

LEADEN HALL SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY TO SAFEGUARD AND PROMOTE THE WELFARE OF ALL CHILDREN

Leaden Hall School is an independent prep school for girls. The school will safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school, in compliance with Department for Education (DfE) Guidance, *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*. Governors and staff take seriously their responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 states that all staff have a legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Therefore, this policy applies to all staff or any adult working in school and older children in positions of responsibility. Compliance with this policy is not a matter of discretion. Our policy, therefore, applies to all staff, governors, visitors and volunteers working in the school. This policy has been written in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures and is available on the school website. It also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). There is a comprehensive document in the staff handbook which includes our Recruitment Policy, Code of Conduct for Safe Practice and Child Protection procedures including abuse – signs and symptoms and should be referred to for further detailed information.

THE MAIN ELEMENTS TO OUR POLICY:

1. Ensuring we have a policy and procedures in place in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures and they are available to parents.
2. Ensuring we adhere to safer recruitment guidelines in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children which includes enhanced CRB checks and compliance with Independent School Standards Regulations (ISSR) and DfE guidelines. Safer recruiting training has been completed by the Chair of Governors, Head and School Business Manager and will be arranged for any other personnel that will be involved in recruitment. Please refer to our Recruitment Policy for further guidance.
3. Ensuring we have arrangements in place to deal with allegations of abuse against members of staff/volunteers/head.
4. Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
5. Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
6. Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
7. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

8. Child Protection training (updated every three years) for the Head and all staff, including part-time and voluntary staff either online or INSET training days.
9. Ensuring we have one or more designated persons with status and authority to take responsibility for child protection matters and provides training every two years in child protection and inter agency working for the designated person(s).

We recognize that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to and be aware that confidentiality cannot be promised to the pupil giving evidence.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried. We have a school counsellor with an 'open door' policy. There is ample opportunity to discuss any general concerns with the girls' welfare at weekly staff meeting. All staff are familiar with the designated Child Protection Officers namely Mrs Eager and Mrs Litherland who have the status and authority to take responsibility for child protection matters.
- Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognize and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE) to:

- Ensure we have a designated senior person for child protection who has received appropriate training in child protection and inter-agency working (updated every two years) and support for this role.
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that any referral is made, either in writing or with written confirmation of a telephoned referral, of allegations or suspicions of abuse to the Local Children Safeguarding Board (LSCB) and or police in accordance with agreed local arrangements within 24 hours of any disclosure and without detailed investigation by the school to carry out child protection investigations.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.

- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer. For registered EYFS setting, Ofsted should be informed 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 as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days
- Ensure that staff are aware that they should report to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) any concern or allegation about school practices, allegations against staff, the behaviour of colleagues or the designated child protection officer, which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm; and provide immunity from disciplinary actions as per our whistle blowing policy. In cases where a member of boarding staff is suspended, pending an investigation of a child protection nature, appropriate alternative accommodation away from children will be made.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately. Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Allegations against staff, volunteers or the designated person with responsibility for safeguarding should be reported to the head. It is also advised that the designated person should be contacted (unless he or she is the object of the allegation), since the designated person will have received higher level safeguarding training. If the head is absent, the allegation should be passed to the chair of governors. If the allegation concerns the head, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the chair of governors without notifying the head first. In case of serious harm, the police should be informed from the outset.
- Be aware of any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements and ensure they are remedied without delay
- Refer to Staff Handbook for child protection policies, procedures and details about signs of abuse.

- The school carries out an annual School Safeguarding Audit through Wiltshire Council with the Schools Advisor. This audit forms the basis of our action plan to ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in our child protection arrangements are remedied without delay. It also allows us to assess our practice, identify any gaps and develop an action plan. This plan is then completed in time for the Head's safeguarding report to Governors at the June governors' meeting. These procedures are reviewed internally every 6 months.

We recognize 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 their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will Endeavour to support the pupil 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.
- A designated school counsellor with an 'open door' policy who keeps the Child Protection officer informed of any concerns about a child's welfare.

The school behaviour policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred. The schools' behaviour and anti-bullying policies outline acceptable behaviour towards other pupils. Allegations of abuse made by one or more pupils against another pupil must be reported to the Designated Person, who will take necessary measures to safeguard the pupil and will refer to the appropriate authorities in accordance with the LCPA. (this may mean involving external agencies).

- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed
- Provide that the governing body undertakes an annual review of the school's child protection policies and procedures to ensure the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.
- Ensure all staff, both full time and part time, attend Child Protection training and this is updated every 3 years sometimes as an inset day. Volunteers and part time staff including peripatetic's are also made aware of the

child protection arrangements and attend inset training days when possible.

- To report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) within 1 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 ISA commenced operation on 20 January 2009 and its address for referrals is PO Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA (Telephone 0300 123 1111). The school is aware that it is important that reports include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. Failure to make a report constitutes an offence and the school may be removed from the DfE register of independent schools. The relevant legislation is contained in The Education (Provision of information by independent schools) (England) Regulations 2003. Compromise agreements cannot apply in this connection.

The school's designated person responsible for child protection matters for the whole school, including the EYFS setting is the Head, Mrs Eager, supported by a deputy, Mrs Litherland. The Child Protection Governor is Caroline Marking. The area LADO for the south is 01722 327551 open 9am to 5pm Mon to Friday, Out of hours, Contact Emergency Duty Team on 0845 607 0888. Our Schools Advisor in Child Protection at Wiltshire Council is Deborah Steele.

Safeguarding within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Leaden Hall School has children of EYFS age, and this safeguarding policy also applies to EYFS. The Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) is the Head, Mrs Eager supported by a deputy, Mrs Litherland.