

**OAKLANDS SCHOOL  
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICIES**

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## Safeguarding Children

### SECTION A CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

**This policy follows DCSF guidelines in 'Safeguarding Children in Education' (September 2004) and the requirements of the Children Act 2004.**

#### **Objectives**

- To provide a safe environment for our children to learn
- To identify children who are suffering or are likely to suffer abuse and to take appropriate action with the aim of making sure that they are kept safe both at home and at school.

#### **We aim to:-**

- prevent unsuitable people working with our children through following DCSF procedures in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education;
- respond about a child's welfare by reporting all concerns to the designated person;
- contribute to effective partnership working between all those involved in providing services for children (e.g. health, social services, police).

Independent schools under Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and the Education Regulations 2003 as well as The Children Act 2004 are required to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The Essex Education Safeguarding Service (ESS) provides advice and training and acts as a link with other local children's services. The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) was set up in January 2009 to help prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults. Its address for referrals is PO Box 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA (Tel: 0300 123 1111). This policy is available to parents on request: (see Parents' Handbook, page 9).

#### **Duties include:-**

- ensuring that procedures are in place that are in line with procedures outlined in the Southend, Essex & Thurrock (SET) Child Protection Procedures (available in the staff room and Headmistress's office);
- operating safe recruitment procedures and carrying out CRB checks on new staff and regular volunteers and obtaining assurance that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working at the School while the children are present;
- ensuring that there are procedures in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff/volunteers (including the Headmistress) that comply with Essex procedures;
- providing one or more designated person(s) with 'status and authority' to take responsibility for child protection matters;
- providing training for all staff and training for the designated person in inter agency work (all staff every three years and designated person training every two years) and make sure that part-time and voluntary staff who work with the children are made aware of arrangements;
- requiring that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay;
- providing that the proprietor undertakes an annual review of the School's child protection policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged;
- ensuring that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner, in accordance with the School whistle blowing policy;

- providing guidance for staff, 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 (e.g. in one-to-one tuition, sports coaching, conveying a pupil by car, engaging in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil and so on) in line with DCSF advice in 'Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Educational Settings';
- providing information to Contact Point about pupils at the School;
- reporting to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) within one month of leaving the School, 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.

Procedures:

- Staff are trained in child protection. Copies of the guidance 'What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused' and the Southend, Essex & Thurrock (SET) Child Protection Procedures are available in the staff room and are also available on the Essex Safeguarding Children's Board website [www.escb.org.uk](http://www.escb.org.uk).
- The Headmistress is the Designated Person for Child Protection and has attended Essex training in inter agency work (updated every two years). If any staff (teaching or non-teaching) have any concerns that a child may be being abused, they should speak to the Headmistress (or in her absence, the Deputy Head). (If their concern involves the Headmistress they should speak to the Principal). If the Headmistress believes that a child has been abused or is at serious risk of being abused it is her duty to contact a Welfare Agency within 24 hours. She also takes lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the EYFS setting and liaising with local statutory children's agencies as appropriate.
- All School staff (teaching and non-teaching) are trained in child protection. The training is updated every three years.
- All part-time and voluntary staff who work with children are given training by the Headmistress and are made aware of arrangements for child protection.
- All applicants for jobs at the School are scrutinised by verifying their identity and suitability for working with children by a Criminal Records Bureau 'enhanced' check. and by asking for evidence of any academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and that the candidate has the health and physical capacity to do the job.
- All staff are aware of the advice in the DCSF Circular 10/98 'The use of force to control or restrain pupils' and are aware of what constitutes inappropriate physical contact.
- Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff (and volunteers who work with children) – see separate policy. Staff have a duty to inform the Headmistress if they have concerns that a child is being abused, even if the concern involves another employee at the School (see 'whistle blowing policy'). In the case of a concern involving the Headmistress, staff should inform the Principal. The Headmistress will report the allegation to the Essex Safeguarding Service on the same day and if serious, to Ofsted within 14 days (see policy on dealing with allegations against staff) Essex Safeguarding Service will advise as to whether child protection agencies or the police need to be informed.
- New members of staff (including volunteers) are given induction on the School's child protection policy and procedures and given a written statement, which includes the information that the Headmistress acts as the designated person for child protection, and that the Deputy Head acts as the designated person in the absence of the Head.
- Any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements will be remedied straight away.

