

## CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

The following policies relate to Child Protection Procedures at Riddlesworth Hall. It is the duty of all staff to read and familiarise themselves with these policies.

### RIDDLESWORTH HALL

### CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:**

Code of Conduct for Staff Policy.

Safe Recruiting Safeguarding Standards

Child Protection – Prefect Policy

Policy on Procedures when a Member of Staff, Volunteer, Headmaster (CPO) or Principal faces allegations of abuse.

Policy in the Event of a Student Going Missing.

Policy for Whistleblowing Procedures

### STATEMENT OF INTENT

The safety and well being of all our pupils at Riddlesworth Hall School is our highest priority. Our business is to know everyone as an individual and to provide a secure and caring environment, so that every pupil can learn in safety. We expect respect, good manners and fair play to be shown by everyone so that every pupil can develop their full potential and feel positive about themselves as an individual. All pupils should care for and support each other. This policy also applies to members of the EYFS and boarders.

### WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

The NSPCC defines child abuse as:

*“Child abuse is the term used when an adult harms a child or a young person under the age of 18.....Child abuse can take four forms, all of which can cause long term damage to a child: physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and child sexual abuse. Bullying and domestic violence are also forms of child abuse.*

*“A child may be experiencing abuse if he or she is:*

- *Frequently dirty, hungry or inadequately dressed*
- *Left in unsafe situations, or without medical attention*
- *Constantly “put down,” insulted, sworn at or humiliated*

- *Seems afraid of parents or carers*
- *Severely bruised or injured*
- *Displays sexual behaviour which doesn't seem appropriate for their age*
- *Growing up in a home where there is domestic violence*
- *Living with parents or carers involved in serious drug or alcohol abuse*

*“Remember, this list does not cover every child abuse possibility. You may have seen other things in the child’s behaviour or circumstances that worry you.*

*“Abuse is always wrong and it is never the young person’s fault.”*

## SYMPTONS

The NSPCC lists some of the signs and behaviours which may indicate that a child is being abused:

- repeated minor injuries
- children who are dirty, smelly, poorly clothed or who appear underfed
- children who have lingering illnesses which are not attended to, deterioration in school work, or significant changes in behaviour, aggressive behaviour, severe tantrums
- an air of 'detachment' or 'don't care' attitude
- overly compliant behaviour
- a 'watchful attitude'
- sexually explicit behaviour (e.g. playing games and showing awareness which is inappropriate for the child's age), continual open masturbation, aggressive and inappropriate sex play
- a child who is reluctant to go home, or is kept away from school for no apparent reason
- does not trust adults, particularly those who are close
- 'tummy pains' with no medical reason
- eating problems, including over-eating, loss of appetite
- disturbed sleep, nightmares, bed wetting
- running away from home, suicide attempts
- self inflicted wounds
- reverting to younger behaviour
- depression, withdrawal
- relationships between child and adults which are secretive and exclude others
- pregnancy

These signs are not evidence themselves; but may be a warning, particularly if a child exhibits several of them or a pattern emerges. It is important to remember that there may be other explanations for a child showing such signs. Abuse is not easy to diagnose, even for experts.

### CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER

The Headmaster, Mr Paul Cochrane has been fully trained for the demands of his role in child protection and inter-Agency working. He regularly attends courses with other child support agencies to ensure that he remains conversant with best practice. He undergoes refresher training every two years. He maintains close links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for] and reports at least once a year to the SMT on the child protection issues outlined above.

The school's records on child protection are kept locked in the Office in the School and are separated from routine pupil records. Access is restricted to the CPO and the Principal.

### EYFS

Whilst all members of the EYFS are vigilant to the signs of abuse, Mr Paul Cochrane (CPO) is the designated practitioner who will take lead responsibility for the setting. Mr Cochrane will report to Ofsted, within 14 days, any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children at the premises (whether the 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.

### BOARDERS

If a member of boarding staff is suspended pending an investigation of a child protection nature, they will be asked to vacate their School accommodation and will be moved to the School Cottage in Hall Lane Road, Barnardiston, Suffolk.

