

<b>CHILD PROTECTION POLICY (Child Safeguarding and Welfare Policy)</b>
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*Please also refer to the Anti-Bullying Policy.*

**This policy is on the school website and copies are available on request.**

New Hall School recognises that there are two aspects to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. They are:

- taking all reasonable measures to ensure that risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised;
- taking all appropriate action to address concerns about the welfare of a child, or children, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies.

We recognise that child abuse can take place within/outside the school environment and that accordingly we must raise our awareness of the signs in order to assure an effective protection policy. We also recognise that child abuse can be committed by one or more students against another student. School staff, through the unique relationships which they build up in day-to-day contact, may be the first to hear talk of problems or the first to observe outward signs of abuse.

This fulfils New Hall's common law duty of care towards children. We work closely with several outside agencies, including Essex Safeguarding, the Essex Social Services and Essex Children and Young People's Service.

<b>To minimise the risk</b>
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### **Staff Appointments**

Staff appointments will follow the procedures laid down by the Independent Schools' Council, the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and New Hall's Safer Recruitment Policy. It is essential that all staff and volunteers having access to students (including full time, part time and supply) have an enhanced CRB check. This also applies to people employed by another organisation, or self-employed, who may be working with our students on or off site. All appointments must be confirmed by the Human Resources Manager, who ensures that an enhanced CRB clearance is received before work commences. Adult relatives living with those staff resident on site must also be subject to the same checks. The request for a CRB check should always be present in any offer letter and the appointment is subject to this being satisfactory.

### **Parent Helpers/Volunteers**

Parents who are helping on a regular basis e.g. swimming, will undergo a CRB check as with other members of staff. They will also undergo an informal interview and be issued with a job description, clearly outlining the expectations of the job they will be carrying out and stressing the appropriate behaviour required within child protection guidelines. Staff will be consulted as to whether they think a parent is suitable to help. Parents who are helping on stand alone days e.g. workshops, educational trips are carefully selected by members of staff and given clear instructions on the day as to what is expected of them. Under no circumstances are they allowed unsupervised access to children.

## **DfE requirement**

If a person (whether employed, contracted, voluntary or student) leaves New Hall because their services are no longer used because s/he is considered unsuitable to work with children, then the school will report this to the Independent Safeguarding Authority within one month of them leaving. In this context, ceasing to use a person's services includes: dismissal, non-renewal of a fixed term contract, no longer using/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency, terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee, no longer using staff employed by contractors, no longer using volunteers, resignation and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract work, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering. Failure to make such a report constitutes an offence and the school could be removed from the DfE register of independent schools.

## **Staff**

The Principal delegates responsibility for Child Protection, welfare issues and liaison with outside agencies such as the Social Services Department to a named person of requisite experience; at present this is Mrs Joy Hopkinson, Vice Principal (pastoral), in the Senior School and Mrs Sarah Conrad (Headteacher) in the Preparatory School and Mrs Carole Hedditch-Grey (Pre-Reception Manager) in Pre-Reception (the EYFS setting). In the absence of these members of staff the Vice Principal (curriculum), Mrs Rachel Owens (Senior School) or the Deputy Head, Mrs Sara Kightley or Deputy Pre-Reception Manager, Mrs Marisa White (Preparatory School) will act as CPO. The Governor with responsibility for Child Protection is Mrs Carmel Jones, who is the Headteacher of St Joseph's primary school, Havering. All staff have regular training and updates and inter-agency working (this is mentioned in the ISI guidelines): in the case of the CPO this is every 2 years; all other staff have refresher courses every 3 years. NB The term CPO throughout this document refers to all holding this role.

Any deficiency in the procedure noted by a member of staff will be remedied without delay and the policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Governors, together with the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.

All staff, including all volunteer workers, must be aware of the policy and procedures and of Social Services guidelines. Common sense and sensitivity is of paramount importance in this area and advice is available from the Child Protection Officer and/or Principal. Special attention will be given to these matters in the induction of new staff.

The Essex Safeguarding Purple Book is available in the Staff Rooms of both schools and in the offices of all CPOs.

## **All staff are committed to the following principles of Child Protection:**

1. Confidentiality and appropriate security/access to records
2. Clear and effective communication
3. Centralisation of information, liaison with outside agencies
4. Maintenance of secure records and registers
5. Ensuring co-operation between organisations, departments and individuals
6. Promoting an environment in which a child's development (physical, intellectual, emotional, social, behavioural) and health (physical and mental) are nurtured and in which ill-treatment (e.g. sexual or psychological abuse) is effectively tackled

The CPO acknowledges that a strong and successful pastoral system already operates at New Hall; her role is to support this system. It is understood that the Heads of Year (HoY) and the Class Teacher in the Preparatory School (or Housemistress/master in the case of boarders) will be the active agent in most circumstances which involve sensitive pastoral care of the student.

### **Students**

Students should be made aware of the procedures. A summary is in the Students' Handbook for Senior School students and in the Parent Information Booklet for Preparatory School pupils. The Child Protection Officer, the house staff, Heads of Year, teachers and tutors have a particular role in raising student awareness.

