

The John Lyon School



Child Protection Policy

Academic Year 2009 - 2010

Child Protection (policy and procedure)

The aim of this document is to give details of the Child Protection Policy and Procedures at the John Lyon School. It is written in line with the child protection procedures of the Children and Family Services of the London Borough of Harrow and the local Safeguarding Children Board. The school will also comply with the procedures of the following local authorities as required: Brent, Ealing, Hillingdon, Three Rivers, Barnet, South Bucks, Hounslow, Watford, Hertsmere, Westminster, Chiltern, Hammersmith and Fulham, Islington, Richmond upon Thames. (Contact details in appendix 1)

The Children Act 1989 (Section 87), amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, states that, "Where a school or college provides accommodation for any child, it shall be the duty of the relevant person to safeguard and protect the child's welfare." The education Act 2002 (Section 157) extended this to apply to all independent schools.

The John Lyon School is concerned about the welfare and safety of all its pupils and works to create an ethos in which pupils feel secure and listened to. If our Child Protection Policy is successful, Child Protection concerns that arise will be dealt with as sensitively and effectively as possible. Records will be accurate and securely stored and passage of information will always occur in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures. Confidential files are held in the office of the Head's P.A. Regular files are stored in a secure office adjacent to the P.E. department office. A sticker on the regular file notes the existence of a confidential file.

The school believes that all pupils have the right to feel safe in their everyday environment and with the people with whom they interact.

Staff at the John Lyon School will therefore:

- (a) Support the development of pupils in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- (b) Uphold the rights of pupils as laid down in the Children Act 1989 and 2004.
- (c) Support staff in safeguarding the welfare of all pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying.
- (d) The school will operate safe recruitment procedures for all teaching and non teaching staff, including CRB checks and compliance with Independent School Standards Regulations. These will be carried out by the Head's P.A. and the top half of CRB check is stored on personnel files. The lower portion is stored securely by the Head's P.A.
- (e) The school will ensure that appropriate child protection checks have been applied to staff employed by another organisation who work with the school's pupils.
- (f) The Governing Body will undertake an annual review of the school's Child Protection Policies and Procedures and the efficiency with which these have been discharged.

1. Definition of Abuse

A child is considered to be abused or at risk of abuse when the basic needs of the child are not being met through avoidable acts of either commission or omission. The harm must be significant and includes neglect, ill-treatment, physical, sexual or emotional abuse, impairment of physical or mental health or impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional or social development. All members of staff should familiarise themselves with the typical signs and symptoms as set out below.

Child Abuse can be best categorised in four types:

- neglect
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse

It should always be borne in mind that a child may be suffering from any combination of these.

2. General Indicators of Child Neglect and Abuse

There are a number of indicators that have been put forward by professionals in the field of child protection in order to raise awareness in those who are working on a daily basis with children and their families. The following lists have indicators which apply to children and their parents.

Parents who may neglect or abuse their children may exhibit the following:

- Rejection of the child;
- Rough handling of the child;
- Failure to keep appointments with child care staff;
- Frequent visits to the medical services with trivial complaints about the child or themselves.

Children who may be suffering from neglect or abuse may exhibit the following:

- Unexplained failure to thrive;
- Injuries that are inconsistent with an accident as described by the parents;
- Frequent bruising, cuts, burns, etc;
- Frozen awareness, when the child carefully watches adults' expressions and movements;
- Reluctance to be alone with their carer/s;
- Sudden unexplained changes in their reactions towards their carer/s.

Not all children who have been neglected or abused will show all of these indicators, and one indicator alone may not denote that a child is being abused. A number of children may exhibit "failure to thrive" and doctors may not be able to find any reasonable explanation for this but this does not necessarily indicate that they have been a victim of abuse. A child with a combination of indicators who has a parent who is also exhibiting one of more of the adult indicators could lead a carer to suspect that they may be dealing with a case of abuse or neglect.

In the area of child sexual abuse there is a different set of indicators; most of these are related to the behaviour of the child:

- Sudden changes in personality, such as wanting constant attention and reassurance;
- Lack of trust of a familiar adult;
- Aggressive or compliant behaviour;
- Withdrawal, listlessness, sadness;
- Fear of being alone;
- Showing affection in a sexual way inappropriate to their age;
- Eating problems, loss of appetite, problems swallowing, excessive eating.