### TRANSPARENCY

#### Riddlesworth

Hall School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Carers, Parents and Social Workers have an important role in supporting the School. Copies of this policy, together with our other policies relating to issues of child protection are available to Carers, Parents and Social Workers, and we hope that they will always feel able to take up any issues or worries that they may have with the school. We will never ignore an allegation of child abuse and will always investigate any concerns thoroughly. Open communications are essential.

### SAFER EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

Riddlesworth Hall School follows the Government's recommendations for the safer recruitment and employment of staff who work with children. All members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at the school, including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff,

and visiting staff, such as musicians and sports coaches, are checked with the Criminal Records Bureau before starting work. Our policies are reviewed by The Principal annually.

## REPORTING

The CPO will ensure that a report is made to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) within one month of leaving the School, of any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he / she is considered unsuitable to work with children. The address for referrals is PO Box 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA (tel number 0300 123 111). The Principal will make the necessary checks to ensure this referral is made in a timely manner.

## RAISING AWARENESS

The Headmaster (Mr Paul Cochrane) is appointed person in charge for Child Protection issues and is the Designated Child Protection Officer. Mr Cochrane is fully trained and this qualification is updated at least every two years. In addition, all staff and volunteers are trained in Child Protection which is updated at least every three years. Temporary staff will be made aware of the School's policy prior to working at the School. *The SMT formally consider child protection issues once a year, with day to day issues being delegated to the Headmaster. The Principal (Colonel Keith Boulter) is also fully trained as a CPO and is responsible for reviewing the procedures for and the efficiency with which the child protection duties have been discharged.*

- *Ensuring that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay.*
- *Approving amendments to child protection arrangements in the light of changing Regulations or recommended best practice.*

## INDUCTION AND TRAINING

Every new member of staff, including part-timers, temporary, visiting and contract staff working in school, receives basic training on their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and bullying and on the procedures for recording and referring any concerns to the Child Protection Officer. Everyone attends refresher training at least every three years. Training in child protection is an important part of the induction process. More detail is set out in our policy on Induction of New Staff and Volunteers in Child Protection

## INTERACTION WITH PUPILS: MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF

New members of staff and volunteers are given copies of the school's policy on Interaction with Pupils: Model Code of Conduct for Staff. Discussion of the procedures set out in that document forms a vital part of our induction procedures. The model code of conduct provides guidance for teachers and other members of staff when faced with handling any issue relating to child abuse. It is not intended to be a substitute for proper training.

Mr Paul Cochrane, our designated Child Protection Officer, who has received specialist training in this topic, should always be informed if a member of staff has any concerns.

The code is placed on the agenda of a staff meeting once a year, so that it can be reviewed and updated by the staff themselves, before being sent to the Principal for approval.

### RAISING AWARENESS WITH PUPILS

Riddlesworth Hall School prides itself on its culture of open and effective communication between staff and pupils, and on its excellent pastoral support structures. We prepare all of our pupils to make reasoned, informed choices, judgments and decisions. Time is allocated in PSHE and group time for discussion of child abuse and in developing in pupils the confidence which they require to recognise abuse and to stay safe.

All pupils know that there are adults to whom they can turn to if they are worried. In particular:

- All pupils have access to a telephone helpline, enabling them to call for support from outside agencies such as Kidscape, The Samaritans and Childline, in private.
- Our Policy for Pupils on Confidentiality, which deals with the issue in more depth, is explained to all pupils.

### PROMOTION OF WELFARE

The ethos of Riddlesworth Hall School is to promote social and moral well-being, to teach pupils to take care of and to value themselves, and to think in terms of making a positive contribution to society as adults. Our pupils take part in a charitable activities.

### EQUAL TREATMENT

Riddlesworth Hall School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of an individual's race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or social background.

We aim to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each student.

### BULLYING

Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable.

## COMPLAINTS

We hope that children will not have any complaints about our school; but copies of the School's complaints procedure are enclosed with the School Handbook, a copy of which is sent to carers and parents upon registration at the School.

## DECISION ON WHETHER OR NOT TO MAKE A REFERRAL

When deciding whether to make a referral, following an allegation or suspicion of abuse, the Head or Principal will not make their own decision over what appears to be a borderline case, but rather the concerns will be discussed with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) who will give further advice.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The safety and well-being of every pupil at Riddlesworth Hall Preparatory School is of paramount importance. Every child has the right to grow up and to live in a safe environment. All staff have a duty to protect pupils from abuse and bullying and to promote their well-being.

