attendance, Registration and Collection Policy & Procedure	Fire Emergency Plan
Supervision of Children	Safe Recruitment of Staff & Volunteers
Transporting Pupils (inc crossing the road, mini bus & walking)	Dealing with Parental Complaints
Children Behaviour Policy & Procedure	Photography and Video Policy
Physical Control Policy & Procedure	Alcohol, Drugs and Smoking Policy
Physical Restraint Policy & Procedure	Confidentiality Policy
Pastoral Care	Whistle Blowing Policy
Anti-Bullying Policy & Procedure	
Safeguarding within the Curriculum	<i>Appendices</i>
Equality & Diversity Policy & Procedure	Occurrence Form
Equal Opportunities Policy & Procedure	Head Bump Form
PSHCE Policy inc Every Child Matters	Administering Medicine
Sex and Relationship Education Policy	General Medication Record
Internet Usage Policy & Procedure	Incident Form
Accident and First Aid Policy & Procedure	Consultations with Parents
Trips and Slips Policy and Procedures	
Risk Assessment of trips, activities and areas	Risk Assessment Form
Out of School Visit Pack	Reporting of an injury or dangerous occurrence
	Reporting of a case of disease

Safeguarding refers to the physical and emotional safety of children and staff within the school. This document outlines policies concerning each aspects of safeguarding and explains the relevant procedure.

The Governing Body will act in accordance with Section 175 (or Section 157, for Independent Schools) of the Education Act 2002 and the supporting statutory guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' (2006) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this school.

All children have the right to be safeguarded from harm or exploitation whatever their

- Race, religion, first language or ethnicity
- Gender or sexuality

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- Age
- Health or disability
- Political or asylum status

Governors, staff and volunteers in this school understand the importance of working in partnership with children, their parents and other agencies in order to promote children's welfare.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Afford protection for the students and staff at Berkhamstead School
- Enable staff and volunteers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Promote a culture which makes this school a safer place to learn

We will endeavour to safeguard the children in our care by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- Involving them in decisions which affect them.
- Making sure all the staff and volunteers are aware of and committed to the child protection procedures.
- Sharing information and concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving children and their parents/carers appropriately.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Adopting a code of conduct for all staff and volunteers
- Providing effective management through induction, support and training.
- Dealing appropriately with allegations/concerns about staff or volunteers in accordance with school policy.

Training:

All staff, academic and support staff, are given Safeguarding training. The Safeguarding Designated Officer (SDO) is responsible for arranging this regularly through the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB). When new staff arrive they will be given one-to-one training initially with the SDO prior to attending a GSCB course.

Roles and Responsibilities

Headmaster

- The Head Master is responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are in place and that the roles of the Senior Designated Officers (SDO) is implemented.
- The Headmaster is responsible for ensuring that DfES guidance is followed to ensure safe staff recruitment and that adequate staff checks and records are maintained.

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- Mr Andy Milner and Miss Jenna Bull are the Senior Designated Safeguarding Officers (SDOs).
- Miss Jenna Bull has the lead responsibility for safeguarding children in the EYFS – Nursery and Reception – and will liaise with GSCB as appropriate.

The Safeguarding Designated Officers

- Will be available to discuss concerns about suspected child abuse with staff
- Take responsibility for procedures and referrals
- Act as a focal point for liaison with authorised agencies .
- Arrange training for all adults every three years and keep records of training
- Has undertaken level three Safeguarding training and undertakes regular updates every two years.
- Ensures all new staff receive induction in safeguarding procedures
- Support staff involved in safeguarding cases.
- Monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the School's Safeguarding Policy.

Governors

- Governors must ensure that the School has a Safeguarding policy and that this is known to all staff and governors
- Mrs C. Pellerau is the designated governor for Safeguarding. She is responsible for instigating an annual review of procedures.
- As part of an annual review the Governors will judge the efficiency by which procedures have been implemented. Any deficiencies will be remedied immediately.

