



Rugby School

Policy on Child Protection

Policy Statement

1. Every pupil at Rugby School has a fundamental right to feel safe and protected from any form of abuse which, in this policy, means any kind of neglect, non-accidental physical injury, sexual exploitation or emotional ill-treatment.
2. Our policy and our commitment at Rugby School is to safeguard and promote the welfare of each child and young person (pupil) in our care and:
 - 2.1. to protect each pupil from any form of abuse, whether from an adult or another pupil or from any other person
 - 2.2. to be alert to signs of abuse both in the School and from outside
 - 2.3. to deal appropriately with every suspicion or complaint of abuse
 - 2.4. to design and operate procedures which promote this policy and which, so far as possible, ensure that teachers and others who are innocent are not prejudiced by false allegations.

The Designated Officer

3. The School has appointed a senior member of staff ("Designated Officer") to be responsible for matters relating to child protection and welfare. The main responsibilities of the Designated Officer are:
 - 3.1. To be the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff, external agencies and any other in all matters of child protection.
 - 3.2. To co-ordinate the child protection procedures in the School.
 - 3.3. To maintain an ongoing training programme for all school employees, Governors and volunteers.
 - 3.4. To monitor the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to child protection.

- 3.5. To liaise with Social Services.
- 3.6. To ensure School procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with LA² and WACPC procedures (Blue Book). We will ensure that:
 - 3.6.1. The designated member(s) of staff undertake regular training.
 - 3.6.2. We have a member of staff who will act in the designated teacher's absence.
 - 3.6.3. All members of staff develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse.
 - 3.6.4. All members of staff know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse.
 - 3.6.5. All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures³.
4. The Designated Officer is **Mrs Sally Rosser (Deputy Head)** who may be contacted on 01788 556350 (sar@rugbyschool.net). The Assistant Child Protection Officer is Mrs Anne Naylor (Hm – Griffin House 01788 556331). The Designated Officer will, where appropriate:
 - 4.1. Advise and act upon all suspicion, belief and evidence of abuse reported to her.
 - 4.2. Keep the Head Master informed of all actions unless the Head Master is the subject of a complaint (when the Chairman of Governors will be involved).
 - 4.3. Liaise with the Social Services and other agencies on behalf of the School.
5. If the Designated Officer is unavailable or is herself the subject of a complaint, her duties will be carried out by the Head Master or the Assistant Child Protection Officer.

Signs of Abuse

6. Possible signs of abuse include (but are not limited to):
 - 6.1. The pupil says s/he has been abused or asks a question which gives rise to that inference.

- 6.2. There is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a pupil's injury; the injury is unusual in kind or location; there have been a number of injuries; there is a pattern to the injuries.
- 6.3. The pupil's behaviour stands out from the group as either being extreme model behaviour or extremely challenging behaviour; or there is a sudden change in the pupil's behaviour.
- 6.4. The pupil's development is delayed.
- 6.5. The pupil loses or gains weight.
- 6.6. The pupil appears neglected, e.g. dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed.
- 6.7. The pupil is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by his/her parents or carers.

Duty of Employees

7. Every employee of the School has a responsibility (whether teaching or support staff):
 - 7.1. To protect children from abuse.
 - 7.2. To be alert to the definitions and indicators of abuse.
 - 7.3. To be aware of the School's child protection procedures.
 - 7.4. To know how to access and implement the procedures, independently if necessary.
 - 7.5. To keep a sufficient record of any significant complaint, conversation or event.
 - 7.6. To report any matters of concern to the Designated Officer.

Procedures

8. Concerns and allegations of abuse.

In circumstances where you have concerns that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm to his or her health or development, or where a child gives information detailing abuse, the following principles must be adhered to:

- 8.1. All concerns and allegations, whatever their origin, must be taken seriously and considered with an open mind and without prejudging the situation.

