

# **ARTS EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL**

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **Statement**

Everyone employed by Arts Educational School, London has a responsibility for safeguarding children. Increasingly, schools are expected to work with, support and sometimes lead different agencies to enable the most appropriate form of intervention to take place. This policy aims to outline the role that the school will have, the procedures that staff should take and guidance on issues related to child protection generally. However, it is not exhaustive. All staff should use, as a rule of thumb, the needs and safety of the child as being at the centre of any decision they make. Our policy applies to all staff, governors and pupils at Arts Educational School.

**Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have the optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

***Safeguarding Children and safer recruitment in education- Dfes January 2007***

### **Foreword**

This policy was revised in 2011, in line with

- Working Together To Safeguard Children: A guide to inter agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. MH Government 2010
- Every Child Matters: Safeguarding Children and safer recruitment in education Dfes 2007
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004

### **Objectives**

Everyone at Arts Educational School shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe by contributing to

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn in education settings and,
- Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure that they are kept safe both at home and in the education setting

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The objectives referred to above are achieved through developing systems within the school aimed at

- raising awareness of individual responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse
- providing a systematic means of monitoring, recording and reporting of concerns and cases
- providing guidance on recognising and dealing with suspected child abuse
- promoting safe practise and challenging poor and unsafe practice
- providing a framework for inter-agency communication and effective liaison
- identifying strategies and interventions available to support children at risk.
- establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop
- ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children in line with the Independent Safeguarding Authority

### **PROCEDURE**

The role of independent schools in relation to child protection is the same as any other school. At Arts Educational School we adopt the principles and pursue the objectives contained within the statutory guidance. The guidance stresses the importance of establishing channels of communication with the Local Education Authority (Hounslow) Safeguarding Children's Board so that children requiring support receive prompt attention and any allegations of abuse can be properly investigated.

All staff including the headteacher receive regular training in child protection, every 3 years and are issued with relevant information/certification.

Any Child Protection cases would be evaluated after the event and examined to establish whether or not due process had been followed and whether or not there was scope for any improvements to be made. The Designated person would seek feedback from both the Hounslow's Child Safeguarding Department and from the designated governor responsible for Child Protection as to how ArtsEd's child protection arrangements could be improved or remedied.

# **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

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## **I. The Role of Designated Person**

In most cases this will be the referral of concerns to a line manager, and to ensure that concerns are referred to Designated Person for Child Protection. The designated person is the Pastoral Manager, Claire Lloyd. In her absence concerns should be taken to the Deputy Pastoral Manager, Charlotte Loweth.

The designated person will;

- co-ordinate action within the school and liaise with social care and other agencies over cases of abuse and suspected abuse
- hold current, relevant child protection documents and be fully conversant with these procedures
- holding and being fully conversant with Volume 5 of the Guidance and Regulations relating to the Children's Act 1989 entitled 'Independent Schools'
- act as a source of expertise and advice within the school briefing all employees on the relevant contents of the above guidance. This includes briefing new staff as part of their induction.
- receive reports of alleged or suspected abuse within the School, or reported by a pupil relating to incidents at home or outside of school and make child protection referrals, recording and reporting accordingly
- liaise with Children's Services Social Care and other agencies about individual cases
- organise training on child protection within school
- undertake refresher training every 2 years
- ensure that appropriate strategies for recording and reporting incidents are kept within school
- provide appropriate feedback to members of staff as and when necessary.
- review the school's Child Protection policy after each incident to ensure the policy is robust enough. These amendments would be reported to the governor with overall responsibility for Child Protection.

## **2. Responsibilities of all members of staff (see appendix I)**

Any member of staff who is told of an incident or who has a strong suspicion of abuse occurring within the School, or to a pupil at home or outside of school must report it to the Designated Person immediately. If the allegations of abuse are about the Designated Person the report should be made to the Head Teacher.