Staff

- Know who the SDOs for Safeguarding are
- Familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Report any Safeguarding issues to the SDO
- To act and be seen to act in every pupil's best interests

When deciding whether to make a referral, following an allegation or suspicion of abuse, the head and designated child protection officer should not make their own decision over what appear to be borderline cases, but rather the doubts and concerns should be discussed with the local authority designated officer (LADO). This may be done tentatively and without giving names in the first instance. What appears trivial at first can later be revealed to be much more serious, and an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation. Thus the school should not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking a child leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegations of abuse

Appointment of Staff

Safeguarding issues must be uppermost in our mind throughout the process of appointing both teaching and support staff.

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- The appointment process is designed to deter potential offenders from applying. All applicants are required to complete application forms which are designed to prompt interviewers to spot lacunae, frequent changes of jobs and movement around the country. They state the primacy of safeguarding concerns at the school and require a declaration of past convictions and whether or not the candidate is on List 99 and disqualified from working with children.
- References must normally be taken up in advance of short-listing, and always before confirmation of appointment. These are completed on a reference pro-forma and include sections requiring declarations of concerns raised, whether proven or not, which relate to the safety or welfare of children. References must be from at least two sources or institutions.
- When interviewing the Headmaster will be accompanied by a member of the Senior Management Team so that proceedings are observed. Support staff will be interviewed by the Bursar, accompanied by a Bursary colleague, Governor or the Headmaster for senior positions. Those interviewing must not be afraid to ask difficult questions of the candidate or referee.
- All teaching and support staff will be checked for their suitability with the Criminal Records Bureau. Other adults, who will come into contact with pupils as part of their business with the school, or on an infrequent basis, will be always accompanied and will have a List 99 check, if appropriate. Before appointment it is a requirement that qualifications are presented and photographic identity seen. All appointees are required to complete a medical declaration to assess their suitability to work with children.
- Any member of staff found not suitable to work with children will be notified to the appropriate bodies (List 99 for education staff). Any concern raised, whether proven or not, will be reported in staff references.
- The Headmasters secretary will keep files on all employees and helpers at clubs and activities. All future helpers will be directed to her for appropriate checking procedures.

Confidentiality

- The SDOs will disclose any information about a pupil or other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- All staff have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children
- Staff cannot promise to keep secrets which might compromise a child's safety or which might implicate others in serious misconduct
- The school will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB) with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with the GSCB on this point.

Safeguarding concerns arising from pupils

All staff should be aware that older pupils may act in a way which is contrary to the welfare of younger children. Staff should be especially vigilant of relationships between pupils with a wide age gap and be prepared to communicate concerns to parents.

Physical intervention

Physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under safeguarding or disciplinary procedures. See separate policy.

Bullying

Any form of bullying may lead to consideration under safeguarding procedures. This includes homophobic, race and gender related bullying. See separate policy.

Health and Safety and Educational Trips and Visits.

Our Health and Safety and Educational visits procedures reflect the consideration we give to the protection of our children both physically within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits. When supervised by staff from other schools or accredited adventure centres etc, the trip leader will ensure that the appropriate checks have been made by the organisation. See separate policies.

Pastoral Education.

The School promotes the welfare of children explicitly through the PHSCE curriculum, assemblies and through the pastoral system. Pupils are helped to understand that there are certain situations and persons, including the Internet, which could lead them into harm.

Supporting Staff

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

Whistleblowing

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of safeguarding, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If the member of staff reporting suspicions remains unsatisfied by a decision not to act by the Headmaster or SDO, he or she may, as a responsible citizen, report concerns directly to Social Services. He or she will be considered to have acted as a responsible citizen and will not be held accountable for undermining a school decision.

See appendix 1: Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB) Safeguarding Procedures.

