

GUILDFORD COUNTY SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION / SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Note: Reference is made to 'children' and 'child' since these terms are used in the Children Act and elsewhere. At no point do the Governors wish to suggest that less care is due to our older students.

THE SCHOOL'S COMMITMENT TO THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Guildford County School recognises its responsibilities towards the protection of our students. Our policy applies to all staff, governors, visitors and volunteers working in the school.

The Governors wish to ensure that:

- (a) Staff deal properly and promptly with any issues which affect the interests of the students and their protection so that all matters are dealt with sensitively, in compliance with relevant guiding legislation and in confidence.
- (b) appropriate action is taken to protect a student who is, or may be, at risk of harm or suffering harm
- (c) all members of staff are aware of their duty to report any suspicion, allegation or disclosure which affects or may be thought to affect the welfare of the student.

Guildford County School will:

- ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with students.
- Develop and implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Follow the Surrey Safeguarding Board's guidance on levels of need.
- Support students who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Ensure all staff receive regular Child Protection training and updates.
- Operate a Single Safeguarding List
- Follow Surrey's guidance on Safe Recruitment procedures.

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

There are four categories of child abuse.

Physical abuse: Actual or likely injury to a child or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering including hitting, shaking, throwing, burning or scalding, deliberate poisoning, suffocation, drowning and Munchausen's syndrome by proxy (when adults harm a child to bring attention to themselves. This is also known as Fabricated or Induced Illness).

Sexual abuse: forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at or the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development and may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are unloved, worthless or inadequate
- Imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations
- Causing children to be frightened or in danger e.g. witnessing domestic violence
- Exploitation or corruption of children

All abuse involves some level of emotional abuse although it can occur alone.

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical / psychological needs likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. This may involve failure to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, failure to protect the child from physical harm or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care. It may also include neglect of a child's basic emotional needs such as the refusal to give children love, affection and/or attention, domestic violence or drug/alcohol abuse in the child's presence.

Further advice on indicators of these types of abuse is available from the Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO).

Students with disabilities and special educational needs are especially vulnerable.

Students and young people can also be abusers and they will need help too. They may themselves have been abused when younger.

Other situations:

Staff may sometimes come across situations which may not directly appear to be child protection issues but are issues relating to the safety and well-being of a student. Examples include:

- Self harming
- Eating disorders
- Pregnancy
- Drug or alcohol use
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour

Any member of staff who has concerns about a student relating to these, or any similar activities, should refer to the CPLO.

ROLES

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them. There are, however, key people within schools and the LEA who have specific responsibilities under Child Protection procedures.

Within Guildford County School Mrs Helen Nurton is the Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO) and Mr John Lewis is the Assistant CPLO. All matters concerning Child Protection should be referred to them or to the Headteacher.

The Governing Body will identify a Governor to act as a link to the CPLO. They will monitor the Safeguarding procedures via the annual report from the CPLO and they will follow the Safeguarding guidelines when interviewing and appointing to posts at the school.

An annual report will be provided to the Governing body covering conduct and the impact of

safeguarding and safer recruitment in the school. This report will include any changes to the policy and procedures, recruitment policy and procedure changes, information on safeguarding training delivered and needs and the number of incidents. The Surrey proforma will be used for this report.

TRAINING

All staff, trainee teachers and volunteers go through an induction process that covers safeguarding children matters and training is updated regularly, as per the Surrey guidelines.

THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE TO AN ALLEGATION OF CHILD ABUSE

All allegations of child abuse involving the school community will be dealt with as follows:

- Any allegation of abuse against a member of staff or against a student will be discussed by the CPLO and the Headteacher. The Headteacher will inform and consult with the Local Education Officer. We will follow Surrey's procedures for dealing with any such matters. Appropriate consultation within school and a plan of action will then be agreed. Any allegations against the Headteacher will be referred by the CPLO to the Chair of Governors.
- Any member of staff who has concerns regarding child protection should refer initially to the CPLO.
- The CPLO, if appropriate, will make sure that a referral has been made to social care team, will complete the emergency common assessment framework form (CAF) and will liaise with that department and the police during any Child Protection investigation.
- All media contacts will go through the Headteacher.
- During a Child Protection investigation an accused person may be withdrawn from any contact with children or young people.
- Following the outcome of an investigation, appropriate disciplinary procedures may apply.
- Allegations may be shown to be unfounded or malicious. In such a case the Headteacher will find appropriate means to make it clear that the person has been exonerated.
- Where results of an investigation are inconclusive the Headteacher or Governors may require the person to undergo counselling, training or supervision.

PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

All matters concerning Child Protection are confidential. Any details (including CP conference notes and teachers' notes) regarding Child Protection issues will be retained by the CPLO, separate from the child's school record. Information regarding child protection issues will only be given to those needing to know. The Head of Year / Key Stage will normally know of any child protection issues.

If a child transfers or leaves the school the CPLO will liaise with the Headteacher or the CPLO of the receiving school regarding files and records.

RACIST INCIDENTS AND SAFEGUARDING

Guidance from Surrey CC (July 2009) states that allegations of racism made by students against adults, including school staff, should be treated under the Safeguarding 'Managing Allegations Against Staff' guidelines.

ATTENDANCE AT CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

The CPLO (or the Head of Key Stage / Year if more appropriate) will attend child protection conferences and review meetings.

SUPPORTING PUPILS AT RISK

Guildford County School recognises that students who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world in a positive way. The school

may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of some children at risk. Whilst at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant.

The school will support students through:

- the curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- the school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- the implementation of school behaviour management policies
- individual mentoring where appropriate
- regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families.
- a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's interests to do so.

DEALING WITH STUDENTS

The following guidelines provide a framework within which students should be safe from harm and adults protected from false allegations.

DO

- Treat all students and young people with respect
- Be aware of your speech, tone of voice and body language
- Make sure another adult is present if you need to give first-aid or personal assistance to a child
- Make sure that another adult is close by (and the student is aware of this) if you need to see a student alone.
- Follow staff guidelines on the staff supervision of groups away from the school

DO NOT

- Play rough physical or sexually provocative games
- Be sexually suggestive about or to a young person, even in fun
- Touch inappropriately
- Scapegoat or ridicule a student
- Show favouritism towards a student
- Allow students to involve you in excessive attention seeking, especially if it is overtly physical or sexual in nature
- Give lifts to students alone. If this is unavoidable ask the child to sit in the back
- Share sleeping accommodation with young people
- Invite a young person to your home alone
- Permit abusive peer activities such as ridiculing or bullying
- Allow unknown adults to have unsupervised access to students.

It is not advisable to befriend students via social networking sites.

DEALING WITH INAPPROPRIATE ADVANCES

Students or young people can sometimes make suggestive approaches to an adult. They may have a crush or act inappropriately following previous abusive experiences. If this happens to you it is vital you take the responsibility to:

- Tell the student / young person that his / her language or behaviour is inappropriate
- Tell your Head of Year / Key Stage, Head of Department or member of the Leadership Team about the incident
- Record the incident, what was said and done. This is a safeguard if later accusations are made

- Decide with the CPLO what measures will be taken to help the young person and to prevent a reoccurrence.

Staff should be aware that sexual relationships are not permitted with any students on the school roll, even if they are over the age of 16.

WHEN A STUDENT WANTS TO TALK TO YOU

A student may choose to tell a teacher or other member of staff if something is happening to them. If a student asks to tell you something in confidence you must **always** tell them that will depend on the circumstances. Explain you may have to tell someone else if they are being harmed. A student who decides to disclose information wants help.

Try to have another adult present when the student speaks but do not prevent the student from speaking if this is not possible. The following advice should be followed by the listener:

- The conversation is potentially a source of evidence. The listener should listen and not ask questions which lead or suggest an answer to the student
- The listener should record the conversation as soon as possible, using the student's own words. (This is usually needed for any referral to external agencies)
- The record should be signed and dated, noting the time and location of the conversation and the names of all people present.
- The student should be reassured and taken seriously.
- Explain to the student what will happen next
- It is not your responsibility to decide whether an allegation is true or false. It is your responsibility to inform the CPLO immediately.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN

If a student needs medical attention call the appropriate emergency services or take the student to the nearest Accident and Emergency and tell the hospital staff of your suspicions

If the student is not in immediate danger or you are not sure whether child abuse is involved, discuss your concerns with the CPLO. The CPLO will decide with you what action to take. You may take your concerns directly to social services or the police; but all school referrals must be made through the CPLO. It is social services' responsibility to decide whether to investigate.

PARENTS

If we have a concern about a child we will share these concerns with parents/carers. However, if sharing these concerns put the child at risk of significant or further harm we will seek advice from the duty manager at Surrey Contact Centre.

This policy will be shared with parents and carers via the school website. It will also be available in printed form on request.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually to comply with LEA guidance.

Policy reviewed September 2009