Child protection issues are raised with students through the following:

- CPO talks each year to each year group/tutor group.
- It forms a part of the PSHE programme in tutorials and assemblies.
- Drama workshops.
- Chaplaincy and Willow (student support group).
- There is a clearly defined Anti Bullying Policy giving guidelines for students, teachers and parents.

These are designed to actively encourage resistance to abuse, confidence to complain if necessary and an attitude in students that to tell is right.

Senior students, who have been given positions of responsibility, will also receive briefing on child protection issues and the appropriate action to take should they receive any allegations of abuse.

### **The CPO and Medical Staff**

It should be understood that the medical staff are governed by their own code of professional ethics and that medical confidentiality is to be respected. The CPO may need to refer for advice to the medical staff but should not expect disclosures to be forthcoming. Where there is liaison between medical staff and the CPO, it will be the CPO who communicates with parents.

## **Child Protection Procedures**

Child abuse may take many forms: it can be both verbal and physical. Neglect, emotional deprivation, bullying and sexual abuse all indicate a child is at risk.

- If a member of staff has a child protection concern about a student, no matter how small, s/he should complete a purple Child Protection Referral Form, available in the Staff Rooms of both schools and on the K Drive. This form should then be given to the CPO of the relevant school or in the EYFS setting to be kept on file and will assist in building up a profile should one begin to emerge.
- In the EYFS setting, the CPO should inform ISI 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. They should inform ISI as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within

14 days. The CPO will notify the local child protection agency of any serious accident or serious injury to or the death of any child whilst in their care and act on any advice given.

- Students may approach any member of staff with whom they feel they have a good relationship.
- Although staff need to reassure the child, it is imperative that they do not ask any leading questions. Confidentiality is also essential amongst staff.
- Staff should make it clear to a student making a disclosure that confidentiality cannot be maintained as the CPO must be informed. At no point should the member of staff guarantee the child that they will not relay the information to the CPO.
- If the conversation indicates that the child may be at risk in any way, it is the legal responsibility of that member of staff to inform the CPO immediately.
- If abuse is alleged, a detailed written report must be made and signed by the adult (to whom the child has disclosed) and submitted to the CPO who will inform the Social Services Department within 24 hours. Precise documentation is vital. In all cases, other than where it is the Principal that is accused of abuse, the Principal will be kept informed by the CPO as appropriate.
- Staff must report to the CPO, the Principal, or LADO, any concern or allegation about school practices or the behaviour of colleagues which are likely to put students at risk of abuse or other serious harm. It is implicit in the school's ethos that they should feel confident in reporting such issues in good faith and immune from any retribution or disciplinary action in these cases.
- If the CPO is accused of abuse, the Principal would inform the Chairman of Governors and contact Social Services.
- If the Principal is accused of abuse, the Chairman of Governors should be notified, who will liaise with the CPO and notify Social Services.
- If a member of the boarding staff is accused and suspended pending an investigation, then the school will make arrangements for that person to be housed off site.
- Where a student is suspected of abuse, a decision will be made by the Principal whether to suspend the student pending investigation. Procedures will be followed as with all cases of abuse and the case referred immediately to Essex Safeguarding.

Any complaint of abuse will be independently investigated by Social Services, involving the police as necessary. In any instances of serious harm, the police should be notified from the outset. Appropriate arrangements will be made with the Social Services Department for counselling the child.

In cases involving possible physical injury or infection, referral of the child to a doctor will be made by the Principal and may be made in co-operation with Social Services.

If for any reason the Principal has not acted and neither has Social Services, students may contact directly Social Services by writing to them at:

**Essex Safeguarding Children Board**

**PO Box 11**

**County Hall**

**Chelmsford**

**Essex CM1 1LX**

**Tel: 01245 430 307**

In the case of a boarder in the school any concerns can be reported directly to Ofsted:

**enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk**

**0845 601 4772**

**0845 640 4046**

Whilst it is possible for students, or staff, to make false allegations of child abuse, all allegations must be treated seriously. If the statements are found to be untrue at a later date, it may be an indication of the individual's need for help in other ways.

All staff are in a position to notice children at risk. The criteria may vary but the key indicator is change. This could be in attitude or behaviour, the need for attention, or social withdrawal.

## **Recognising Abuse**

### **Identifying abuse**

Because of their day-to-day contact with individual children, teachers and others working at New Hall are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or developmental problems. Any unusual physical markings may be apparent, particularly when children change their clothes for physical education and sports activities. Possible indicators of physical neglect, such as inadequate clothing, poor growth, hunger or apparently deficient nutrition, and of emotional abuse, such as excessive dependence or attention-seeking, may be noticeable. Sexual abuse may exhibit physical signs, or lead to a substantial behavioural change, including precocity or social withdrawal. These signs, and others, can do no more than give rise to suspicion - they are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred. However, staff should be alert to all such signs.

### **Signs and Symptoms of Abuse**

#### **1. Emotional abuse**

Children suffering from emotional abuse may exhibit these behavioural symptoms:

- excessively clingy or attention-seeking behaviour
- low self-esteem
- apathy
- be fearful or socially withdrawn
- constantly seek to please
- be over-ready to relate to anyone, even strangers

Where emotional abuse is suspected, it is important to seek help for the child.

