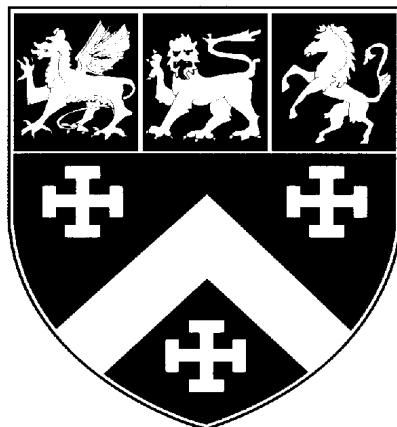


Handcross Park School



Safeguarding Policy

Revised April 2010

This policy was adopted April 2010

This policy is to be reviewed one year from the date of adoption.

Copies of signed forms from all members of staff who have read and agreed this policy are kept by The Headmaster.

The Designated Persons for Child Protection who have overall responsibility for safeguarding protection practice at Handcross Park School are the Headmaster; Mr W. Hilton, The Deputy Head; Mrs. N Bartholomew; The Head of the Pre-Preparatory Department; Mrs T. Cufley (who is the Designated Person for Early Years Foundation Stage), The Chairman of the Governors; Mrs Emily Hutchins, and the Boarding Houseparents; Mrs. E. Lickiss and Mr. M Lickiss.

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Safeguarding is the proactive engagement with children, parents and carers as well as colleagues to ensure children are safe and achieving their potential. This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established in the Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, section 2.22 and in line with locally agreed inter-agency procedures and is available to parents on the school website. We recognise that we have a duty to protect children from maltreatment and to prevent impairment. We will promote welfare by creating opportunities to enable children to have optimum chances in childhood, adolescence and adulthood.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. The aims of the policy are:

- To ensure that we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- To raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep themselves safe.
- To develop and then implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse.
- To support pupils who have been abused in accordance with their child protection plan.
- To establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

Information about possible abuse may come to a member of staff in several ways - direct allegation from a child that has been abused, through a friend, relative or other child, through a child's behaviour or through observation of an injury to the child. We recognise that because of day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. **It is the responsibility of every member of staff to immediately pass on any concerns to the Designated Person for their Department.** The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need, to recognise, and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out in the Independent Schools Inspectorate Handbook and take account of any guidance issued by the Department of Children, Schools and Families to:

- Ensure that we have a Designated Person for child protection who has undertaken Child Protection Training **and inter-agency working training** and who undertakes an updated training every two years.
- Ensure that the designated practitioner
- Ensure that we nominate a governor responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that every member of staff and the governing body know the name of the Designated Senior Person responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all full time staff have the required training in child protection which will be updated every three years. The most recent Child Protection training was on **09.04.2010**. The next Child Protection training will take place within three years from that date.

- Ensure that all part time, voluntary and temporary staff who work with children are made aware of the arrangements that are in place to safeguard pupils and will be offered training at least every three years.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and for referring any concerns to the Designated Person responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that the Designated Person contacts Children's Social Care if there are concerns about a child.
- Ensure that the designated practitioner who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the EYFS setting (Mrs. T. Cufley Head of Pre-Prep and Nursery) liaises with local statutory children's agencies as appropriate.
- Informs Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm and abuse.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its duties on the school website.
- Notify the Area Social Care Officer immediately if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who is on a child protection register/subject to a child protection plan.
- Implement the statutory and Local Authority guidance when a child goes missing from education.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including the attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concern about children, even when there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely and ensure that a child's school record indicates the existence of further records.
- Ensure that when a child moves school their Child Protection Record is transferred to the named Designated Person in that new setting.