3. Specific Indicators of Various Forms of Child Neglect and Abuse

a) Neglect:

Physical Indicators

- Poor hygiene
- Inadequately clothed, dirty, torn or inappropriate clothing
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor nourishment/failure to thrive
- Emaciation

Behavioural Indicators

- Tired or listless
- Low self-esteem
- Always hungry
- States that there is no one at home to look after them or indicates that they spend a lot of time at home alone

b) Physical Abuse:

Physical Indicators

- Unexplained bruising in places where an injury cannot easily be sustained or explained
- Facial bruising
- Hand or finger marks or pressure bruising
- Bite marks
- Burns (particularly cigarette burns), scalds
- Unexplained fractures
- Lacerations or abrasions

Behavioural Indicators

- Shying away from physical contact
- Withdrawn or aggressive behaviour
- Sudden changes in behaviour, e.g. from extrovert to introvert

c) Sexual Abuse:

Physical Indicators

- Bruises or scratches inconsistent with accidental injury
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Pain or itching in the genital area
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothes
- Loss of appetite

Behavioural Indicators

- Sexually precocious, uses seductive behaviour towards adults
- Uses sexually explicit language
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters
- Informed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Poor self-esteem
- Withdrawn or isolated from other children

d) Emotional Abuse:

- Attention seeking
- Withdrawn
- Telling lies
- Inability to have fun
- Low self-esteem
- Tantrums past the age when they are part of normal development
- Speech disorders e.g. stammering
- Inability to play
- Indiscriminately affectionate

4. Staff Code of Conduct

- All staff must respect the rights, dignity, privacy and worth of each pupil equally within the context of the school.
- Staff must place the well being and safety of each pupil above all other considerations, including the development of educational performance.
- Staff must adhere to all guidelines laid down by the school in relation to the care and welfare of pupils.
- Staff and the Head receive Child Protection training every three years delivered as part of the INSED programme.
- Staff are required to have read and understood the John Lyon School Child Protection Policy. They sign a statement to this effect stored on their personnel files.
- Staff must develop an appropriate working relationship with each pupil based on mutual trust and respect.
- Staff must encourage and guide pupils to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.
- Staff must ensure that the activities they direct or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of pupils.
- Staff must co-operate fully with others in the best interests of the pupil.
- Staff must themselves consistently adhere to high standards of behaviour and appearance.

5. Staff Protection

It is possible to reduce situations in which abuse can occur and help protect staff by promoting good practice. Always be public and open when working with pupils.

All staff should also be aware that they should not:

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with individual pupils. For example in one to one tuition or sports coaching.
- Take pupils alone on car journeys without the knowledge of the parents.
- Take pupils to their home where they will be alone.

Staff should never:

- Allow or engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Share a bedroom with a pupil on any residential trip or other occasion.
- Allow or engage in any form of touching apart from official activities which require this and for which there are guide-lines. (*Common sense should be exercised in dealing with injured pupils, or very young pupils in distress*).
- Allow pupils to use inappropriate language unchallenged.

- Make sexually suggestive or inappropriate comments to a pupil, even in jest.
- Allow allegations made by a pupil to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Invite or allow pupils to stay with you at your home without the knowledge and permission of the Head and parents/guardians.
- Humiliate pupils, including sustained shouting or unacceptable use of sarcasm.
- Engage in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil. Staff who need to be in contact with pupils outside school hours are provided with a school mobile phone.