- The proprietor undertakes an annual review of the School's child protection policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.
- The designated person will report any concerns about possible child abuse to the Education Safeguarding Service, Children and Young People's Service, PO Box 47, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 6WN (Telephone 01245 436 744) or make a referral to Essex Social Services (Telephone 01279 426 102).
- Guidance for staff on safe working practice for the protection of children and staff in educational settings is available in the 'Safeguarding Children' file in the Staff Room. Staff should refer to this document to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil, for example in one-to-one tuition, sports coaching, conveying a pupil by car or engaging in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil.

### **Educating Children**

The non-statutory framework for Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) provides opportunities for children to learn about keeping safe, and who to ask for help if their safety is threatened.

We teach children (via PSHE, class and assembly time) to develop a healthy and safe lifestyle and give opportunities to help them;

- to recognise and manage risks in different situation and then behave responsibly;
- to judge what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable;
- to recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being and develop effective ways of resisting pressure; including knowing when and where to get help;
- to use assertiveness techniques to resist unhelpful pressure;
- to learn that it is okay to talk about their own problems and where to find help.

### **Listening to Children**

Children will speak to people that they feel they can trust and they feel comfortable with. This will not always be a teacher. For this reason all staff (teaching and non teaching) are trained in child protection so that they know how to respond sensitively to a child's concerns, whom to approach for advice about them, and the importance of not guaranteeing complete confidentiality.

Posters giving national children's help lines (Child line/NSPCC) are displayed in the library.

Any member of staff who is approached by a child wanting to talk should listen positively and reassure the child. They should record the conversation on an encounter form as soon as possible, distinguishing clearly between fact, observation, allegation and opinion, noting any action taken and signing and dating the note. They should then inform the Headmistress (or in her absence the Deputy Head).

The member of staff should be aware that the way in which they talk to the child could have an effect on the evidence that is put forward if there are subsequent proceedings. Staff should not jump to conclusions, ask leading questions, or put words in a child's mouth.

Staff should be aware that:-

- it is not their responsibility to investigate suspected cases of abuse;
- they should not take any action beyond that advised in the Southend, Essex & Thurrock (SET) Child Protection Procedures;
- they cannot promise a child complete confidentiality – instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe;

- if they have concerns about a child's welfare, or if a child discloses that s/he is suffering abuse or reveals information that gives ground for concern, they should speak to the Headmistress (or in her absence, the Deputy Head);
- they must avoid asking leading questions;
- accusations of abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil should be immediately reported to the designated person who will take advice from the Education Safeguarding Service;
- procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse by a member of staff are outlined in section C of this policy. All such allegations should be reported immediately to the designated person, who will contact the Education Safeguarding Service within 24 hours of disclosure or suspicion of abuse;
- the contact number for the Education Safeguarding Service is 01245 436744. Advice can be obtained by staff directly, if needed;
- guidance for staff, to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils, or themselves, at risk or harm to a pupil, is available in 'Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Educational Settings'. This is available in the staff room. It is the responsibility of each member of staff to make sure that they are familiar with this guidance.

Abuse or neglect can have a damaging effect on a child's health, educational attainment and emotional well-being. Staff may see changes in behaviour patterns in existing pupils which are likely to impact adversely on a child's performance at school. Such changes may not necessarily indicate that a child is suffering abuse or neglect. In some cases those changes may be symptoms of a hidden disability or undiagnosed medical condition and the need to distinguish those cases reinforces the need for careful and thorough assessment of the child and his/her needs when concerns are passed on.

