

Safeguarding Policy

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
- 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.

Safeguarding Children Procedures

What to do if you suspect Child Abuse or Neglect

The Safeguarding Designated Officers are - Mr Milner & Miss Bull

The Designated Governor responsible for Safeguarding is Mr Peter Lacey

Your Role in protecting Children at Risk

As someone who comes into frequent contact with children, you will be aware that many children each year are abused and neglected. When you are faced with a child who you think may have been abused or neglected, the following guidelines are those which have been agreed by all agencies involved in the Area Child Protection Committee. You should ensure that you are aware of their content.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

1. All children are entitled to protection from abuse and neglect
2. In any intervention, emphasis should be placed first and foremost on the interest of the child
3. Possible child abuse always demands urgent action. However, except when a child's injuries appear to need immediate treatments, discussions should take place with Social Services so that a planned approach can be adopted.
4. All people concerned should be aware of the importance of good record keeping.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN

Any member of Staff who suspects, or who is told of any incident or strong suspicion of physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect occurring in the school, or to a pupil of the school at home or outside the school, must take the following action and observe the following guidelines:

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1. The matter must be reported the same day, as soon as possible, to the designated SDO. In the absence of the designated staff member, the immediate report should be made to the Headmaster. In the first instance the matter should not be discussed with anyone except the designated member of staff or, in her absence, the Headmaster. (If the allegation or suspicion is about the designated member of staff, the report should be made directly to the Headmaster). If the report is against the Headmaster then the SDO must go direct to the Chair of Governors.

2. Staff must not investigate reports of abuse themselves. Alleged victims, perpetrators, those reporting abuse and others involved should not be interviewed by school staff.

3. IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER TO:

- a) Take what the young person says seriously. Ask if you may take notes.
- b) React calmly because over-reacting can frighten the young person and compound feelings of guilt.
- c) Tell the young person they are not to blame. Young people are the victims of child abuse, never the cause.
- d) Explain to the young person what will happen next as early as possible.
- e) Check out your understanding with the young person of what has happened if you are not clear what the young person is telling you.
- f) Keep questions to a minimum and never lead the young person as leading questions may invalidate the young person's testimony in court.
- g) Use the words the young person uses.
- h) Record your conversation with the young person as soon as possible after the event.

IT IS IMPORTANT NOT TO:

- a. Promise the child that you will not tell anyone else. Instead explain that to help them to stop the abuse you will need to talk to other people.
- b. Try to "go it alone". Children are best protected when all the agencies involved work together.

4. The designated member of staff will advise the Headmaster on what further action should be taken.

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Post Incident Support

Appropriate support, where necessary, will be provided for pupils who have suffered abuse, and any others closely involved, including the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made.

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