Every member of staff should read this code of conduct in conjunction with Riddlesworth Hall Preparatory School's Statement on Child Protection Policy, our Policy for Pupils on Confidentiality Issues and our Policy on Checking Employees, Temporary Workers, Governors, Parent Helpers and Contractors. Staff are invited to review this code of conduct annually.

### **SAFER RECRUITMENT**

Riddlesworth Hall Preparatory School follows the Government's guidelines for the safer employment of staff who work with children. We obtain enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) certificates on all new members of staff, temporary staff, visiting and peripatetic staff. Parent helpers who have regular unsupervised access to children are also required to have up to date CRB certificates. CRB certificates are also required for the adult members of the families of members of staff who are accommodated on site. More details are set out in Policy on Checking Employees, Temporary Workers, Governors, Parent Helpers and Contractors.

New staff receive child protection training as part of their induction process. This training is repeated at not more than three yearly intervals.

### **CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER**

Mr Paul Cochrane (Headmaster) is Riddlesworth Hall Preparatory School's Child Protection Officer (CPO). He has been fully trained for the demands of this role and inter-Agency working. He regularly attends courses with other child support agencies to ensure that he remains conversant with best practice. He undergoes refresher training every two years, and maintains close links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for Norfolk. He reports at least once a year to the Principal on child protection issues.

The school's records on child protection are kept locked in the Headmaster's office, and are separated from routine pupil records. Access is restricted to the Headmaster.

### **PROMOTING AWARENESS**

Our curriculum and pastoral systems are designed to foster the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all our pupils. All our teaching staff play a vital role in this process, helping to ensure that all of our pupils relate well to one another and feel safe and comfortable within the school. We expect all the teaching and medical staff to lead by example, and to play a full part in promoting an awareness that is appropriate to their age

amongst all our pupils on issues relating to health, safety and well-being. All the staff, including all non-teaching staff, have an important role in insisting that our pupils always adhere to the standards of behaviour set out in our behaviour policy and in enforcing our anti-bullying policy.

Time is allocated in PSHE and form time to discussions of what constitutes appropriate behaviour and on why bullying and lack of respect for others is never right. Assemblies, drama and RE lessons are used to promote tolerance and mutual respect and understanding.

## INTERACTION WITH PUPILS

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 the School Chaplain or a member of the teaching or pastoral staff.

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 or personal email. 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 [himself/herself] or on 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 Headmaster who will decide what to do next.

## IF A PUPIL REPORTS ABUSE

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 ChildLine (details are given

in the Policy for Pupils on Confidentiality Issues. 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 CPO 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, (drawing on the policy for pupils on confidentiality issues as necessary),
- Explain that any adult member of staff is obliged to inform the CPO, if there child protection or safeguarding issues are involved, in order that specialist help can be arranged.
- Encourage the pupil to speak directly to the CPO,
- 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 – or is involved - the Principal 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. In serious cases, the Police should be informed from the outset.

#### 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.

#### ACTION TO PROTECT THE CHILD

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.

In the case of an allegation being made by the child concerned or by a third party it is important to remember that:

- Defendants have been acquitted where leading questioning or inappropriate investigation has been proven.
- It is vital that subsequent enquiries should not be prejudiced by detailed questioning in school.

The Headmaster will consider how best to support and monitor the pupil concerned through any process of investigation, liaising closely with parents, carers, Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), or other agencies involved to identify the support strategies that will be appropriate.

### Whistle-Blowing

If a teacher or member of staff has concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff towards a pupil, he or she should report it at once to the Headmaster. Any concern will be thoroughly investigated under the school's whistle-blowing procedures. If there is evidence of criminal activity, the Police will always be informed. Wherever possible, and subject to the rights of the pupil, the member of staff will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. No one who reports a genuine concern in good faith needs to fear retribution.

### Confidentiality

A member of staff who uses the whistle-blowing procedure is entitled to have his/her name protected from being disclosed by the Headmaster to the alleged perpetrator, without his/her prior approval. However, it has to be recognised that his/her evidence may be required by the Police to be used in any criminal proceedings.