At all times School staff should:

- be alert to the signs of abuse as detailed in this policy
- report any concerns immediately, where possible to the designated teacher or deputy pastoral manager
- consult with the designated teacher if in any doubt as to how to proceed
- follow the advice given in this policy in relation to how to handle disclosures.

- contribute through the curriculum by developing children's understanding, awareness and resilience

For children at risk, school may be the one stable place from which they can expect security and reassurance. It is not only about being alert to potential abuse but providing the support to help children through difficult times. Providing them with the coping skills that can help avoid situations arising and deal with the emotional difficulties afterwards if they do.

Whistle blowing

All staff are required to report to the Designated Person, any concern or allegations about the behaviour of colleagues or practices which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm. Any report made to the Designated Person will be handed with complete sensitivity. The member of staff reporting the alleged incident should be assured that they would not face any retribution as a result of their actions.

### **3. Definition of abuse (see appendix 2)**

Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed by someone often in a position of power. It includes abuse of a pupil by a member of staff or by another adult outside of school or the abuse of one pupil by another pupil. It is not the responsibility of school staff to decide whether child abuse is occurring but we are required to act on any concerns and report it to the appropriate party. The health, safety and protection of a child are paramount.

Abuse might fall into the categories of:

- physical
- emotional
- sexual
- neglect

### **4 How staff should deal with child abuse allegations? See appendix 1**

Arts Educational School policy is that brief notes should be kept at the time of the incident - or immediately after - with the subsequent completion of a critical incident sheet. Records may be used in legal proceedings and must be kept accurate and secure. All records should be copied to the designated person and should include factual information rather than assumption or interpretation. The child's own language should be used to quote rather than a translation. Records may be used at a later date to support a referral to an external agency.

### **5. Action by the Designated Person**

The designated teacher will;

- follow-up the referral using the critical incident sheet as a basis for consideration before action
- make additional records of discussions and any investigation that takes place
- make a decision whether to continue to monitor the situation or take the referral further. This decision should be communicated to the individual making the initial referral
- inform the Head Teacher of the allegation unless he/she is the subject of the allegation.
- ensure parents see copies of the child protection policy, which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the establishment in this, so as to avoid conflict later.
- where a child is referred to social care a referral form will be completed and sent to Hounslow Children's Services & Lifelong Learning Department within 24 hours.
- Take any necessary steps for the longer-term protection and support of each pupil who has made allegations of abuse, or is alleged to have suffered from abuse, taking his/her wishes fully in account.
- Ensure that any pupil being interviewed by police has available a supportive member of staff of his/her own choice if necessary
- Inform the Hounslow Senior Advisor for Safeguarding Children; Sally Phillips (02085833061) or Lyn Wilson

### **Inter-agency Liaison**

#### Social Care Meetings

At times the DP will be called to participate in meetings organised and chaired by social care. These might include:

- register reviews
- case conferences
- professionals' meetings in which representative professionals from different agencies are asked to meet to discuss children and their families with a view to providing support or making recommendations in terms of next stages of involvement
- core group meetings in which a "core" group of professionals associated with the family are asked to meet to review the progress of actions decided at case conferences and register reviews.

At these meetings, the DP should be ready to report back providing information about

- attendance and punctuality
- academic achievement
- child's behaviour and attitude
- relationships with peer group and social skills generally
- child's appearance and readiness for school
- contact with parents/carers
- any specific incidents that need reporting.

Prior to the meeting, class teachers and other adults working closely with the child will be asked for their comments. Following the meeting feedback will be given and staff brought up-to-date with any actions that are needed.

## 6. Confidentiality

Where children are on the child protection register and leave one school for another, the designated person must inform the receiving school and the key worker. If the child leaves the school with no receiving school, details should be passed to the principal education social worker (ESW).

Educational staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with the investigative agencies. Members of staff should not promise confidentiality but can let the child know that only those who need to know will be informed, and always for the child's own sake. Time should be taken to reassure the child and confirm that information given will be treated sensitively. Reassurance should be given and the adult involved listen sympathetically and non-judgmentally.