We recognise that a child, parents or a colleague may make an allegation against a member of staff if that member of staff has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they are unsuitable to work with children, therefore we will:
 - Ensure that in a case of serious harm, the police will be informed from the outset.
 - Ensure that if the matter refers to the EYFS that OFSTED are informed within 14 days even if the matter occurred on the premises or elsewhere.
 - Ensure that if the allegation refers to a member of staff living on the premises that the member of staff will be required to make alternative accommodation arrangements away from the children pending an investigation.
 - Ensure that the Headmaster takes responsibility for handling allegations against staff. If an allegation is made against the Headmaster then the Chair of Governors will take responsibility, the Head will not be notified in advance of the Chair of the Governors.
 - Ensure that the school complies with child protection procedures regarding the handling of allegations against adults who work with children.
 - Ensure that we participate in any investigation that ensues

- Ensure that safe recruitment procedures are always followed including CRB checks and compliance with Independent School Standards Regulations. The Headteacher has completed safe recruitment training. Any interview panel will consist of a member of staff who has completed safe recruitment training.
- Ensure that senior pupils in the boarding house who are given positions of responsibility over other pupils are briefed on the appropriate action they should take should they receive any allegations of abuse

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupils through:

- The content of the curriculum
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued
- The school Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- The implementation and reviewing of statutory policies that are relevant to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil.
- Ensuring that where a pupil on the child protections register leaves the school their information is transferred to the new school and any agencies involved are informed.
- Recognising that children come from multi cultural backgrounds and as a result have developed policies to ensure that we embrace:
 - Diversity in religion and faith
 - Diversity of race
 - Diversity of ethnicity
 - Diversity of gender and sexual orientation
 - The Disability Equality Duty

All members of staff will be made aware of the following:

- The signs of possible abuse (see Appendix 1 and Child Protection Training Handout)
- The policy regarding searching for and if necessary reporting any children missing from school. (see Appendix 5)
- That confidentiality cannot be promised to a pupil giving evidence
- That we offer immunity from ‘whistle blowing’. (Appendix 9)
- Of the need to avoid asking leading questions
- The procedures for dealing with abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil (see Appendix 3)
- The school’s reporting arrangements including contact with a welfare agency within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse.
- The contact details for agency involvement (see website and useful addresses section)
- The school’s recording arrangements

Appendix 1

Child Abuse Signs and Symptoms

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused they may well indicate that something is wrong. If a number of these symptoms are present then the possibility of abuse must be investigated.

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
- Regression 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
- Starting to wet, day or night nightmares
- Becoming worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be ultra good or perfect, overreacting to criticism

Physical Abuse

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- Wearing clothes to cover injuries even in hot weather
- Refusal to undress for games lessons
- Bald patches
- Chronic running away
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Fear of physical contact
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted

Emotional Abuse

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

Neglect

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

If a child tells you about abuse:

- Stay calm and be reassuring
- Find a quiet place to talk
- Believe in what you are being told
- Listen, but do not press for information
- Reassure the child that he or she was right to tell
- It will help the child to cope if you say the abuser has a problem
- Acknowledge that the child may have angry, sad or even guilty feelings about what has happened, but stress that the abuse was not the child's fault.
- Acknowledge that you may need help dealing with your own feelings.

Procedure following a disclosure

Remember the 4 'R's

- **Receive**

Listen to the child. If you are shocked by what they tell you, try not to show it. Take what they say seriously. Children rarely lie about abuse and to be disbelieved adds to the traumatic nature of disclosing. Children will retract what they have said if they meet with revulsion or disbelief.

Accept what the child says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking "Why didn't you tell me before?"

- **Reassure**

Stay calm and reassure the child that they have done the right thing in talking to you. It's essential to be honest with the child, so don't make promises you may not be able to keep, like "I'll stay with you" or "Everything will be alright now".

Don't promise confidentiality: you have a duty to refer a child who is at risk.

Try to alleviate any feelings of guilt that the child displays. For example by saying "You're not to blame" or "You're not alone, you're not the only one this sort of thing happens to".

Acknowledge how hard it must have been for the child to tell you what happened.

Empathise with the child – don't tell them what they should be feeling

- **React**

React to the pupil only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer the matter; but do not 'interrogate' them for full details.

Do not ask leading questions. Such questions may invalidate evidence in any later prosecution in court.

Ask open questions such as "Anything else to tell me?" "Yes?" or "And...?"

- **Record**

Make some very brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible.

Do not destroy your original notes in case they are later required.

Record the date, time, place and who else was around; any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child. If the child uses their family's own private sexual words, record the actual words used rather than translating them into 'proper' words.

Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising.