6. Procedures

a) Guiding Principles

All matters concerning possible or alleged child abuse should be referred ONLY to the Child Protection Officer (the Head of Oldfield and Lower School Mrs Lynne Plummer) or the Deputy Child Protection Officer (The Head of Upper School Mr Ian Parker). Under no circumstances will any information or speculation be intimated to anyone else, within or outside the school. The Child Protection Officer will make all decisions on further action, in consultation with the Head and professional bodies (Social Services, Police) as necessary.

b) Initial Concern

Where staff see in children signs which cause them concern they should seek information from the child with tact and sympathy. It is not their role to carry out an investigation. If such concerns are not reinforced the member of staff should make a written note of the concern, recording the date, concern and action taken and pass it to the Child Protection Officer for filing. All child protection records will be filed securely and separately from the main pupil files.

c) Disclosure/Allegation from a Child/Young Person

If a child volunteers information about abuse to a member of staff, it may sometimes be done obliquely rather than directly. An abused child is likely to be under severe emotional stress and the staff member may be the only adult whom the child is prepared to trust. When information is offered in confidence, the member of staff will need to explain with sensitivity, whilst retaining the child's trust, that action may be required, that other adults will need to be informed and that complete confidentiality cannot be honoured. Staff need to be aware that the most important aspect of their response to a child is willingness to listen and to take seriously what the child is saying, without asking questions or making any assumptions (e.g. about who has abused the child) which could later be interpreted as leading the child if criminal proceedings were to follow. The child should tell the full story of what has happened only once. The member of staff should as soon as possible (certainly within 24 hours) make a written note of the discussion, recording date, place and names of any one else present, and using the words of the child where they are remembered. In any criminal proceedings these notes would be potentially disclosable to both the prosecution and defence lawyers.

d) Medical Examinations

In cases of suspected physical abuse or physical neglect, parental and pupil permission for the School Doctor or Nurse to undress the child in the presence of two professional adults should be sought. Where the School is unable to contact the parents, it reserves the right, acting in loco parentis, to request that the child undress. Should either parent or pupil refuse, the School would then be left with no option but to contact Social Services for further advice.

e) Information About or Allegation of Abuse by a Staff Member, Volunteer Worker or another pupil

If a child or his/her parent volunteers to a member of staff information about abuse by; another member of staff, any volunteer working in the school, or another pupil in the school, the person receiving the information should immediately pass it to the School's Child Protection Officer. If an employee of the John Lyon School has concerns about; a member of staff, any employee working in the school or another pupil in the school that person should also pass this information immediately to the School's Child Protection Officer. Teachers are particularly vulnerable to accusations of abuse but even though such allegations may be false, malicious or misplaced, reporting must be instantaneous and the informant assured of that. Such information will be extremely sensitive for abuse in circumstances concerning a teacher is particularly serious but unfounded allegations can be traumatic for the teacher concerned and can inflict long term damage on a person's health and career.

The Child Protection Officer will refer the matter to the Head ONLY who will consider initially whether or not there is sufficient substance in an allegation to warrant investigation. The rights of individual staff to be informed and protected will be safeguarded. In the event of an allegation being made regarding the Head, the Child Protection Officer will refer the matter to the Chair of Governors. In the event of an allegation being made against either the Child Protection Officer or her Deputy, the allegation will be referred to the other officer.

f) Summary of procedure

- Any member of staff concerned about a child must inform the Child Protection Officer or Deputy Child Protection Officer immediately.
- The member of staff must record information regarding the concerns on the same day.
- The Child Protection Officer or her Deputy will consult the Head. A decision will be taken whether the concerns should be referred to Social Services Department. If it is decided to make a referral to Social Services, this will be done, if necessary, without prior discussion with the parents.
- If a referral is made to Social Services, the Child Protection Officer will ensure that a written report is sent to the Social Worker dealing with the case within forty eight hours.
- Particular attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child who has been identified as at risk, or who has been placed on the Child Protection Register.
- If a pupil who is on the Child Protection register changes school, the Child Protection Officer will inform the Social Worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the receiving school.

g) Duty of school as employer

- The school will operate safe recruitment procedures, including CRB checks and compliance with Independent School Standards Regulations.
- Appropriate child protection checks and procedures will apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with the school's pupils on another site.
- The John Lyon School will report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) within one month of leaving any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children.

