



## **READING SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **AIMS**

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that the school safeguards and promotes the welfare of children effectively, in accordance with the duties arising from Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, and guidance issued by the Secretary of State. For instance, Working Together to Safeguard Children and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

### **PRINCIPLES**

It is a basic right of every child to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a child being harmed through abuse or neglect.

Reading School recognises its legal and ethical duty to promote the well-being of pupils at the school, protect them from harm, and take appropriate action where we have concerns. We agree that we have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge, and we will carry out this duty through our teaching and learning, extra-curricular activities, pastoral care and extended school activities.

The school seeks to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of their responsibility for pastoral care. The school hopes that parents and children will feel free to talk about any concerns and will see school as a safe place if there are any difficulties at home.

As a consequence, we

- assert that teachers and other members of staff (including volunteers) in the school are an integral part of the child safeguarding process;
- recognise that abuse and neglect are likely to have significant detrimental impacts on a child's learning, social and emotional well-being, behaviour and attendance
- accept totally that safeguarding children is an appropriate function for all members of staff in the school, and wholly compatible with their primary pedagogic responsibilities.
- recognise that safeguarding children in this school is a responsibility for all staff, including volunteers, and the Governing body;
- will ensure through training and supervision that all staff and volunteers in the school are alert to the possibility that a child is at risk of suffering harm, and know how to report concerns or suspicions;

- will designate a senior member of staff, the Headmaster, with knowledge and skills in recognising and acting on child protection concerns. He will act as a source of expertise and advice, and is responsible for co-ordinating action within the school and liaising with other agencies;
- will ensure that all members of staff and volunteers who have suspicion that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, refer such concerns to the Designated Person, who will refer on to Children’s Services in accordance with the LSPs guidance, policies and procedures;
- safeguard the welfare of children whilst in the school, through positive measures to address bullying, especially where this is aggravated by sexual or racial factors, disability or special educational needs
- will ensure that all relevant staff are aware of the child protection procedures established by the LSPs and, where appropriate, the Local Authority, and act on any guidance or advice given by them. These can be found at <http://proceduresonline.com/berks/>
- will ensure through our recruitment and selection of volunteers and paid employees that all people who work in our school are suitable to work with children,
- will act swiftly and make appropriate referrals where an allegation is made that a member of staff has committed an offence against a child, harmed a child, or acted in a way that calls into question their suitability for working with children.

All members of staff (including volunteers and governors) in Reading School, in whatever capacity, will at all times act pro-actively in child welfare matters. Where any member of staff fails to act in accordance with this policy, this may be dealt with as a disciplinary matter. No special arrangements will be granted to VIPs. The same safeguarding procedures apply.

**DESIGNATED MEMBER OF STAFF**

1. The designated senior member of staff (designated person) for child protection in this school is:

Mr Chris Evans, Deputy Headteacher

2. In their absence, these matters will be dealt with by the Deputy Designated Person:

Mr Ashley Robson, Headmaster and Mr Paul Teixeira, Boarding Housemaster

3. The designated person(s) are key to ensuring that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to child safeguarding issues. They will also act as a dedicated resource available for other staff, volunteers and governors to draw upon.

4. The school will ensure that:

- All members of staff (including volunteers) will be made aware of who this person is and what their role is.
- The Designated Person will liaise with other agencies and build good working relationships with colleagues from these agencies.
- The Designated Person (and any deputy) has sufficient capacity to carry out their responsibilities and access to appropriate training and support. Two further members of senior staff are also level 3 trained to help support.

5. The designated person is responsible for referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the Local Authority in according to the procedures established by the LSPs.