Be objective in your recording: include statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations or assumptions.

Ensure that you note down

- **What you have seen**
- **What you have heard from others**
- **What was said to you directly**

The procedures for dealing with abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil

You come across suspected or actual bullying. What do you do?

- Remain calm, you are in charge.
Do not make the situation worse, for example by humiliating the bully (as this may lead to reprisals).
- Take stock of the situation and diffuse it.
- Make it plain that you disapprove of what you have witnessed
- Encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view
- Re-assure the victim, offer support / advice.
- Indicate that you will be reporting the matter to the Tutor and that they may inform Headmaster / Deputy Head
- Records of all incidents are vital. Please complete a contact report on Hebron and alert all staff to its existence.
- Try to give a full, detailed picture in the form of a written report as well as dialogue with tutor / Deputy Head / Headmaster.
- Do this promptly.

Following this

- The tutor will conduct an investigation – involving relevant teachers, Housemasters and other staff as necessary.
- Initial attempts should be to understand the situation and prevent recurrence.
- If pupils can grasp the situation then explanation and discussion may prevent further problems.
- Tutors must judge if punishment is appropriate (using loss of privilege, minuses, report card, referral, etc. as deemed necessary). Liaison with Deputy Head and Headmaster over sanctions will be expected.
- The Tutor, Deputy Head, Head of Pre-Prep or Headmaster may wish to bring parents into the process – ensuring they are both informed of behaviour and aware of the School's response.
- The tutor will report back to the teacher who tackled the original incident.

A teacher who is directly approached by a parent and made aware of alleged bullying should initiate the procedure outlined above (and tell the parent that the system will operate). In this instance the Headmaster or Deputy Head would need early consultation.

Arrangements for dealing with allegations of abuse by pupils against members of staff, volunteers or The Headmaster.

Pupils who have a problem may speak to someone whom they trust. It is important that the member of staff sets the boundaries firmly at the outset of such a conversation, making it clear that no one can offer absolute confidentiality. A pupil who is insistent upon confidentiality should be referred to an external source, such as Child Line. If the pupil is only prepared to speak if absolute confidentiality is guaranteed, the member of staff should terminate the conversation at that point. The adult should provide the Headmaster with a written account of what has transpired as a matter of urgency.

If a pupil decides to speak to a member of staff about the fact that either he/she, or a pupil known to them, is being bullied, harassed and abused, the member of staff should:

- React professionally, and remember that they are not carrying out an investigation, (which is a task for specialists),
- Take what the child says seriously, and calmly, without becoming emotionally involved,
- Make it clear why unconditional confidentiality cannot be offered.
- Explain that any adult member of staff is obliged to inform the Headmaster, if there are child protection or safeguarding issues involved, in order that specialist help can be arranged.
- Encourage the pupil to speak directly to the Headmaster. Explain that only those who have a professional “need to know” will be told, and, if appropriate, measures will be set up to protect the pupil from retaliation and further abuse,
- Reassure the child that he or she was right to tell, and that he/she is not to blame for having being bullied or abused,
- Allow the child to tell his or her own story, without asking detailed or leading questions
- Record what has been said,
- Inform the Headmaster as soon as possible - at least by the end of the morning/afternoon session of that day.
- Inform the Headmaster immediately in cases where abuse from a member of staff is alleged, or if the incident happened inside the school, or on a school trip. (If the Headmaster is unavailable speak to the Deputy Head. If the Headmaster is involved - the Chairman of Governors should be told immediately).

Where there are evident signs of physical injury, that may (or may not) be the result of abuse or bullying, medical help should be summoned, or the pupil should be taken to the surgery. In serious cases, the Police should be informed from the outset.

MISSING CHILD POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The welfare of all of our children at Handcross Park School is our paramount responsibility. Every adult who works at the school has been trained to appreciate that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. Our staffing ratios are generous and are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is adequately supervised the whole time that he or she is in our care.

The enhanced supervisory arrangements for outings involving our youngest children are set out in a detailed policy document: “Educational Visits for EYFS Children.” We review these policies regularly (at least once a year) in order to satisfy ourselves that they are robust and effective. Every new staff receives a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision of very young children.

ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING FROM THE SCHOOL DURING THE DAY

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child was found to be missing, we would carry out the following actions:

- Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children were present
- Inform the Head of the relevant department
- Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child
- Occupy all of the other children in their classroom(s)
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within the department, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms where a child might hide
- Check the doors, gates and CCTV records for signs of entry/exit

If the child is still missing, the following steps would be taken:

- Inform the Headmaster who will arrange for staff to search the rest of the school premises and grounds
- The Headmaster who will ring the child’s parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the school at once
- The Headmaster will notify the Police
- If the child’s home is within walking distance, a member of staff would set out on foot to attempt to catch up with him/her
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care
- Inform the Chairman of Governors
- Ofsted would be informed in the case of an EYFS child
- The Insurers would be informed

- If the child is injured a report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

ACTION TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING FROM THE SCHOOL DURING BOARDING

- Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children were present
- Inform the Houseparents if not on duty
- Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child
- Ring the child's mobile phone if they have it with them
- Alert all on site staff
- Occupy all of the other children appropriately
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within the department, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms where a child might hide
- Check the doors, gates and CCTV records for signs of entry/exit

If the child is still missing, the following steps would be taken:

- Inform the Headmaster who will arrange for staff to search the rest of the school premises and grounds
- The Headmaster who will ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the school at once
- The Headmaster will notify the Police
- If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff would set out on foot to attempt to catch up with him/her
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care
- Inform the Chairman of Governors
- The Insurers would be informed
- If the child is injured a report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING ON AN OUTING

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity and remain there
- The remaining children would be taken back to school when appropriate.
- Inform the Headmaster immediately.
- Ask the Headmaster to ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue at once
- Contact the venue Manager and arrange a search
- Contact the Police
- The Child Protection Officer would inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care
- Inform the Chairman of Governors
- Ofsted would be informed in the case of an EYFS child
- The Insurers would be informed
- If the child is injured a report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF ONCE THE CHILD IS FOUND

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child
- Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing
- The Headmaster will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident
- The Headmaster will initiate a full investigation (if appropriate involving Social Services/ Local Children Safeguarding Board)
- Media queries should be referred to the Headmaster
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements
- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, [the purpose of the outing], the length of time that the child was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing, lessons for the future.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN THE CASE OF A MISSING EYFS CHILD.

Registers are taken morning and afternoon and regular head counts are made of the children. If a child is found to be missing then the adult responsible will immediately respond.

- S/he will move the children in his/her care to the parallel class to be supervised by another teacher or leave the class in the care of a Teaching Assistant. As an alternative the Teaching Assistant can be asked to follow the procedure listed below on behalf of the teacher.
- S/he will check the toilets, cloakrooms and communal spaces
- Other children will be sensitively questioned to ascertain the last known whereabouts of the child
- The Head of the Pre-Prep will be informed and she in turn will instruct the School Secretary to quietly inform all other staff in case they have information. Parallel classes will be united to release extra adults to search for the missing child. It is essential that there is no undue panic.
- The Head of the Pre-Prep will contact the Headmaster, giving a full description of the child, and he in turn will inform the Ground Staff and wider school community, who will widen the search. CCTV will be checked
- The Head of the Pre-Prep will contact the child's parents and Police
- Ofsted and the school governors will be notified
- A full incident report will be completed and any necessary procedures adjusted to ensure that this does not happen again.

ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF ONCE THE CHILD IS FOUND

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child
- Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing
- The Headmaster will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident
- The Headmaster will initiate a full investigation (if appropriate involving Social Services/ Local Children Safeguarding Board)
- Media queries should be referred to the Headmaster
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements
- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, [the purpose of the outing], the length of time that the child was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing, lessons for the future.

PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF WHEN A CHILD IS NOT COLLECTED ON TIME

If a child is not collected, and the child is in the Nursery or Pre-Preparatory Dept the Head of the Pre-Prep will instigate the following procedure:

- The child will attend After School Club if their parent/carer does not arrive and the child will be re-assured. They will be protected from our concerns about the whereabouts of their parent.
- Every effort will be made to contact parents to establish why they have failed to arrive to collect their child and to plan a suitable alternative. A list of contact numbers is available.
- If the parents or carer cannot be contacted on any of the telephone numbers we have been given within 30 minutes then the emergency contact person whose details we have will be contacted. Messages will be left on all the telephones that are rung if this is possible.
- When parents are eventually contacted they will be reminded of the necessity to notify the school of any delays and need to make alternative arrangements
- If the school is unable to contact any named person the headmistress will be informed.
- A last resort, if no-one can be contacted within 4 hours of the end of the day, we will contact Social Care and advise them of the situation. (We have the facility to care for the child in the boarding house in the short term).
- If a child is not picked up from After School Club the above procedure will be followed but emergency contacts will be telephoned straightaway and the procedure will continue from there with less time delay.

If a child in the Preparatory Dept. is not collected within half an hour of the agreed collection time, we will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers. The child will be reassured and appropriate protection from concerns will occur. If there is no answer they will go to the library until 17.50 and then into supper. After this they will join the boarders until their parents or carers can be contacted. .

We will make a full written report of any such incidents.

We undertake to look after the child safely throughout the time that he or she remains under our care.

Guidance for staff to ensure that the behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil

In general, pupils should be encouraged to discuss with their parents or guardians issues that are troubling them. It may be appropriate to suggest that a pupil sees a member of the Pastoral Care Team.

Staff need to ensure that their behaviour does not inadvertently lay them open to allegations of abuse. They need to treat all pupils with respect and try, as far as possible, not to be alone with a child or young person. Where this is not possible, for example, in an instrumental music lesson, or sports coaching lesson, it is good practice to ensure that others are within earshot. Where possible, a gap or barrier should be maintained between teacher and child at all times. Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint. Staff should avoid taking one pupil on his/her own in a car.

Communication with Pupils

Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers to pupils, nor should they communicate with them by text message, personal email or Facebook. If they need to speak to a pupil by telephone, they should use one of the school's telephones. The Group Leader on all trips and visits involving an overnight stay should take a school mobile phone with him/her, and may ask the pupils for their mobile numbers before allowing them out in small, unsupervised groups. The school mobile should be used for any contact with pupils that may be necessary. The Group leader will delete any record of pupils' mobile phone numbers at the end of the trip or visit.

Physical Restraint

Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on either themselves or another, and then only as a last resort, when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the Head who will decide what to do next.

Appendix 8

EYFS REASONABLE FORCE POLICY

Teaching staff are allowed to 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 damage to property (including their own property);

This provision applies when a teacher is on school premises or when he or she has lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned elsewhere

TYPES OF INCIDENT

There is 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:

- where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is imminent risk of injury;
- where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property;
- where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.

Examples of situations that fall into the first two categories are:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- pupils are fighting;
- a pupil is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, deliberate damage or vandalism to property;
- a pupil is causing, or is at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects;
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school

Example of a situation which falls into the third category is:

- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

REASONABLE FORCE

The degree of force will always depend on all the circumstances of the case, and there are two relevant considerations:

- The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it. The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force. Therefore, physical force could not be justified to prevent a pupil from committing a trivial misdemeanour, or in a situation that could be resolved without force.
- The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

Whether it is reasonable to use force, and the degree of force that could reasonably be employed, might also depend on the age, understanding and sex of the pupil.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Before intervening physically a teacher should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop, and what will happen if he or she does not. The teacher should continue attempting to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident, and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and teachers should never give the impression that they have lost their temper, or are acting out of anger or frustration, or to punish the pupil.

Sometimes a teacher should not intervene in an incident without help if the teacher believes he or she may be at risk of injury. In those circumstances, the teacher should remove other pupils who might be at risk, and summon assistance from a colleague or colleagues. Until assistance arrives, the teacher should continue to attempt to diffuse the situation orally, and to prevent the incident from escalating. Assistance should be sought whenever possible.

APPLICATION OF FORCE

Physical intervention can take several forms:

- Physically interposing between pupils;
- Blocking a pupil's path;
- Holding;
- Pushing;
- Pulling;
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm;
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back

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

Staff should **not** act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:

- Holding a pupil around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe;
- Slapping, punching or kicking a pupil;
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint;
- Tripping a pupil;
- Holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear;
- Holding a pupil face down on the ground.