Definitions of Child Abuse:

A child is considered to be abused or at risk of abuse by parents when the basic needs of the child are not being met through act of either commission or omission, leading to demonstrable harm or demonstrable likely harm.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse is where parents or another in a trusted position physically hurt, injure or kill a child. This can involve hitting, whipping, punching, shaking, slapping, burning and biting. It can also include giving a child poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs or alcohol and attempting to suffocate or drown a child. In some cases excessive force may be used when feeding or changing a baby's nappy. Some of these result in very definite injuries which are visible on the body - such as scratches, burns, bruises and welts. Others are internal, such as broken bones, fractures or haemorrhaging.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse is where children (girls and boys) are violated by force, tricks, threats or coercion into having any kind of sexual contact with an adult or older child. This might be sexual intercourse, fondling, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse, exposing children to pornographic literature or videos. Some children are forced or encouraged to have sexual contact with parents, uncles, grandparents or friends of the family. Others have sexual contact with strangers.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is where children are constantly starved of love and affection by parents. Parents who continuously verbally attack, threaten, taunt and/or shout at a child can lead to a child's loss of confidence and self-esteem so that they become nervous and withdrawn. Parents who do not talk to, hug, or hold the child and are generally unavailable emotionally for the youngster. Alcoholic parents can be emotionally neglectful of their children's needs. Emotional abuse may not leave physical scars but does have serious consequences for the child, if not in childhood, then in adult life.

NEGLECT

Neglect is when the parents fail to meet the basic and essential needs of their children, like food, clothes, warmth and medical care. Leaving children alone and unsupervised is another example of neglectful parenting. Again like emotional abuse, it is neglectful of a child to deprive it of love or verbal stimulation.

Signs of abuse:

- Changes in behaviour, especially withdrawal or a sudden desire for attention.
- An unusually acute interest in sexual matters
- Signs of looking unwashed, undernourished, weight loss etc.
- Bruising in strange places that you wouldn't expect from a knock or obvious grip marks.

Procedures for referral:

Staff Action:

All adults must respond to safeguarding disclosures using non-leading techniques:

Receive, Reassure, Respond, Record, Refer.

Receive what is said:

- Accept what you are told- you do not need to decide whether or not it is true.
- Listen without displaying shock or disbelief.

Reassure the pupil

- Acknowledge their courage in telling
- Remind them that they are not to blame(but avoid criticising the alleged perpetrator-children often love adults who abuse them)
- Never promise confidentiality, only discretion
- Reassure them, but do not promise what you may not be able to deliver eg. everything will be alright now'(it may not be)

Responding

- Respond to what the pupil has said, but do not interrogate
- Avoid leading questions such a 'was it your father? Did he touch your breasts?' The defence counsel in a subsequent court case to suggest that you 'contaminated' the child's evidence can use questions such as these.
- Ask open-ended questions: Do you want to tell me anything else? And? Yes?
- Where necessary, clarify what has been said to you so that you are clear and able to decide whether this is an abusive situation.
- There is a careful judgement to be made in ensuring you have enough information to make an appropriate referral and allowing a pupil to talk without being silenced, while making sure that you have not inadvertently led a young person perhaps by an assumption behind a question. For example asking 'were you sitting up or lying down when this happened?' Contains the answer in the question
- Explain what you will do next and (where appropriate) the referral process.

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Recording

- Make brief notes as soon as possible
- Keep original notes, and then write up a subsequent record-include date, time, and place. Describe observable behaviour
- Record the actual words the child uses.

Refer

- Refer the matter within 24 hours, with all the relevant details to the Senior Designated Officers
- For allegations against a member of staff or the Headmaster see Appendix 4 below

Response of the Senior Designated Officers

- Take steps needed to protect any pupil involved from risk or harm.
- Not interview or investigate the allegation further, but refer to the local Safeguarding team of Social Services (GSCB) and follow their advice on further action.
- Agree with Social Services 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
 - informing other people at the school.
- Inform the pupil or adult who has made the initial allegation of what the next steps are to be
- Inform the Headmaster of the allegation and action taken
- Ensure long-term protection support for all pupils involved.

For procedure following an allegation made against a member of staff, see Appendix 4.

For Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB) Safeguarding Procedures see Appendix 1

Appendix 2: Guidelines on the Prevention of Allegations of Abuse.

Curriculum

Staff should be aware that curriculum content can sometimes include subject matter which is sexually explicit or of an otherwise sensitive nature. Care should be taken to ensure that curriculum materials couldn't be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified for that lesson. Schemes of work should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity.