### **Parental Involvement**

Parents need to understand that the School has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children at the School, that this responsibility necessitates a child protection policy and procedures and that the School may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare.

The School will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with the family and, where possible, seek their agreement to making referrals to social services. If the Headmistress has reservations about involving the child's family, she will seek advice from the Essex Education Safeguarding Service.

We recognise the importance of partnership between home and school but where issues of child abuse or suspected child abuse arise, our first and only responsibility is to the child. We may not be able to prevent child abuse but by following child protection procedures, we will try our best to protect all our children and this is our prime objective. The School will keep a list of children causing concern and who need to be monitored. Staff are kept informed of any child in their class who is on this list.

## **KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE SCHOOL**

### **DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR**

NAME: Pam Simmonds

CONTACT NUMBER: 020 8508 3517

### **DEPUTY DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR**

NAME: Cheryl Macnair

CONTACT NUMBER: 020 8508 3517

### **NOMINATED GOVERNOR FOR CHILD PROTECTION**

NAME: Matthew Hagger

## **KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY**

The **EDUCATION SAFEGUARDING SERVICE** is able to provide advice and consultancy and is the first point of contact for schools and education services should an allegation against an adult working within an education setting arise

Cathryn Adams

Amanda Goh

Sue Powell

**CONTACT NUMBER: 01245 436744**

### **REFERRAL TO ESSEX SOCIAL CARE SERVICES**

Where schools have **URGENT** and **IMMEDIATE** concerns for the safety and welfare of a child or young person during office hours telephone **0845 606 1212**

To make **URGENT** referrals **OUT OF OFFICE HOURS** telephone **0845 606 1212**

For all **NON – URGENT** referrals and enquiries telephone **0845 603 7627**

## Safeguarding Children

### SECTION B DEFINITIONS AND SIGNS OF ABUSE

#### Definitions of abuse

Child abuse may fall into one of the following four categories. These categories represent the criteria for registration on the Child Protection Register.

1. NEGLECT

The persistent or severe neglect of a child (e.g., by exposure to any kind of danger including cold or starvation, drug/alcohol abuse, domestic violence) which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

2. PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

3. SEXUAL ABUSE

The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities that they do not truly comprehend, and to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles.

4. EMOTIONAL ABUSE

The severe, adverse effects on the behaviour and emotional development of a child by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment; this category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

#### Identifying Abuse

It is always preferable to prevent abuse or for intervention to take place at the earliest possible stage. All school staff are well placed to observe outward symptoms which may be due to child abuse.

#### Signs and Symptoms:

- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment which is needed;
- Incompatible explanations;
- A series of minor injuries;
- Unexplained bruising:
  - in and around the mouth;
  - black eyes – especially if both eyes are black and there is no bruising;
  - to forehead or nose;
  - grasp marks;
  - finger marks;
  - bruising of the ears;
  - linear bruising (particularly buttocks or back);
  - differing age bruising.

- Bite marks;
- Burns and scalds;
- Cigarette burns;
- General physical disability;
- Unresponsiveness in the child;
- Soiling and wetting;
- Change in behavioural pattern;
- Frozen look;
- Attention seeking;
- Apprehension;
- Anti-social behaviour;
- Unkempt appearance;
- Sexually precocious behaviour;
- Sexualised drawings and play;
- Sudden poor performance in school;
- Poor self esteem;
- Self mutilation;
- Withdrawal;
- Running away;
- Reluctance to return home after school;
- Resistance to undressing for PE;
- Resistance to school medicals;
- Difficulty in forming relationships;
- Confusing affectionate displays;
- Poor attendance – repeated infections etc;
- Excessive dependence;
- Poor growth.

No list of symptoms can be exhaustive. They may give rise to concern but are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred. Where a member of staff is concerned that abuse may have occurred, he or she must report this immediately to the designated teacher who has specific responsibility for child protection.