Restraint should not lead to injury

A member of Staff must only use force when they are acting in a controlled manner and there must be no element of punishment. Corporal punishment is not to be used in any circumstances. The unwarranted use of physical restraint could lead to criminal prosecution.

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

Where the risk is not so urgent, the teacher should consider carefully whether, and if so when, physical intervention is right. Teachers should always try to deal with the situation using other strategies before using force.

The age and level of understanding of the pupil is also very relevant. Physical intervention to enforce compliance with staff instructions is likely to be increasingly inappropriate with older pupils.

RECORDING INCIDENTS

It is important that The Headmaster, and the Head of EYFS if appropriate, are informed if force has been used and that a detailed report is written as soon after the event as possible and that parents are notified.

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

This policy is to enable members of staff to raise concerns internally and in a confidential fashion about fraud, malpractice, health and safety, criminal offences, miscarriages of justice, and failure to comply with legal obligations or unethical conduct. Throughout this policy, the term *whistleblower* denotes the person raising the concern or making the complaint. It is not meant in a pejorative sense and is entirely consistent with the terminology used by Lord Nolan as recommended in the *Second Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life: Local Spending Bodies* published in May 1996.

Aims of the Policy

This policy on whistle-blowing is intended to demonstrate that the School :-

- Will not tolerate malpractice;
- Respects the confidentiality of employees raising concerns and will provide procedures to maintain confidentiality so far as is consistent with progressing the issues effectively;
- Will provide the opportunity to raise concerns outside of the normal line management structure where this is appropriate;
- Will invoke the School's disciplinary policy and procedure in the case of false, malicious, vexatious or frivolous allegations;
- Will provide a clear and simple procedure for raising concerns, which is accessible to all members of staff.

PROCEDURE

No-one should use the whistle-blowing procedure to raise grievances about their personal employment situation.

This procedure is to enable you to express a legitimate concern regarding suspected malpractice within the School.

Malpractice is not easily defined; however, it includes allegations of fraud, financial irregularities, corruption, bribery, dishonesty, acting contrary to the staff code of ethics, criminal activities, or failing to comply with a legal obligation, a miscarriage of justice, or creating or ignoring a serious risk to health, safety or the environment.

CONFIDENTIALITY

If you wish to raise a concern under this procedure you are entitled to have the matter treated confidentially and your name will not be disclosed to the alleged perpetrator of malpractice without your prior approval. It may be appropriate to preserve confidentiality that concerns are raised orally rather than in writing, although you are encouraged to express your concern

in writing wherever possible. If there is evidence of criminal activity then the Police will usually be informed.

THE INVESTIGATION

You should initially express your concern to the Headmaster, or Chair of Governors if the allegation is against the Headmaster.

Any concern raised will be investigated thoroughly and in a timely manner, and appropriate corrective action will be pursued. Whenever possible and subject to third party rights, the member of staff making the allegation will be kept informed of progress and will be informed of the resolution.

If you are not satisfied that your concern is being properly dealt with you will have a right to raise it in confidence with the Chair of Governors, or another Governor if appropriate.

MALICIOUS ACCUSATIONS

False, malicious, vexatious or frivolous accusations will be dealt with under the School's Disciplinary Procedure.

PROTECTION FROM REPRISAL OR VICTIMISATION

You will not suffer a detriment or be disciplined for raising a genuine and legitimate concern, providing that you do so in good faith and following these procedures.

ROLE OF SCHOOL MEDICAL STAFF

Health professionals in a school operate within their own professional guidelines, which include an obligation to refer cases of abuse to the Headmaster. The School Nurse holds a copy of the Department of Health's child protection guidelines for senior nurses.

PARENTS

In general, we believe at Handcross Park School that parents should be informed about any concerns regarding their children. It is important that we are honest and open in our dealings with them. However, concerns must be referred to the Headmaster, who will decide on the appropriate response. In a very few cases, it may not be right to inform parents of our concerns immediately as that action could prejudice any investigation, or place the child at further risk. In such cases, advice will be sought from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

Child protection is always our top priority.