The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter which may be sexually explicit or of an otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to pupils' questions may require careful judgement and staff may wish to take guidance in these circumstances. This means that staff should not enter into or encourage inappropriate or offensive discussion about sexual activity.

Care should also be taken to abide by the School's policy on sex education and the wishes of parents who have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education provided (but not from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction necessary under the School's science curriculum.)

Physical Education and other activities, which require physical contact

Some staff, those who teach PE and games, or who offer music tuition, for example, will on occasions have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a child so that they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument to assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement. Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity. This means that staff should:

- Consider alternatives where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret any such contact perhaps involving another member of staff or a less vulnerable pupil in the demonstration
- Always explain to a pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form the contact will take. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non verbally by the child.

Staff must remember:

- Never touch a child in a way which might be considered indecent
- Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny
- Never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights
- Should not use an object to make physical contact
- Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of staff, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be

misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded in writing as soon as possible and given as soon as possible to the SDO with a copy placed on the child's file.

Trips and off site visits

These guidelines must apply to residential/non residential visits. Aspects of Safeguarding must be included in the risk assessment where appropriate.

Particular attention must be paid to

- Where pupils are staying in a residential/hostel/hotel. Pupils must only stay in accredited, official and recognised venues.

Internet use

The School has clear policies about access to and the use of the Internet. Under no circumstances should staff in school access inappropriate images. Accessing child pornography or indecent images of children on the Internet, and making, storing or disseminating such material, is behaviour that, if proven, will invariably result in the individual being barred from work with children and young people.

In general a person's private activities, including use of the Internet, that does not involve child pornography or other illegal material, will not impinge on his or her suitability to work with children. However, using school equipment to access other inappropriate or indecent material including adult pornography, will give cause for concern, particularly if as a result pupils might be exposed to inappropriate or indecent material. Staff should be aware that this would be construed as gross misconduct under the School's disciplinary procedures.

One to one situations

When staff work in one to one situations with children, perhaps in a pastoral role, they need to be aware that this could provide an opportunity for allegations to be made. Teachers and others should recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. This means that staff should

- Avoid meetings with pupils in remote secluded areas of the school
- Ensure that there is visual access or an open door
- Inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by.

Transporting children

In certain situations e.g. out of school activities or medical emergencies, staff or volunteers may be required to transport children.

Staff should not:

- Transport children alone, when ever practicable
- Children should sit in the back of the car only, with seatbelts on.

First Aid and Administration of Medication

Only staff who are trained should administer First Aid. When administering first aid, staff should ensure that other adults or children are present, or aware of the action being taken, whenever possible. Parents should always be informed when First Aid has been administered.

This means staff should:

- Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken
- Explain to the child what is happening

Photography, Video/DVD and other Creative Arts

Some school activities involve the taking of images. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, extra curricular activities, publicity or to celebrate achievement. Using images of children for publicity purposes will require the consent of their parents or legal guardians. **A LIST OF THOSE PUPILS WHOSE PARENTS HAVEN'T GIVEN CONSENT WILL BE DISPLAYED IN EACH STAFF ROOM.** This means that images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without consent. The definition of a public place includes areas where visitors to the school have access. This means that staff should:

- Be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson/activity is concluded.
- Ensure that all images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability.
- Be able to justify the images of children in their possession
- Avoid making images in one to one situation.

It is recommended that when using a photograph the following rules should be followed:

- If the photograph is used, avoid naming the pupil, unless the photograph is to be used by the local press and permission has been given
- If the pupil is named avoid using her/his photograph
- The School establishes whether the image will be retained for further use
- Images are securely stored and used only by those authorised to do so.

This means that staff should not

- Take or distribute images of children unless they have the consent of their parents (they are not on the list in the staff room).

Changing

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. However, there needs to be a required level of supervision to safeguard young people and satisfy health and safety considerations and to ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. The supervision will need to be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned.