We recognise the importance of partnership between home and school but where issues of child abuse or suspected child abuse arise, our first and only responsibility is to the child. We may not be able to prevent child abuse but by following child protection procedures, we will try our best to protect all our children and this is our prime objective. The School will keep a list of children causing concern and who need to be monitored. Staff are kept informed of any child in their class who is on this list.

## Safeguarding Children

### SECTION C DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST TEACHERS AND OTHER STAFF

This document outlines school procedure for managing cases of allegations that might indicate that a person is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position, or in any capacity.

It will be used if it is alleged that a teacher or a member of staff in the School (including volunteers) has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

We aim to deal with any allegation of abuse made against a teacher or other member of staff or volunteer fairly, quickly and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

These procedures follow DCSF guidance – Safeguarding Children in Education: Dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff.

There may be up to three strands in the consideration of an allegation:

- a police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether the child is in need of protection or in need of services;
- consideration by the School of disciplinary action in respect of the individual. (In some cases the School may need to act jointly with another organisation e.g. a supply agency)

Some cases will also need to be reported to DCSF for consideration of including the person on List 99, or consideration by the General Teaching Council (GTC) about possible sanctions against the individual.

#### **School Procedure**

##### **Initial consideration**

All allegations against a member of staff (including volunteers) should be reported to the Headmistress or, in her absence, the Deputy Head. If the allegation is against the Headmistress, the allegation should be reported to the Principal. Details of the allegation should be written out on an encounter form, signed and dated.

If the allegation meets any of the criteria outlined overleaf, the Headmistress will inform the Principal and report the matter to the Essex designated person at the Essex Education Safeguarding Service (ESS) within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse. At this stage, the Headmistress will not investigate the allegation. Discussion will take place to consider whether there is evidence/information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded. If this is not the case, the ESS will advise the Headmistress accordingly. An allegation may require consideration from any of the following four inter-related perspectives:

- Child protection enquiries by Children's Social Care
- Criminal investigation by the police
- Staff disciplinary procedures of the employing agency
- Complaint procedures of employing agency.

If there is cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, or a criminal offence might have been committed, the designated person at the Essex Education Safeguarding Service will advise the Headmistress to make a referral to Children's Social Care. If it is clear following initial consideration or from the conclusions of any Strategy Meeting, that neither the police nor

Children's Social Care need to be involved, the designated person at the Essex Education Safeguarding Service should discuss the next steps with the employer.

### **Whistle Blowing Policy**

The School operates a 'whistle blowing' policy. This means that, if you have any concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff (or volunteer) you should raise them with the Headmistress, or if you are concerned about the behaviour of the Headmistress, with the Principal.

### **Supporting those involved**

Parents of the child involved will be told about the allegation as soon as possible and will be kept informed about the progress and outcome of the investigation. The School, in consultation with children's social care and / or the police, will offer the child appropriate support.

The School, in consultation with the ESS, will keep the person who is the subject of the allegations informed of the progress of the case and will offer appropriate support to the individual. (The School will not automatically suspend the individual concerned but where the decision to suspend is taken, e.g. where there is cause to suspect a child is at significant risk of harm, the individual will be kept informed and offered appropriate support.)

### **Confidentiality**

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated/considered.

### **Record keeping**

A clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved and a note of any action taken and decisions reached will be kept in the person's confidential file and a copy will be provided to the person concerned.

### **Action following initial considerations**

Where, after the initial consideration, it is decided that the allegation does not involve a criminal offence the School will deal with it. In such cases, if the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the Headmistress will institute appropriate action within 3 working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, the hearing will be held within 15 days.

Where further investigation is required prior to consideration of disciplinary action, the Headmistress and the Principal will discuss who will undertake that with the ESS. (In some cases this may be a person independent of the School.) The investigating officer will aim to provide a report to the Principal within 10 working days.