## 2. Neglect and delay in growth (failure to thrive)

Warning signs include:

- poor growth for which no medical cause is found, with a dramatic improvement on a normal diet away from home
- unkempt, dirty appearance
- medical needs of child unmet - failure to seek medical advice for illness, missed immunisations
- developmental delay
- lack of social responsiveness
- self-stimulating behaviours such as head banging or rocking
- repeated failure to prevent (accidental) injury

## 3. Sexual Abuse

Warning signs include:

### 3.1 Behaviour with sexual overtones:

- explicit or frequent sexual preoccupation in talk and play
- sexually-provocative relationships with adults
- hinting at sexual activity or secrets through words, play or drawings
- sexual activity between young people may be a sign that one or more of them have been victims of abuse

### 3.2 General:

- withdrawn, fearful or aggressive behaviour towards peers or adults
- running away from home
- suicide attempts and self-mutilation
- child psychiatric problems, including behaviour problems, social withdrawal, onset of wetting or soiling, severe sleep disturbances
- inappropriate displays of affection between fathers/daughters, mothers/sons - e.g. flirtatious or seductive behaviour, very possessive fathers who appear over-involved with their daughters
- learning problems or poor concentration (NB for some sexually abused children, school may be a haven: they arrive early, are reluctant to leave and perform well)
- marked reluctance to participate in physical activity or to change clothes for PE, etc.

### 3.3 Physical manifestations:

- pain on passing urine, recurrent urinary tract infections

## 4. Physical Abuse

All children incur bruising as part of their normal play and development but warning signs include:

- bruises
- bites
- scars
- fractures
- some marks may seem insignificant by themselves but repeated injuries even of a very minor nature may be symptomatic

## Missing Students

Registers of tutor groups in the Senior School and classes in the Preparatory School must be completed and sent to Reception by 9.30am and 2.30pm. If the staff do not register via their laptops using the SERCO system then a paper copy must be received by Reception by these times.

All staff must take a register each lesson. If a student is missing from a lesson staff should call Reception or use SERCO and the information will be passed automatically to Reception. They will contact the Health Centre. If a student is not in the care of the Health Centre they will contact the HoY or the Housemistress/master. If necessary the Vice Principal (pastoral), Headteacher of the Preparatory School or the Principal will be involved and will take appropriate action.

Within the boarding houses, house staff should have a signing in and out book for boarders appropriate to their age.

A register of boarders should be completed in the morning, during the evening, formally and informally and a check made before bedtime.

If a Senior School student is missing, the Vice Principal (pastoral) must be informed as soon as possible. If a pupil is missing in the Preparatory School, the Headteacher or Deputy Head must be informed as soon as possible.

House staff should keep a record of all mobile telephone numbers of students.

A record must be kept of all such incidents, including the action taken and the reasons given by the student for being missing.

## Guidelines for staff

See also guidelines for house staff (in Residents Handbook).

- Staff should rarely need to touch students. If any form of manual/physical touching is required it should be provided openly. If a student has to be restrained in order to protect themselves or others from harm, another member of staff should be called if possible. Non physical approaches should be tried first, e.g. talking to them, by asking them not to move if they are injured, by standing in the way. If restraint has to be used it should be the minimum necessary for their safety. Whatever the circumstances physical restraint must be appropriate and reasonable.
- In sporting situations, manual/physical touching should be according to guidelines provided by the appropriate national governing body.
- Staff need to be aware of the risks related to one-to-one student/staff situations. Staff are reminded that a one-to-one conversation behind closed doors may carry risks and unless required should be avoided. Should such a conversation be necessary, for example during timetabled one-to-one lessons or an essential car journey, it should be conducted in a setting which simultaneously offers privacy, but also is observable by others, e.g. teaching in a room with a window onto a public area, sitting the child in a back seat of a car.

- Staff should be wary of using electronic communications with students other than for work related issues (e.g. emailing course work). Social interaction with current students on social network sites (e.g. Facebook) must be avoided.
- A member of staff may receive a letter, poem or other material from a student that causes concern as to how the student sees her/his relations with the member of staff, or about the feelings expressed. In such a case, the member of staff should inform the CPO at once and hand over the material.
- Prudence should be exercised in issuing staff personal telephone numbers to students and numbers should only be given if other communication channels are not available or appropriate.
- In all situations common sense is the best guide. If in doubt contact the CPO or the Principal/Headteacher.

<b>Important Contact Details:</b>
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**New Hall School**

Reception	01245 467 588
Child Protection Officer/Vice Principal (pastoral)	01245 467 588 ext 426
Head of Preparatory School	01245 467 588 ext 277

**Essex Social Services (referrals)**

Office hours	0845 603 7634
Out of office hours	0845 606 1212

<b>Essex Safeguarding Children Boards</b>	01245 506 641
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<b>Essex Safeguarding Advisory Service</b>	01245 436 748
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<b>Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)</b>	0300 123 1111
	PO Box 181
	Darlington
	DL1 9FA

<b>NSPCC</b>	Childline	0800 1111
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