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Staff, therefore, need to be vigilant about their own behaviour. This means that staff should:

- Announce their intention of entering changing rooms
- Avoid remaining in changing rooms unless a pupil needs require it
- Avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress
- Avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
- Not change in the same place as children

Social Contact

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship, pursuing or strengthening a relationship. Even if a child seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise his/her professional judgement in making a response and be aware that contact could be misconstrued.

This means that staff should:

- Always approve any planned social contact with SMT
- Advise SMT when regular social contact occurs through activities not linked to school
- Report and record any situation, which they feel, might compromise the school or their own professional standing.

Pupils in distress.

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. This may include appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times to ensure that their contact is not threatening or intrusive and not subject to misinterpretation.

This means that staff should:

- Consider the way in which they offer comfort to a distressed pupil
- Always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed child
- Record any situation that may give rise to concern.

Intimate Care.

Children are encouraged to be ready for independent toileting before joining the Nursery although adult assistance is always on hand for those children who need it. If a child has an accident or is unable to maintain good levels of hygiene then an adult with inform another adult in the room and assist the child. This help is carried out in as public a place as possible, allowing for hygiene and self-esteem issues. This guideline is used for any other accidents around school, on school visits or in the unusual case of an older child. In the case of persistent difficulty, the child's parents will be asked to seek medical advice from their GP or Health Visitor.

Sexual Contact with Young People.

The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative 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.

Adult behaviour may also involve 'grooming' a child. This can involve an adult conferring special attention and favour upon a child with the intent of sexually abusing them at a future point.

This means that staff should:

Not pursue sexual relationships with children either in or outside of school. Any form of communication with a child which could be misinterpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative, i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact. Sexual behaviour towards and/or developing a sexual relationship between a member of staff with any child is inappropriate and illegal. This behaviour is considered as gross misconduct and will result in immediate suspension pending investigation.

Gifts.

Receiving of gifts is essentially inadvisable as it may be inappropriate and in some cases constitute a criminal offence. Of course, there are occasions when children wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff at Christmas time or as a 'thank you' gift. In the context of creating safe working practices it is also inadvisable to give or receive gifts regularly or of any value to individual children. This could be misconstrued as a gesture either to bribe, or single out the child and it might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return.

This means that staff should:

- Ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued should be declared.
- Not give preferential treatment to any child on a regular basis.
- Ensure that any gifts given as part of a reward system are small and an accepted part of school practice.

Infatuation.

Staff need to be aware that it is not uncommon for a pupil to develop an infatuation of a member of staff. Staff should be aware that pupils can be strongly attracted to a member of staff and may develop a heterosexual or homosexual infatuation. All situations should be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of all concerned. Staff should also be aware that such circumstances always carry a high risk of words or actions being

misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff. A member of staff who becomes aware that a pupil may have developed an infatuation (on themselves or a colleague) should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a senior colleague so that appropriate action can be taken, where necessary.

Dress and Appearance

It is necessary and wise for staff to consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role as opposed to that which may be adopted in their personal life. This means that staff should wear clothing which:

- Promotes a positive and professional image
- Is appropriate to their role
- May not be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
- Is absent of any slogans.

Staff who dress or appear in a manner that could be considered inappropriate or offensive, could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation and should expect guidance from SMT.

Searching

If an investigation or an allegation leads to reasonable suspicion that a search of a pupil, his or her clothes, bags or lockers, two staff members must be present while the search is conducted. Pupils must be asked to empty pockets and bags themselves.

Appendix 3: Guidelines on the use of force to control or restrain pupils.

Occasions may arise, for example, when a pupil appeared likely to dash across the road, where staff might have to restrain them. In order to ensure safety, staff should be aware of DfES\Circular 10/98 which aims to:

- Provide for the safety and security of pupils in need of physical restraint
- To clarify for staff the occasions when physical intervention might be appropriate and the steps they are allowed to take.
- To distinguish between physical restraint and corporal punishment
- To make sure that any restraint is minimal, infrequent, recorded and communicated to parents.