### WHERE A MEMBER OF STAFF HAS CONCERNS ABOUT A PUPIL

If a teacher or other member of staff has concerns about any pupil or incident that touches upon child protection issues, he or she should report them as soon as possible to the Headmaster.

### DEFINITION OF ABUSE

Abuse can affect children of all ages, sexes, different races and cultures and all social classes. In some cases behaviours or physical injuries suggest clearly that abuse is occurring but in others the signs will be less apparent.

Four categories of abuse are recognised in legislation:

- physical abuse
- neglect
- emotional abuse

- sexual abuse

The NSPCC defines child abuse as:

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*“A child may be experiencing abuse if he or she is:*

- *Frequently dirty, hungry or inadequately dressed*
- *Left in unsafe situations, or without medical attention*
- *Constantly “put down,” insulted, sworn at or humiliated*
- *Seems afraid of parents or carers*
- *Severely bruised or injured*
- *Displays sexual behaviour which doesn't seem appropriate for their age*
- *Growing up in a home where there is domestic violence*
- *Living with parents or carers involved in serious drug or alcohol abuse”*

*“Remember, this list does not cover every child abuse possibility. You may have seen other things in the child's behaviour in circumstances that worry you.”*

*“Abuse is always wrong and it is never the young person's fault.”*

The severity of impact on a child is believed to increase the longer the abuse continues, the more extensive the abuse, and the older the child.

## SYMPTONS

The NSPCC lists some of the signs and behaviours which may indicate that a child is being abused:

- repeated minor injuries
- children who are dirty, smelly, poorly clothed or who appear underfed
- children who have lingering illnesses which are not attended to, deterioration in school work, or significant changes in behaviour, aggressive behaviour, severe tantrums
- an air of 'detachment' or 'don't care' attitude
- overly compliant behaviour
- a 'watchful attitude'
- sexually explicit behaviour (e.g. playing games and showing awareness which is inappropriate for the child's age), continual open masturbation, aggressive and inappropriate sex play
- a child who is reluctant to go home, or is kept away from school for no apparent reason
- does not trust adults, particularly those who are close
- 'tummy pains' with no medical reason
- eating problems, including over-eating, loss of appetite

- disturbed sleep, nightmares, bed wetting
- running away from home, suicide attempts
- self inflicted wounds
- reverting to younger behaviour
- depression, withdrawal
- relationships between child and adults which are secretive and exclude others
- pregnancy

These signs are not evidence themselves; but may be a warning, particularly if a child exhibits several of them or a pattern emerges. It is important to remember that there may be other explanations for a child showing such signs. Abuse is not easy to diagnose, even for experts.

### PARENTS

In general, we believe at Riddlesworth Hall Preparatory 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 of this nature 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 them 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).

### REMEMBER

Your aim should be to establish as quickly and accurately as possible the details of the injury or abuse. Questioning should be brief and gentle using open rather than closed questions ("How did it happen?" rather than "Did [ ] hit you?"). Keep a note of what you heard and saw.

**BETTER STILL . . . . .** with care and sensitivity, pass the pupil to the Headmaster immediately.

**Child protection is always our top priority.**

## **SAFE RECRUITING POLICY - SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS**

*This document has been produced taking advice from the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board and taking into account the publication 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education which came into force on 1 January 2007. There are amendments to the Act which came into force on 1 May 2007 and these have been used to update the previous guidelines.*

- 1 Pre-interview planning:
  - a. Timetable decided
  - b. Job Specification prepared
  
- 2 Vacancy advertised
  - a. Advert includes paragraph about Riddlesworth Hall being committed to promoting the welfare of children.
  
- 3 Applications received
  - a. Any gaps in employment, anomalies or discrepancies explored with candidate if short-listed.
  