On receipt of the report the Headmistress and Principal will consult the ESS and decide whether a disciplinary hearing is needed within 2 working days. If a hearing is needed it will be held within 15 working days. (In cases where children's social care has undertaken enquiries, the Headmistress and Principal will take into account any relevant information obtained in the course of these enquiries.)

### **Resignations and 'Compromise agreements'**

The fact that a person resigns or ceases to provide services will not prevent an allegation being followed up according to these procedures. It may be difficult to reach a conclusion in these circumstances and it may not be possible to impose disciplinary sanctions but it is important to reach and record a conclusion. 'Compromise Agreements' will not be used in cases of allegations of abuse.

### **Referral to DCSF**

If on conclusion of the case the School ceases to use the person's services, or the person ceases to provide his/ her services, the School will consult with the ESS about whether a referral to DCFS for consideration of List 99 action is required. If a referral is required the report will be made within one month. Failure to make a report constitutes an offence and the School may be removed from DCSF of Independent Schools (Provision by Independent Schools, England, Regulation 2003.)

**Informing Ofsted**

Ofsted will be informed as soon as is practicable, but at the latest within 14 days, of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises and of the action taken in respect of these allegations.

## Safeguarding Children

### SECTION D POLICY ON THE USE OF FORCE TO CONTROL OR RESTRAIN PUPILS

The Education Act 1997 (Section 4) clarified the position about the use of physical force by teachers and others authorised by the Headmistress to control or restrain pupils. At Oaklands School all learning support, lunchtime staff, admin staff, club supervisors, peripatetic music staff and the caretaker are authorised by the Headmistress to control or restrain pupils where necessary.

#### Corporal Punishment

The law forbids a teacher to use any degree of physical contact which is deliberately intended to punish a pupil, or which is primarily intended to cause pain or injury or humiliation. At Oaklands School, corporal punishment is not allowed.

#### Physical Restraint

Teachers and other authorised staff may use such force as is reasonable in all circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility);
- injuring themselves or others;
- causing serious damage to property (including the pupil's own property);
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the School or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere;
- anything that would reasonably be regarded as exceptional circumstances.

This applies when a teacher, or other authorised person, is on the School premises and when he or she has lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned elsewhere, e.g. on a field trip or other authorised out of school activity.

Any occasion where physical intervention is used to manage a child's behaviour should be recorded and parents should be informed about this on the same day.

#### Types of Incidents

There are a wide variety of situations in which reasonable force might be appropriate, or necessary, to control or restrain a pupil. They will fall into three broad categories:

1. where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is imminent risk of injury e.g. a pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil;
2. where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property e.g. pupils are fighting, misusing dangerous materials, vandalising property, running in the corridor in a way that may cause an accident or a pupil absconds from school or tries to leave the School and so is at risk;
3. where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good discipline e.g. a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave the classroom or behaves in a way which seriously disrupts the classroom.

#### Practical Considerations

Before intervening physically a teacher should, where practicable, tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop and what will happen if he/she does not. The teacher should continue to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident and should make it clear that the physical contact will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

In some circumstances, a teacher should not intervene without help (unless it is an emergency) e.g. when dealing with an older pupil, or a physically large pupil, or if the teacher believes he or she may be at risk of injury. In these circumstances the teacher should remove other pupils who may be at risk and call for assistance from colleagues or where necessary call the police.

### **Application of Force**

Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve staff:

- physically interposing between pupils;
- blocking a pupil's path
- holding
- pushing
- pulling
- leading by the hand or arm
- shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back;
- (in extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds.

In exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk of injury, a member of staff may need to take any necessary action consistent with the concept of 'reasonable force': for example to prevent a young pupil running off the pavement onto a busy road or preventing a pupil hitting someone or throwing something.

In other circumstances staff should not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury.

Staff should always avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent.