Implementation

Teachers may use such force as is reasonable in order to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing a criminal offence
- Injuring themselves or others
- Causing damage to property
- Disrupting good order in the classroom and beyond

Teachers in charge of pupils should exercise this responsibility on any occasion when they have lawful control of pupils. When it is likely that young children may have temper tantrums, pupils should be removed from the public situation and taken to a senior member of staff.

Appropriate action may be:

- Physically interposing between pupils
- Blocking pupils path
- Holding
- Pushing or pulling
- Leading by the arm
- Shepherding a pupil by placing a hand in the centre of the back.

Teachers should not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury

- By restricting breathing
- Slapping, punching or kicking pupils
- Twisting a limb
- Tripping
- Holding or pulling by the hair or ear
- Holding face down on the ground

Male teachers, unless there is danger to the pupil, should avoid physical contact with female pupils which, however well-intentioned, can be misconstrued.

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All incidents where staff feel they have used force to control or restrain should be recorded and submitted to a member of SLT. The documentation should be kept on the pupil/s file and the parents informed.

Appendix 4: Allegations against staff.

An allegation should be made if a teacher or other member of staff has:

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

An allegation will indicate that a person is unsuitable to continue to work with children in his or her present position, or in any capacity.

If a pupil makes an allegation against a member of staff, the member of staff receiving the allegation must immediately inform the Headmaster; if the Headmaster is absent the SDO should pass the allegation on to the Chair of the Governing body.

The Headmaster on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Chair of the Governing body.

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headmaster, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of the Governing body without notifying the Headmaster first. In cases of serious harm, the police will be involved from the outset.

Procedures following an allegation of abuse by a member of staff:

Considerations: once an allegation has been made, the Headmaster (Chair of the Governing body if the allegation is made against the Headmaster) will investigate to establish whether the allegation is not substantially false or unfounded. He may decide to use an independent adviser.

Whenever a person is interviewed as part of an investigation, he or she is entitled to choose a representative to act as a witness to proceedings.

If the allegation is found not to be substantially false or unfounded, it will usually be the case that a strategy discussion will take place for the protection of the child concerned or the police will be contacted for further investigation.

If the child is not likely to suffer significant harm, but a criminal offence has been committed, the police will be informed directly.

Record Keeping: a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made against a member of staff, and all details leading to and including a resolution, will be kept on the confidential personnel file, and will be retained until the member of staff reaches retirement age, or for a period of 10 years after the allegation has been made. The school

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will provide information regarding an allegation for the purposes of future references and CRB disclosures.

Procedures: If it is decided that the allegation does not involve a criminal offence and/or does not require formal disciplinary action, the Headmaster will institute appropriate action within 3 working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, the hearing should be held within 15 working days.

According to the terms of the teacher's contract, the Headmaster may suspend a member of staff whilst an investigation is progressing, dependent on the seriousness of the case. Suspension will always occur if there is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm. The decision to suspend remains with the Headmaster. Suspension is not an indication of guilt.

Parents and guardians of the child concerned will be told about the case, if they do not already know and will be kept informed of the progress, including the outcome, but not the details of any disciplinary process.

The person who is subject to the allegation will be kept informed at all times of developments. Those who are members of a union are advised to contact the union at the outset.

Action: if the allegation is found to be false, and the person has been suspended, then the school will support him or her as best it can, perhaps with the help of a mentor to return to work and will attempt to minimise contact with the pupil involved in making the allegation if they remain at school. The school will consider serious disciplinary action against a child who has been found to make deliberately false allegations.

If the allegation is substantiated, the decision whether to dismiss the member of staff is at the discretion of the Headmaster. A criminal offence, regardless of significant harm to a child, would be considered a gross misconduct and is liable to dismissal.

The school will report the dismissal of any member of staff or volunteer following a substantiated allegation to the Independent Safeguarding Authority within one month of the person leaving.

At the Early Years Foundation Stage, the School will inform Ofsted within 14 days of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working or looking after children on the premises being made and of the action taken in respect of these allegations.

Review: a review of procedures will take place after any allegations made.
To be reviewed annually or in the light of statutory changes and after any safeguarding concern.