- 4 Short-list prepared and candidates advised that references will be taken up.
  - a. Request references using the letter asking specific questions and including a statement about liability of accuracy. Every request will include:
    - i. Referee's relationship with candidate and how long known to them, in what capacity.
    - ii. Whether satisfied the applicant has ability and is suitable to perform the job in question and has demonstrated their ability to meet the person specification.
    - iii. Ask for specific comments about the persons suitability for the post and how they have demonstrated their ability to meet the person specification.
    - iv. Whether referee is completely satisfied that candidate is suitable to work with children and if not, to provide specific details of concerns and reasons why.
    - v. Confirmation of details of applicant's current post, salary and sick record.
    - vi. Specific verifiable comments on applicants performance history and conduct.
    - vii. Details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to which have involved issues relating to safety and welfare of young people, including any where the disciplinary sanction has expired and the outcomes of those.
    - viii. Details of any allegations or concerns that have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety or welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards young people, and the outcomes of those concerns ie whether allegations or concerns were investigated, the conclusion reached and how matter was resolved.
    - ix. Referee reminding that they have a responsibility to ensure the reference is accurate and does not contain any material misstatement or

omission. They should provide relevant factual content that could be discussed with the individuals.

- 5 Receive references
  - a. Check against information on application form and note any concern or discrepancy to take up with candidate at interview.
  - b. References should be followed up with a telephone call.
- 6 Invitation to interview
  - a. Include itinerary for the day and any other relevant information.
- 7 Interview
  - a. All recruitment panels to have a minimum of two interviewers, one of who is SG trained / aware.
  - b. All interviews are fact to face even if there is only one candidate. Phone interviews are not allowed.
  - c. Notes are made and destroyed after 6 months; successful candidate's notes held on P file indefinitely.
  - d. Interviews should be carried out with regard to the 'Warner Interviewing'. Warner recommends that employers should include the following questions that would probe candidates about their:
    - i. Personal life
    - ii. Attitudes and motivations
    - iii. Suitability to work with the client group

Questions may focus around attitudes to control and punishment of children and the stability of the candidates' emotional and sexual relationships. All answers are recorded.

- 8 Conditional offer of appointment
  - a. Offer of appointment is made conditional on satisfactory completion of the following:
    - i. References (if not already obtained)
    - ii. Identity – only a passport, driving licence or birth certificate are acceptable. In addition, evidence of current address must be seen (utility bill, bank statement or similar).
    - iii. Qualifications
    - iv. CRB disclosure
    - v. Health questionnaire
- 9 Upon receipt of all of the above, a contract is issued.

## PREFECT POLICY

The National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools states that our prefect system must safeguard and promote individual boarders welfare.

This policy is aimed specifically at Standard 13 of the Minimum Standards.

This policy should be read in conjunction with related school policy and practice guidelines such as –

- Policy on Discipline
- Sanctions Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Complaints Policy

Within the school it has long been a tradition that prefects are solely selected on the basis of their suitability for the duties and the responsibilities of the role.

The main roles and responsibilities of the prefect role are –

- To provide younger boarders with good role models.
- To monitor and report any inappropriate behaviour amongst the student group.

The duties, responsibilities and any powers accorded prefects do not in any way substitute for the presence and authority of adult teaching and non-teaching staff.

Within the school the prefect system allows boarders to experience and take on roles of leadership and responsibility.

Prefects within the school have limited but important power over other students and boarders. Research into the causes of mistreatment within boarding schools has shown a link between those who are in a position of power and an abuse of that power. Prefects have the right, and a responsibility, to raise *genuinely* held concerns about abuses of power and trust by anyone within the school community.

A prefect who in good faith reports significant concerns, allegations or suspicions of circumstances, situations or the behaviour of others which is likely to put a child's safety or welfare at risk will never be victimized following their disclosure.

Prefects who contact an adult in order to report concerns must be prepared for their concerns to be taken further. No prefect can expect their concerns to be kept confidential but they can be reassured that they will not be victimized subsequently. Raising concerns is rooted in the need to keep children and young people safe, it is **not** about getting other people into trouble.

The school takes very seriously the need to adopt anti-bullying strategies and the important role that prefects play in this work. Prefects will be given an induction into their prefect role by existing post holders.

Prefect vigilance and integrity is one of the most potent deterrents against bullying. Children and young people who bully will then know that it will be dealt with, and the victims of bullying will have confidence for the same reason.