6. The designated person is not responsible for dealing with allegations made against members of staff.

To be effective they will:

- Act as a source of advice, support and expertise within the school and be responsible for coordinating action regarding referrals by liaising with Children's Services and other relevant agencies over suspicions that a child may be suffering harm.
- Cascade safeguarding advice and guidance issued by the LSPs and Local Authority
- Where they have concerns that a referral has not been dealt with in accordance with the LSP's procedures, refer back to the Local Authority
- Ensure each member of staff and volunteers at the school, and regular visitors are aware of and can access readily, this policy.
- Ensure that this policy is updated and reviewed every 11 months and work with the designated governor for child protection regarding this.
- Keep detailed accurate secure written records of referrals/concerns, and ensure that these are held in a secure place.
- Ensure parents are aware of the child protection policy in order to alert them to the fact that the school may need to make referrals.
- Where students leave the school roll, ensure any child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible, separately from the main file, and addressed to the Designated Person for child protection.
- Where a child leaves and the new school is not known, ensure that the Local Authority is alerted so that the child's name can be included on the database for missing pupils.
- Where a child is subject of a Protection Plan, bring to the attention of the allocated social worker any concerns – including any absence from school, behavioural problems, or any exclusion
- Ensure that staff understand that all safeguarding concerns should be passed to the designated safeguarding leads **except** in any cases of suspected FGM, whereby the police should be informed directly

The designated person also has an important role in ensuring that all staff and volunteers receive appropriate training. They will:

- Have a working knowledge of how LSPs operates and the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these when required.
- Attend training in how to identify abuse and know when it is appropriate to refer a case
- Ensure that any new or key messages are passed to other staff, volunteers and governors.
- Make themselves (and any deputies) known to all staff, volunteers and governors (including new starters and supply teachers) and ensure those members of staff have had training in child protection. This should be relevant to their needs to enable them to identify and report any concerns to the designated teacher immediately.

### **DESIGNATED GOVERNOR**

The Designated Governor for Child Protection at this school is:

Mr B Kenwick, Chair of Governors
----------------------------------

The Governors will ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable the necessary tasks to be carried out properly under inter-agency procedures.

The Governors will ensure that the designated member of staff for child protection is given sufficient time to carry out his or her duties, including accessing training.

The Governors will audit and review safeguarding practices in the school on a regular basis, and no less than annually, to ensure that:

- The school is carrying out its duties to safeguard the welfare of children at the school;
- Members of staff and volunteers are aware of current practices in this matter, and that staff receive training where appropriate;
- Child protection is integrated with induction procedures for all new members of staff and volunteers
- The school follows the procedures agreed by the LSPs and any supplementary guidance issued by the Local Authority
- Only persons suitable to work with children shall be employed in the school, or work here in a voluntary capacity
- Where safeguarding concerns about a member of staff are substantiated, take appropriate disciplinary action

### **RECRUITMENT**

In order to ensure that children are protected whilst at this school, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised. In order to achieve this, we will follow the guidance set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education '.

We will ensure that the following checks are satisfactorily completed before a person takes up a position in the school:

- Mandatory DBS Checks for everyone in 'regulated activity'
- Identity checks to establish that applicants are who they claim to be<sup>1</sup>
- Academic qualifications, to ensure that qualifications are genuine
- Professional and character references prior to offering employment
- Satisfy conditions as to health and physical capacity
- Previous employment history will be examined and any gaps accounted for.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

We understand that some people otherwise unsuitable for working with children may use volunteering to gain access to children; for this reason, any volunteers in the school, in whatever capacity, will be given the same consideration as paid staff.

Where a parent or other volunteer helps on a one-off basis, he/she will only work under the direct supervision of a member of staff, and at no time have one to one contact with children. However, if a parent or other volunteer is to be in school regularly or frequently, we will treat them as if they were paid employees and check them to ensure their suitability to work with children.

## **INDUCTION & TRAINING**

All new members of staff will receive a staff handbook and induction pack, which will give an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure, as well as identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality issues.

All new staff at the school (including volunteers) undertake safeguarding training prior to commencing employment.

All staff, including volunteers, will be expected to attend training on safeguarding children that will enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in respect of child protection effectively. The school will provide this training as through the designated person, or through commissioning training.

Staff will attend refresher training annually.

## **DEALING WITH CONCERNS**

Members of staff and volunteers must not investigate suspicions; if somebody has reason to consider that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, they must always discuss such concerns to the Designated Person, who will refer the matter to the relevant Local Authority.

To this end, volunteers and staff will follow the procedures below;

- Upon the receipt of any information from a child, or if any person has suspicions that a child may be at risk of harm, or
- If anyone observes injuries that appear to be non-accidental, or

---

<sup>1</sup> 2 e.g., through birth certificate, passport, new style driving licence, etc...