- 8.2. **You must not take the decision as to whether or not abuse has in fact taken place.**
- 8.3. In circumstances where a child volunteers / discloses information about abuse, listen to the child. **Do not question him/her.** Never ask leading questions, i.e. a question which suggests its own answer.
- 8.4. Never stop a child freely recalling significant events. The child should **not** be asked to repeat the story to a colleague or asked to write it down.
- 8.5. In circumstances where a child has an injury but no explanation is volunteered, it is acceptable to enquire how the injury was sustained. If there are concerns about the explanation given for the cause of the injury, these must be referred to the Designated Officer.
- 8.6. Concern need not be related to a single specific incident. It may also arise from the accumulation of more minor concerns.
- 8.7. Always make a written record as soon as possible of any information provided to you. The record should include the date, time and place of the conversation and the essence of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence. The record should be signed by the member of staff and should use names, not initials. The record must be kept securely and handed to the Designated Officer who will record all subsequent events up to the time of Social Services/Police intervention.
- 8.8. You must not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality but should assure the complainant involved that the information will be passed to the Designated Officer who will ensure that the correct action is taken.

Preserving Evidence

9. All evidence, (for example, scribbled notes, mobile phones containing text messages, clothing, computers), must be safeguarded and preserved.

10. **Reporting**

All suspicion or complaints of abuse must be reported to the Designated Officer, or if the complaint involves the Designated Officer, to the Head Master or the Deputy Head. If the complaint involves the Head Master the Designated Officer will involve the Chairman of Governors.

Action to be undertaken by the Designated Officer

- 10.1. In circumstances where there are concerns that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm to his or her health or development, or where a child gives information detailing abuse, the matter will always be referred to Social Services without further investigation within the School.
- 10.2. A complaint involving a criminal offence will always be referred to Social Services or the police without further investigation within the School.
- 10.3. Where possible, allegations of abuse should be discussed with the family and their agreement sought in making a referral to Social Services. This should only be done where such discussions will not place a child at increased risk of significant harm or cause delay.
- 10.4. Experience shows that a number of our pupils will suffer from difficulties from time to time which would not necessarily fall under the category of child abuse but which nevertheless are a cause for concern and which should be reported to the Designated Officer.
 - Stress, for example, can produce a number of symptoms, including obsessive compulsive behaviour, self harm, eating disorders, bullying or at the other extreme it can cause pupils to become withdrawn, evasive or difficult.
 - Stress itself can be related to a number of circumstances, involving pressures and expectations at School or coming from the home environment. Acrimonious parental break downs or unrealistic goals and ambitions, for example, may produce considerable pressures.

A reference to Social Services or police will not therefore normally be made in circumstances such as the above where:

- the complaint does not involve a criminal offence; **and**
- there are no concerns that the child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm to his or her health or development; **and**
- the case is one which can be satisfactorily dealt with under the School's internal procedures or by the School's medical and Counselling services.

10.5 The Designated Officer must confirm the details of a referral to Social Services in writing within 24 hours.

10.6 The following information must be available when making a referral:

- Name, age, date of birth, ethnic origin, gender of the child, address and telephone number;
- The reason for concern;
- Injuries and other indicators observed;
- The child's first language;
- Details of any specific needs of the child e.g. disability;
- Details of family members;
- Other agencies/professionals involved;
- Family doctor.

11. **Employees Under Suspicion**

11.1. We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff.

11.2. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Head Master.

11.3. The Head Master, or Designated Officer, on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the LA Safeguarding Children manager.

11.4. If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Head Master, the designated teacher will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult with the LA Safeguarding Children manager.

A school employee who is the subject of an allegation of abuse may be suspended pending the outcome of the investigation.

See also Staff Disciplinary Procedures.

12. **Pupils Under Suspicion**

A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School pending the investigation and the School's policy on behaviour, discipline and sanctions will apply.

13. Suspected Harm From Outside the School

A member of staff who suspects that a pupil is suffering harm from outside the School should seek information from the child with tact and sympathy using "open" and not leading questions. A sufficient record should be made of the conversation and if the member of staff continues to be concerned he or she should refer the matter to the Designated Officer.

Monitoring

14. The Designated Officer will monitor the operation of this policy and its procedures which will be reviewed every two years or earlier if necessary.

Robert Swannell
Chairman of the Governing Body

Patrick Derham
Head Master

Eric Wood
Governor with responsibility for Child Protection

Circulation: All teaching and non-teaching staff, including school medical and nursing staff.
Parents & pupils on request.

²Warwickshire LEA Policy for Child Protection 2002

³DfES/0027/2004 Safeguarding Children in Education