7. Child Protection Officer - Role

The Child Protection Officer and Deputy Child Protection Officer will:

1. Draw up the school's policy and procedures for responding to and dealing with cases involving child protection and amend and update these in line with revised guidelines from the police, social services or the Department for Children, Schools and Families.
2. Ensure that the school operates an effective child protection policy.
3. Ensure that the Head, teaching staff both full time and part time, support staff and voluntary staff are aware of school policy and procedures and they receive appropriate staff development and training updated every three years.
4. Be the first point of contact for staff suspecting child abuse.
5. Act as Liaison Officer between the school and other concerned parties, including police, social services and medical authorities. Will pass information to the receiving school if a child on the Child Protection Register changes school.
6. Inform the Head immediately of any suspected case of child abuse or allegation of abuse made against a member of staff.
7. Maintain records of all cases reported separate from pupils' general files.
8. Attend Child Protection Conferences on behalf of the Head if requested.
9. Support staff who have received disclosures of child abuse. To support and advise staff on Child Protection issues generally.
10. To monitor the attendance and development of children on the Child Protection Register.
11. Will receive Child Protection Training and training in inter agency working every two years. Attend relevant courses and maintain a file of relevant publications on Child Protection.
12. Will take immediate steps to remedy any deficiencies that are identified in the Child Protection Policy.

Mrs Lynne Plummer is the John Lyon School's Child Protection Officer
Mr Ian Parker in the John Lyon School's Deputy Child Protection Officer

Appendix 1 Child Protection Policy

Contact details for local authorities

London Borough of Harrow

Children's Services
Duty and Assessment Team
429-433 Pinner Road
Harrow
HA1 4HN
Telephone: 020 8863 5544
Fax: 020 8242 8045

There is an Emergency Duty Service during weekends, bank holidays and between 5pm and 9am weekdays.

Telephone: 020 8424 0999

London Borough of Brent

Telephone: 020 8937 4300 during normal office hours (9am - 5pm)
Brent's Emergency Duty Team after hours on: 020 8863 5250.

London Borough of Ealing

Telephone: (020) 8825 8000

London Borough of Hillingdon

Telephone: 01895 250111

Three Rivers District Council

(Hertfordshire County Council)

Telephone: 0300 123 4043

The Child Abuse Investigation Unit 01707 354000. This is a specialist team with countywide responsibility for undertaking child protection investigations.

London Borough of Barnet

Supporting Families Division
Barnet House
1255 High Road
Whetstone
N20 0EJ
Telephone 020 8359 4066

Text Number (SMS)

07781 473279

South Bucks District Council

High Wycombe, Chilterns and South Bucks Area:
Buckinghamshire County Council
Council Offices
Easton Street
High Wycombe
HP11 1NH
Telephone: 01494 475000

Emergency Duty Team - 01494 675802

For serious emergencies in the evening, weekends or public holidays, you can call the Emergency Duty Team for advice on 01494 675802 or fax 01494 672783

London Borough of Hounslow

Child Protection Line

Telephone: 020 8583 3456 (24hrs answerphone)

E-mail: childrensocialcare@hounslow.gov.uk

Watford Borough Council

(Hertfordshire County Council)

0300 123 4043

The Child Abuse Investigation Unit 01707 354000. This is a specialist team with countywide responsibility for undertaking child protection investigations.

Hertsmere Borough Council

(Hertfordshire County Council)

Telephone: 0300 123 4043

The Child Abuse Investigation Unit 01707 354000. This is a specialist team with countywide responsibility for undertaking child protection investigations.

London Borough of Westminster

Adult & Children's Services

8th Floor,

City Hall

64 Victoria Street

London, SW1E 6QP

Telephone: 020 7641 1999 (Mon-Fri 9:00 - 17:00)

020 7641 8222 (textphone) : ChildrenandCommunityServicesComplaints@westminster.gov.uk

Chiltern District Council

Chiltern and South Bucks

Buckinghamshire County Council

Council Offices

King George V Road

Amersham

HP6 5BN

Telephone: 0845 3708090

www.buckscc.gov.uk

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham

Telephone: 0208 753 5534.

London Borough of Islington

Referral and Advice Team

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Tel: 020 7527 7400

Emergency Duty Social Work Team

(at all other times)

Tel: 020 7226 0992

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

Social Services Initial Response Team on 020 8891 7969.

Outside of office hours you can phone the Emergency Out-of-Hours team on 020 8744 2442.