- where a child or young person makes a direct allegation or implies that they have been abused, or
- makes an allegation against a member of staff<sup>2</sup>

they must record what they have seen, heard or know accurately at the time the event occurs, and share their concerns with the Designated Person (or Headmaster if an allegation about a member of staff) and agree action to take.

We will ensure that all members of staff and employees are familiar with the procedures for keeping a confidential written record of any incidents and with the requirements of the LSP

## **BEHAVIOUR**

Because of the link between abuse and some types of poor behaviour, where a pupil's behaviour is violent, bizarre or dangerous, including acts of vandalism or fire setting, staff will be alert to the possibility that this is an indicator of abuse

## **CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE training is included in the staff training schedule, and is also covered as part of the PSHE programme.

## **CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION**

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines activity. County lines is a major, cross-cutting issue involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery and missing persons. County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

## **PEER TO PEER ALLEGATIONS**

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Particular information governing sexting and cyber bullying is found in the School's e-safety policy, this reflects The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) guidance.

Students are reminded through Chapel, PSHCE, tutor time and assemblies that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up." All forms of "initiation" are prohibited and any participation will be investigated. Students are

---

<sup>2</sup> Allegation that the member of staff has harmed a child, committed an offence against a child, or behaved in a way that questions their suitability to work with children.

encouraged to raise any concerns with their tutor or with a member of staff who they trust or feel supported by, for example in the SEND team, Heads of House, the School Matron or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse include student induction, daily contact with Form tutors, oversight of behavioural issues by the Heads of House and the Welfare Board and content covered in PSHCE. Staff are on duty during Break and Lunch times to monitor peer interactions. Regular guidance is offered to parents and students regarding e-safety.

Allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated by a Head of House or Head of Year. As with all investigations, these statements will be passed directly to members of the SLT. Once an allegation is made, Tutors and Heads of House will ensure that victims of alleged peer on peer abuse are supported through a weekly one to one conversation, and that their allegation is immediately recorded on the Welfare Log. Where necessary the Welfare Board or the Designated Safeguarding Leads will involve other agencies or refer the allegation to the LADO.

### **SAFEGUARDING IN SCHOOL**

As well as ensuring that we address child protection concerns, we will also ensure that children who attend the school are kept safe from harm whilst they are in our charge.

To this end, this policy must be seen in light of the school's policies on:

- Bullying; the school will also ensure that bullying is identified and dealt with so that any harm caused by other pupils can be minimised. We will pay particular attention to sexualised behaviour, or bullying that is homophobic in nature, or where there appear to be links to domestic abuse in the family home.
- Safer recruitment.
- Whistleblowing
- Special Educational Needs
- Racist incidents
- Preventing Violent Extremism and Radicalism
- Behaviour and the school rules
- Health & Safety
- Physical Intervention
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Medical Needs of Pupils
- Health and Safety
- Safe Internet Use
- Attendance, including repeated absence and occasions when children go missing. Missing Students are as per the Missing student procedure in the Missing Student Policy
- Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning; Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education; Sex and Relationships Education; CSE, CCE and FGM education; child protection issues will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate

### **PHOTOGRAPHING CHILDREN**

We understand that parents like to take photos of or video record their children in the school play, or at sports day, or school presentations. This is a normal part of family life, and we

will not discourage parents from celebrating their child's successes. However, if there are Health and Safety issues associated with this - i.e. the use of a flash when taking photos could distract or dazzle the child, and cause them to have an accident, we will encourage parents to use film or settings on their camera that do not require flash.

We will not allow others to photograph or film a pupil during a school activity without the parent's permission.

We will not allow images of pupils to be used on school websites, publicity, or press releases, without express permission from the parent.

The school cannot however be held accountable for photographs or video footage taken by parents or members of the public at school functions.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The school, and all members of staff at the school, will ensure that all data about pupils is handled in accordance with the requirements of the law, and any national and local guidance.

Any member of staff who has access to sensitive information about a child or the child's family must take all reasonable steps to ensure that such information is only disclosed to those people who need to know.