Staff should be careful in subsequent discussions and ensure that information is only given to the appropriate person. All staff should be kept aware of issues relating to confidentiality and the status of information they may hold. Members of staff, other than the designated member and those involved closely, should only have enough details in order to help them to act sensitively and appropriately to a pupil. Sensitive information regarding pastoral issues and for children on the child protection register is kept separately in a folder in the closed section of the office. Discretion should be used when talking about the personal and changing circumstances of children, for example if a child goes into care.

## 7. Allegations of abuse against a member of staff

### Introduction

Allegations of abuse are difficult and distressing for all concerned. It is essential that policies and procedures are in place to manage these cases. Underpinning these procedures are the following principles: that there should be adequate protection for the child and also that the procedures should ensure that allegations against a member of staff are dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently.

**Significant harm** is the threshold for compulsory intervention in a child protection matter. The definition rests on the degree and extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of the abuse, the extent of premeditation, the degree of threat or coercion, cruelty or other elements.

**Allegation procedures should be used** in all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff that provides education for children **under 18 years of age** has:

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

Allegations against members of staff come through a variety of routes:

- Parents contact the school or the local safeguarding authority (Hounslow Council) to make a complaint
- Police discover that a person that they are investigating is a member of the ArtsEd staff

- Pupils and students may tell a member of staff that they are/have been subjected to abuse by a member of staff.

### **DCSF Guidance**

Step 1: Discussing the allegation. The Designated Person to discuss the allegation with the Head and Chair of Governors to establish that the allegation is not blatantly false.

Step 2: Informing parents. Parents should be informed of the allegation as soon as possible and informed of their rights:

- If there is an indication that the child may have been assaulted the parent has the right to contact the police
- Parents may decide that they do not want to report to the police. However the Designated Local Safeguarding Authority Officer will in most cases need to consult the police and the police may contact the parents to check their decision.

Step 3: Informing the member of staff. The person who is the subject of the allegation needs to be informed as soon as possible after consultation with the Designated Person. Where it is likely that police and / or children's social services will be involved, and agreement needs to be made with those agencies as to what information can be disclosed to the member of staff. If the staff member is a member of a trade union or professional association, he or she should be advised to seek support from them. It is advisable that they should also seek independent legal advice.

If the police decide to investigate, the school would not start their own investigation before the police have decided whether or not they intend to take the case through the criminal courts.

The school would seek to support the member of staff as much as possible as they are likely to feel threatened and isolated from others.

### **Suspending the member of staff**

Suspension as a course of action would be considered where there is cause to suspect a student is at risk of significant harm, or the allegation warrants investigation by the police, or is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. Staff should not be automatically suspended, alternatives should also be considered. Suspension in a case of this kind is a procedural step only and must be viewed as a neutral action that does not presuppose guilt or innocence. Suspension itself does not constitute disciplinary action, and the member of staff will continue to receive full pay. Any disciplinary action would follow the procedures laid out in the Staff Handbook.

Investigations into an allegation of abuse should start with the presumption that the member of staff is innocent of any wrong doing unless proven otherwise.
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### **Criminal investigations**

The police will aim to complete their enquiries as quickly as possible, consistent with a fair and thorough investigation. The police are expected to set a review of progress date at the outset of their investigation which should be no later than four weeks after the initial evaluation.

### **Disciplinary Action**

If the Crown Prosecution Service decides against criminal proceedings, disciplinary proceedings must always be considered. Where the initial consideration decides that the

allegation does not involve a possible criminal offence it will be for the school to deal with it. In such cases, if the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the Head should institute appropriate action within 3 working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required, the investigating officer should aim to provide the Head with a report within 10 working days.

### **Resignation and Compromise agreements**

If a person tenders their resignation during an investigation, or before an investigation has started, the investigation should still be continued and recorded. Compromise agreements must not be used in such cases. Such an agreement may include restrictions on the employer in respect of sharing details of the case.