### **Recording Incidents**

It is important that there is a detailed, contemporaneous, written report of any occasion where it has been necessary to use force or restraint (except minor or trivial incidents). Immediately following any such incident the member of staff concerned should tell the Head or a senior member of staff and provide a written report as soon as possible afterwards on an incident form. That should include:

- the name(s) of the pupil(s) involved and when and where the incident took place;
- the names of any staff or pupils who witnessed the incident;
- the reason that force was necessary;
- how the incident began and progressed, including details of the pupil's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, the steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, the degree of force used, how that was applied and for how long;
- the pupil's response, and the outcome of the incident;
- details of any injury suffered by the pupil, another pupil or a member of staff and of any damage to property.

Staff may find it helpful to seek advice from a senior colleague or a representative of their professional association when compiling a report. They should also keep a copy.

Incidents involving the use of force can cause parents of the pupil involved great concern. It is always advisable to inform parents and give them the opportunity to discuss it.

### **Complaints**

Involving parents when an incident occurs, plus a clear policy about physical contact with pupils that staff adhere to, should help to avoid complaints from parents. If, however, a parent does submit a formal complaint this will be dealt with via school procedures for dealing with allegations against staff. This may lead to an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures, or by the Police and Social Services under child protection procedures.

**Physical Contact with pupils in other circumstances**

There are some occasions where physical contact may be proper or necessary. Some physical contact may be necessary during PE lessons, sports coaching or Design Technology or if a member of staff is giving first aid. Young children and children with special needs may need staff to provide physical prompts or help. Touching may also be appropriate where a pupil is in distress and needs comforting. Teachers will use their own professional judgement when they feel a pupil needs this kind of support.

There may be some children for whom touching is particularly unwelcome. For example because of their cultural background or because they have suffered abuse. Staff will be informed if this is the case.

For full details of government advice on the use of physical force by teachers see DFEE circular 10/98, which is available in the staff room in the file, titled 'Safeguarding Children'.

## **Safeguarding Children**

### **SECTION E INTIMATE CARE POLICY**

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required (e.g. assisting with toileting or removal of wet/soiled clothing). A care plan will be drawn up and agreed with parents for all children who require intimate care on a regular basis.

#### **Definition of intimate care**

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which may involve staff touching parts of the child's body. Examples include care associated with toileting and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing.

#### **Aims**

Oaklands School aims to:

- Treat children with sensitivity and respect, so that their experience of intimate care is a positive one.
- Ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and the situation.
- Allow the child to care for him/herself as far as possible.
- Be aware of, and responsive to, the child's reactions.
- When carrying out intimate care away from the School remember the main issues of privacy and safety.
- Ensure that staff have a high awareness of child protection issues and will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times.

#### **Strategies for dealing with intimate care issues**

Given the right approach, intimate care can provide opportunities to teach children about the value of their own bodies, to develop their safety skills and to enhance their self-esteem. Wherever children can learn to assist in carrying out aspects of intimate care, they should be encouraged to do so. This practice fits into the School's personal and social development programme in terms of giving children life skills and developing their independence.

Explanations of what is happening are given in a straight forward and reassuring way to the individual child taking into account any religious and/or cultural sensitivities related to aspects of intimate care relevant to the individual.

Facilities, which afford privacy and modesty e.g. separate toilets, are provided and respect is given to a child's preference for a particular care and sequence of care.

Appropriate terminology for parts of the body and functions are used by staff, who encourage children to use these terms as appropriate.

Spare clothing is kept either in the classroom or in the School office together with a supply of plastic bags. The IV (year 6) class teacher has a supply of sanitary towels / tampons kept in a "special folder".

Staff should consult with other staff if any deviation from these procedures is needed and should record the justification for the variations from school procedure on an individual care plan. This information is shared with parents.

#### **The use of toilets**

It is not usually practicable from the point of view of staffing resources for there to be two members of staff involved with a child needing intimate care unless for health and safety reasons e.g. with a child who is ill or difficult to move or handle. The best interests of the child need to be considered in making

such decisions. Whilst the presence of two people may be seen as providing protection against a possible allegation of abuse against a member of staff, it further erodes the privacy of the child. At Oaklands School, we ensure that members of staff make their intention and purpose known to others before commencing intimate care. There is always another member of staff nearby when intimate care is being undertaken on a one-to-one basis.