All child protection records will be kept separately from the child's main file; the Designated Person will restrict access to those people who have a role to play in protecting the child. Child Protection information held electronically will be password protected.

### **CONDUCT OF STAFF**

The school has a duty to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between staff and children, and that all members of staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.

- At all times, members of staff are required to work in a professional way with children. All staff should be aware of the dangers inherent in:
  - working alone with a child
  - physical interventions
  - cultural and gender stereotyping
  - dealing with sensitive information
  - giving to and receiving gifts from children and parents
  - Contacting children through private telephones (including texting), e-mail, MSN, or social networking websites.
  - disclosing personal details inappropriately
  - meeting pupils outside school hours or school duties

If any member of staff has reasonable suspicion that a child is suffering harm, and fails to act in accordance with this Policy and the LSPs procedures, we will view this as misconduct and take appropriate action.

Where any member of staff in the school believes that the Headmaster is failing to act in accordance with this Policy, they should bring it to the attention of the Chair of Governors.

### **PHYSICAL CONTACT & RESTRAINT**

Members of staff may have to make physical interventions with pupils; generally, this should be avoided unless

- It is necessary to protect the child, or another person, from immediate danger, or
- Where the member of staff has received suitable training.

Any such incident should be written up in full and details passed to the Headmaster or Deputy Designated Child Protection Officers.

### **ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MEMBERS OF STAFF**

If anyone makes an allegation that any member of staff (including any volunteer or Governor) may have:

- Committed an offence against a child
- Placed a child at risk of significant harm
- Behaved in a way that calls into question their suitability to work with children the allegation will be dealt with in accordance with national guidance and agreements, as implemented locally by the LSPs.

The Headmaster will handle such allegations, unless the allegation is against the Headmaster, when the Chair of Governors will handle the school's response.

The Headmaster (or Chair of Governors) will report without delay to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): Mr Jerry Curtis, [Jeremy.curtis@reading.gov.uk](mailto:Jeremy.curtis@reading.gov.uk), tel: 0118 9373555 or 07841 253871.

### **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

Where the Governing Body transfers control of use of school premises to bodies (such as sports clubs) to provide out of school hours activities, we will ensure that these bodies have appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to link with the school on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the bodies.

### **CONTRACTED SERVICES**

Where the Governing Bodies contracts its services to outside providers, we will ensure that these providers have appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to link with the school on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the provider.

### **MONITORING and EVALUATION**

Implementation and day to day working of this policy will be monitored by the Designated Person, who will liaise with the Headmaster and Governors and bring to their attention any concerns that the Policy is not being adhered to, or any changes required arising from changes to statutory guidance or LSPs procedures

The Headmaster will report to the Governing Body annually

- Numbers of child protection concerns brought to her/his attention by staff at the school
- Number of such concerns that were reported to the Local Authority, and response
- Number of requests for information by Local Authority and CAFCASS Social Workers
- Attendances at Child Protection Conferences and Core Group Meetings
- Number of staff (including volunteers) who have received safeguarding training within the last year and the number who are due to receive training within the coming year.

The Headmaster will report to the Governing Body annually

- Incidence of bullying
- Racist Incidents
- Complaints by parents about bullying and racist incidents
- Numbers of allegations against any member of staff
- Number of such concerns that were reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer, and response
- Any concerns raised by the School Council that are relevant to this Policy

## **DISSEMINATION**

The Designated Person will ensure that a copy of this Policy will be made available to all new members of staff and volunteers.

Parents' attention will be drawn to the Policy through the normal school communication channels, including the school prospectus.

The name of the Designated Person (and any deputy) will be displayed at the school entrance and common room.

## **USEFUL LINKS**

Berkshire Child Protection Procedures: <http://proceduresonline.com/berks/>

Working Together to Safeguard Children:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children>

Keeping Children Safe in Education: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education>

## **USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Children's Action Teams: 0118 937 6545

Children's Social Care, Access and Assessment: 0118 955 3641

Pan Berkshire Out of Hours Emergency Team: 01344 786543

Amended: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019

Approved by: EXPC Committee