### **Action in respect of false or unfounded allegations**

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, if necessary with the provision of a mentor to return to work, and will attempt to minimise contact with the pupil(s) 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. The school may consider asking the police to ascertain whether or not they can take any action against the person responsible.

### **Records**

A record should be kept of all allegations and the individual's confidential personnel file with a copy to the person concerned. The record should be kept until the member of staff's retirement age or for 10 years, depending on which is longer.

### **Ethos**

For the sake of the child, parents and member of staff involved, it is important that an investigation is rigorous, timely, executed in a professional manner with due consideration for confidentiality and collaboration with other relevant agencies. The findings of the investigation and the rationale for any action taken must be recorded.

## **8. Role of the Governing Body**

The governing body will:

- be responsible for undertaking annual reviews of the procedures that apply to child protection and judging the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.
- be responsible for receiving and discussing updates provided by the designated person as part of the Headmaster's report
- exercise their child protection responsibilities
- The designated governor with responsibility for Child Protection is Terry Malloy.

## **9. Partnerships with Parents**

It is important that the school has an established approach to working with parents. Parents'

and children's need for privacy should be respected. However, the priority is the needs of the child and effective liaison is crucial for this.

It should be recognised that families from different backgrounds and cultures will have different approaches to child-rearing. These differences should be acknowledged and respected provided they do not place the child at risk as defined later in this policy. Where possible school staff should work with and share information with parents. Permission for liaison and information sharing with outside agencies should be sought unless it places the child at risk. In these cases it is preferable to seek advice from social care or make a child protection referral.

### **The Personal Education Plan**

Children who are “looked after” will have their own personal education plan (PEP). The PEP is part of the care plan. It is a record of what needs to happen in order to enable the young person to “fulfil their potential”. It should reflect other education plans such as individual education plans (IEP).

## **10. General Advice to Staff on Contact with Pupils**

Some form of physical contact with pupils by teachers is inevitable. All teachers should be aware of issues related to touching and the way in which this might be misconstrued. This relates particularly to any sensitive areas of the body. Particular care needs to be taken when making corrections in technique in vocational lessons. This matter is addressed directly in the Performing Arts department. At the beginning of each year all Performing Arts staff discuss the issue of touching and physical contact and ask for any students to let them know if they do not wish to be touched. Where any uncertainty exists a senior member of staff should be consulted and one-to-one discussions with pupils might most appropriately take place in rooms which are openly visible to other members of staff.

In the event of physical restraint it is important that only the minimum amount is used in order to prevent the pupil from causing injury to themselves, others or property. Following such an intervention the critical incident form should be completed.

The majority of staff in school will shortly have received training in restraint. Where teachers or support staff do not, they should refer if possible to a member of staff who has.

Staff are advised to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil. Staff are advised never to disclose their own personal telephone or email addresses to students. Students can be contacted directly from the school office using the phone there. Staff should use their ArtsEd email addresses. Staff have also been advised of the need for diligence in their postings on social networking sites, and the advisability of accepting students and ex-students as friends on these sites.

## **11. Safer recruitment procedures**

The nature of ArtsEd with its large number of visiting vocational specialist teachers as well as its use of staff from the School of Musical Theatre and the School of Acting poses significantly more challenges regarding safer recruitment.

It is our aim that all staff working within the Pupils' School should have undergone the following recruitment checks before they start to work with students:

- There has been an identity check and a List 99/CRB check.
- Two written references have been received and one of the references has been checked with a follow up phone call.
- Proof of qualifications have been received.
- The school has been provided with a full CV and a statement has been given to the applicant that any of their previous employers may be approached.
- The employee has been interviewed (if necessary) to explain any gaps in their CV and the interviewer will provide a written record that the explanation is satisfactory.
- Overseas checks would be carried out, or evidence that they had been carried out is collected.
- The applicant is informed that their appointment is subject to a satisfactory CRB check and references.