Staff should promote appropriate use of toilets and associated skills in private and public settings. Parents should be encouraged to train their children at home as part of their daily routine, and school should reinforce these routines whilst avoiding any unnecessary physical contact. Where possible, staff should be mindful of respect for the personal dignity of the pupils when supervising, teaching or reinforcing toileting skills.

### **Parental rights and responsibilities**

Ultimately it is parents, as the child's main carers who have responsibility for his/her health. They should give relevant information to the School about their child's medical condition, and any medication involved in treatment.

Cultural and religious sensitivities should be taken into account in relation to aspects of intimate care. These should be discussed with parents, and wherever possible, with the child. All staff involved in delivering intimate care should be made aware of these issues relating to individual children and taken into full account in practices.

Diaries offer an excellent way of exchanging information between parents/carers and school staff, which is essential as the personal and social development of a child is their joint responsibility. Parents/carers welcome the communication as it gives them relevant information relating to their child's day at school, and staff also appreciate news from home. However information concerning intimate care procedures should not be recorded in the diary, as it is not a confidential document and could be accessed by people other than the parent/carer and member of staff. It is recommended that communication relating to intimate care should be made through one of the following:

- Sealed letter
- Personal contact – face to face at home or at school
- Telephone call – between member of staff and parent/carer

Parents and staff should be aware that matters concerning intimate care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the children's right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

### **Vetting of staff, volunteers and students**

All those members of staff working with children will have enhanced CRB disclosure and clearance. Work experience students and volunteers who do not have an enhanced CRB disclosure are not allowed to provide intimate care.

## **Safeguarding Children**

### **SECTION F POLICY ON THE USE OF THE INTERNET**

Under no circumstances should adults in school access inappropriate images. Accessing child pornography or indecent images of children on the Internet, and making and disseminating such material is illegal and, if proven, will invariably lead to the individual being barred from work with children and young people.

Using school equipment to access inappropriate or indecent material, including adult pornography, is likely to give cause for concern particularly if as a result pupils might be exposed to inappropriate or indecent material.

#### **Safeguarding children**

Various projects have proved the educational benefits of Internet access, which enables pupils to explore thousands of libraries, databases and bulletin boards. Internet access is supervised in school and material used in school lies within the walled zone called 'school zone'. We are aware, however, that some pupils may find ways to access unsuitable material. We believe that the benefits to pupils from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages.

Parents of pupils in Year 1 are asked to sign a letter giving permission for their children to access the Internet during ICT lessons throughout their time at the School.

Children are not allowed unsupervised access to the Internet and are never allowed to use chat rooms. Use of e-mail will only take place as part of ICT lessons under the clear direction of the teacher.

The computer room is locked when not in use and pupils are not allowed unsupervised access.

Children are taught about the dangers of having conversations with unidentified people in 'chat rooms' (e.g. that sometimes adults pretend to be young people in order to 'groom them' and encourage them to meet them after having 'got to know' them via the Internet.) They are also taught that if they receive unkind messages from members of the School via e-mail or a 'chat room' at home they should immediately tell their parents or a member of staff in school as this may be a form of bullying.

#### **School Website**

We are aware that this may be accessed by anyone, including paedophiles. With this in mind we do not publish photographs with names of pupils available. We do not publish names and addresses of parents (e.g. officers of the Oaklands Parents Association) as this would give information about the address of their children. In news releases to the newspaper and newsletters published on the website, children are referred to only by their Christian name. Our terms and conditions, which are signed by the parents and returned to the School, include a declaration giving permission for pictures of pupils to be published on the website and in the prospectus and any other promotional material published by the School.

## Safeguarding Children

### SECTION G OUR RECRUITMENT POLICY FOR ALL PERMANENT, TEMPORARY, SUPPLY, AGENCY & CASUAL STAFF AT OAKLANDS SCHOOL

In line with the new DCSF regulations and guidelines introduced in January 2007 to safeguard children within our schools, we are required to carry out a number of checks on all staff, whether they are permanent, temporary, casual, voluntary, school based supply or agency based supply, and maintain a central record documenting that checks have been carried out. We will also ensure that we meet any requirement of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

#### **At the Point of Interview:**

- All applicants will be required to bring in a minimum of 3 proofs of Identification which verify their name, date of birth and current address. Ideally:
  1. Valid passport, Birth Certificate or driving licence (proof of ID which includes name, DoB & address)
  2. marriage Certificate, Birth Certificate, NHS Card, NI Card (another proof of name and or DoB)
  3. Additional proof of address, we need at least 2 (recent utility bill, bank statement, valid TV Licence)

These ID documents will also be sufficient if a new CRB Disclosure Application needs to be completed (please refer to CRB Guidance notes for clarification when completing application).

- If the applicant is required to hold a specific qualification relevant to the post (e.g., QTS, a specific subject field, First Aid or Food Hygiene) that has been entered on their application, we need to see the original documentation to verify this.
- In the case of teaching staff and many support staff roles, references will have been sought prior to interview, in other cases, shortly afterwards. Appointments are subject to receipt of satisfactory references.

#### **Procedure with CRB's if Appointed:**

- A new CRB Disclosure Application will be completed if a current valid one is not already held. In addition to the ID documents mentioned above, a five year address history and any other surnames held will be information required on the form.
- Should CRB clearance be delayed and employment commences before it is received, the School will undertake a list 99 check and risk assessment on the member of staff concerned.
- If a CRB Disclosure Certificate is held already – see note on Portability below.

#### **Portability of CRB Disclosure Certificates:**

- If a CRB Disclosure Certificate is held and this is valid (there has been no break-in-service\*), we will need to see and log this document and no further application needs to be made.

**\* No break-in-service = no longer than 3 months away from post as defined in Disclosure Certificate.**

**Regarding Volunteers**

- All Volunteers that have direct contact with children on a regular basis will be required to have a CRB Disclosure check, The Headmistress will assess the need on an individual basis.

**A Special Note for Agencies/Agency Staff**

- Should Oaklands School seek to employ staff via a supply agency, the agency must be able to confirm that all relevant checks have been undertaken (at the point of confirmation of terms of supply), by:
  - (i) Confirming in writing what checks have been carried out and informing Oaklands School if there is anything that may be considered relevant in the context of safeguarding children;
  - (ii) Providing evidence of the checks carried out on their central record and
  - (iii) Ensuring that the supply staff member is aware that they have to bring in their CRB Certificate, proof of qualifications (e.g., QTS Certificate) and ID documents (proving their name, date of birth and address), on the first day of their supply work for Oaklands School.
- Oaklands School reserves the right to terminate the contract with the agency (send home an agency staff member) without notice should the terms of safe recruitment practice be breached by the agency or the member of the agency staff. In this instance Oaklands School will not be liable for any charges connected to the booking.

**Staff Leaving the School**

The School will report to the Secretary of State via Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), within one month of leaving the School 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. The report will include as much evidence about the circumstances as possible. The School understands that this is a requirements of the Education (Provision of Information by Independent Schools) (England) Regulations 2003. The address of the ISA is PO Box 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA (tel: 0300 123111). The School understands that they have a legal duty to respond to requests from the ISA for information they already hold, but will not have to find it from other sources.

Any queries relating to the policy above should be directed to the Headmistress at Oaklands School on 0208 508 3517.

**Agencies, please sign the statement below:**

I have read, full understand & agree to abide by the terms as set out in Oaklands School Safe recruitment Policy.

Signed :..... Date:.....

Print name:.....

Agency:.....

Designation:.....