Due to the nature of the school, it is sometimes necessary to accept a CRB check from another institution (for example for a visiting teacher for a half term period teaching on a specialist unit). In such cases, written consent must be obtained from the member of staff. A CRB disclosure such as this cannot be accepted if there is a gap of employment of more than 3 months. During the time of the employment, the member of staff would be under supervisory arrangements from a line manager or member of the SMT.

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Policy written by:	Claire Lloyd
Authorised by:	Greg Beavis
Approved by:	Jane Harrison
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Policy to be circulated to all governors, staff and parents via the website and available in hard copy on request.

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## **APPENDIX I**

### **Responding when children disclose acts of abuse**

It is necessary to create the right atmosphere when meeting and communicating with children, to help them feel at ease and reduce any pressure from parents, carers or others.

Children will need reassurance that they will not be victimised for sharing information or asking for help or protection. It is essential that any accounts of adverse experiences coming from children are as accurate and complete as possible. Accuracy is key, for without it effective decisions cannot be made and, equally, inaccurate accounts can lead to children remaining unsafe, or to the possibility of wrongful actions being taken that affect children and adults.

#### ***Communicating with vulnerable children: a guide for***

##### ***Practitioners***

If a staff member is the recipient of a child's confidence it is their responsibility to Observe, Record and Report. It is not the responsibility of staff in schools to investigate possible abuse or neglect. They have a key role to play by referring concerns to the Designate Person, providing information for police investigations and by contribution towards assessments. The DP will in turn will refer concerns onto the Local (Hounslow) Children's Social Care

Staff should:

- Listen with care, allow silence
- Reassure the child that he/ she is not to blame and was right to tell you.
- Not show disbelief
- Not appear shocked or angry
- Not give a guarantee of confidentiality
- Take all allegations seriously
- Avoid being judgemental about the information given by the child
- Do not pursue matters by direct questioning; a child may become distressed when faced with resistant questioning. 'Open ended' questions should be used rather than 'leading' questions. The child should never be interrogated
- Ask the informing adult or child what steps they would like taken to protect them now that they have made the allegation, and assure them that the School will try to follow their wishes.
- Alleged victims, perpetrators, those reporting abuse and others involved should not be interviewed by School staff beyond the point at which it is clear there is an allegation of abuse. The interviewing of children and adults is now carried out by specially trained staff only, following procedures agreed by the Local Education Authority and the police
- Write a written report as soon as possible and make a copy available to the DP
- Refer to the DP in accordance with the School guidelines

##### **REMEMBER**

Keep detailed notes and make a record of them on the same day

Be vigilant for signs of abuse and never assume abuse is impossible within the school

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Indicators of abuse**

It is important to note that such lists as below are neither completely definitive nor exhaustive. A child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse. It is also possible that a child may show no outward signs and hide what is happening from everyone

#### **Physical Abuse**

Signs of possible physical abuse

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- Injuries that form a shape or pattern that may look like the object used to make the injury (e.g. buckle, hand, iron, teeth, cigarette burns)
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
- Refusal to change for vocational lessons
- Bald patches
- Running away
- Fear of medical help or examination
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to 'make him study')
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted

#### **Sexual Abuse**

Signs of sexual abuse

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age
- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases
- Other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or child minder
- Displays a sexual knowledge beyond a child's year
- Over sexualised behaviour, promiscuity
- Pregnancy, particularly when reluctant to name father
- Starting to wet again, day or night/nightmares
- Become worried about clothing being removed

- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Drugs, alcohol or solvent abuse
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism

### **Emotional Abuse**

Refusing or failing to give adequate love of affection.

Signs of possible emotional abuse are:

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Low self-esteem
- Sudden speech disorders
- Continual self-depreciation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc')
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)
- Running away
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

### **Neglect**

This is where parents/carers fail to meet the basic essential needs of children. This includes leaving children alone and unsupervised.

Signs of possible neglect are:

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Untreated medical problems
- No social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging
- Destructive tendencies

**Refer to Kidscape and the Hounslow Safeguarding Children Board for further information regarding indicators of abuse.**