It is therefore important that within the school we create a culture and communication network where children and young people are easily able to confide to staff if they are being bullied.

Research has shown that bullying is most likely to take place when students are in unsupervised settings. Within the school the structure and timing of activities is given a high priority and therefore additional vigilance is needed during free time for students. Prefects take a significant degree of responsibility for maintaining appropriate behaviour within the student group.

Incidents of bullying have been specifically linked to unsupervised settings such as playtime, time before and after school and study and when pupils are making their way to and from school. Prefects are given the authority within the school to challenge and report incidents of bullying both within and outside of the school.

A prefect's response to inappropriate behaviour from younger and more junior pupils will be positive, respectful and non-confrontational. Prefects will make it clear to the pupil through their language that it is the behaviour we disapprove of, not the pupil himself or herself.

It is a prefect's responsibility to respond to allegations of serious bullying or abuse. In such circumstances prefects are advised to seek appropriate adult help immediately.

## **PROCEDURES WHEN A MEMBER OF STAFF FACES ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Allegations that a member of staff has abused a pupil or pupils either inside the school premises or during a school trip or visit could be made by:

- Parents
- The abused pupil
- Other members of staff
- Other pupils
- The Police or Social Services
- A third party

An allegation of such seriousness would normally be made directly to the Headmaster; but if another member of staff is told first, he/she will ensure that the Headmaster is informed immediately.

If the Headmaster is unavailable – or is involved - the Principal (who is also a CPO) should be told at once.

### **ANONYMOUS ALLEGATIONS**

If we are faced with an anonymous allegation of child abuse which names both a member of staff and a child, we will handle it in exactly the same way as if we knew the identity of the person making the allegation. Where the allegation names the member of staff; but not the pupil, we will normally interview the member of staff, and ask for his or her version of events. It could be appropriate to establish a mentoring or review programme for that individual, or to provide him or her with further training. A record would be kept on the individual's personal file.

### **THE FIRST RESPONSE**

We will respond promptly and sensitively to the legitimate concerns of the victim and his or her family. We undertake to:

- Take any allegation of abuse, involving a member of staff, very seriously,
- Establish the facts before jumping to any conclusion,
- Inform the member of staff concerned honestly of the allegation that has been made, and advise him or her to contact their Trade Union or Professional Association for advice and support,
- Inform the child's parents in confidence, inviting them to maintain confidentiality whilst the investigation takes place, unless the allegation involves the parents, in which case we will contact the Social Services before making contact.

### **THE NEXT STEP**

Although a formal investigation is a matter for specialists, where the facts suggest that there may be reasonable grounds for suspecting actual abuse, or grooming of a child, or other criminal behaviour, we will always:

- Invite the police to conduct the investigation,
- Involve the Local Safeguarding Childrens Board (LSCB), 01473 299 669 or 08456 023023.
- Consider suspending the member of staff (or volunteer) concerned.

### SUPPORT FOR THE PUPIL

Our priority is to safeguard the young people in our care. We will give all the support that we can to a pupil who has been abused. The Headmaster, the school's Child Protection Officer (CPO), together with the Principal, Colonel Boulter, will consider how best to support and monitor the pupil concerned through any process of investigation, liaising closely with parents, guardians, Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), or other agencies involved to identify the support strategies that will be appropriate.

### SUSPENSION

Suspension of a member of staff is a neutral act and does not imply that any judgement has been reached about his or her conduct. Even so, it is a serious step, and we will take legal advice beforehand, and will normally only suspend a member of staff where:

- There is a serious risk of harm (or further harm) to the child,
- The allegations are so serious as to constitute grounds for dismissal, if proven,
- The police are investigating allegations of criminal misconduct.

We recognise fully that we have a duty of care towards all of our staff, and we will always:

- Keep an open mind until a conclusion has been reached.
- Interview a member of staff before suspending him or her.
- Keep him or her informed of progress of the investigation.

Any member of staff who is invited to a meeting whose outcome is likely to result in his or her suspension, is entitled to be accompanied by a friend [or Trade Union representative].

Boarding school, or other accommodated staff who are suspended will be required to remain off site for the duration of their suspension. In the case of staff who do not have other accommodation, a room will be provided at Hall Lane Cottages in Barnardiston.

## ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION

We will always consider whether an alternative to suspension might be appropriate. Possibilities include:

- Sending the member of staff on leave,
- Giving him or her non-contact duties,
- Ensuring that a second adult is always present in the classroom when he or she teaches.

## IF THE MEMBER OF STAFF RESIGNS

The resignation of a member of staff or volunteer mid-way through an investigation would not lead to the investigation being abandoned. Our policy is always to complete every investigation into allegations of child abuse and regard will be taken of the requirement to report to the ISA if applicable.

## COMPROMISE AGREEMENTS

The policy at Riddlesworth Hall Preparatory School is to follow the DCSF guidance set out in “Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education” on the use of compromise agreements in cases of child abuse which is:

*“Compromise agreements, by which a person agrees to resign, and a school.. ... agrees not to pursue disciplinary action, and both parties agree a form of words to be used in any future reference, must not be used in these cases. In any case, such an agreement will not prevent a thorough police investigation where that is appropriate. Nor can it override the statutory duty to make a referral to ISA where circumstances require it”*

## LENGTH OF INVESTIGATORY PROCESS

We recognise that everyone’s interests are served by completing any investigatory process as swiftly as possible. Riddlesworth Hall Preparatory School is a small community and we will aim to spend as little time as is compatible with fair and impartial processes on the investigatory process. We would expect almost every case to be completed within one month.

## REFERRAL TO THE INDEPENDENT SAFEGUARDING AUTHORITY

Like all schools, we have a statutory legal duty to refer an individual, where there is the risk that he or she may harm, or has caused harm to children, to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) within 14 days of the individual’s dismissal or resignation because he or she has been considered unsuitable to work with children. Reports concerning members of staff or volunteers are normally made by the CPO. If the CPO is involved, the report is made by the Principal.

The referral form can be downloaded from the ISA website on ([www.isa-gov.org.uk](http://www.isa-gov.org.uk)). The school plays no part in the subsequent process of barring individuals from working with

children and/or vulnerable adults. We also have a legal duty to respond to any requests for information that we receive from the ISA at any time.

### RECORDING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

We will record all allegations of abuse, and our subsequent actions, including any disciplinary actions, on an individual's file. A copy will be given to the individual and he or she will be told that the record will be retained until he or she reaches statutory retirement age, or for ten years, if that is longer.

### HANDLING UNFOUNDED OR UNSUBSTANTIATED ALLEGATIONS

#### The Child

A child who has been the centre of unfounded or unsubstantiated allegations of child abuse needs professional help in dealing with the aftermath. We will liaise closely with the LSCB to set up a professional programme that best meets his or her needs, which may involve the Adolescent Mental Health Services and an Educational Psychologist, as well as support from the School Counsellor. We shall be mindful of the possibility that the allegation of abuse was an act of displacement, masking abuse that is actually occurring within the child's own family and/or community.

However much support the child may need in such circumstances; we need to be sensitive to the possibility that the aftermath of an unfounded allegation of abuse may result in the irretrievable breakdown of the relationship with the teacher. In such circumstances, we may conclude that it is in the child's best interests to move to another school. We would do our best to help him/her to achieve as smooth a transition as possible, working closely with the parents or guardians.

#### The Member of Staff

A member of staff could be left at the end of an unfounded or unsubstantiated allegation of child abuse with severely diminished self-esteem, feeling isolated and vulnerable, all too conscious that colleagues might shun him/her on the grounds of "no smoke without fire". If issues of professional competency are involved, and though acquitted of child abuse, disciplinary issues are raised; we recognise that he or she is likely to need both professional and emotional help. We will undertake to arrange a mentoring programme in such circumstances, together with professional counselling outside the school community. A short sabbatical or period of re-training may be appropriate.

### ALLEGATION OF ABUSE OF A CHILD WHO IS NOT A PUPIL AT THE SCHOOL

If we were given information that suggested that a member of staff was abusing a child who was not a pupil at Riddlesworth Hall Preparatory School, we would immediately pass such information to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) to handle. We would then interview the member of staff and formally advise him/her of the allegations, making it clear that the school would not play any part in the investigatory process. He or she would be advised of the possibility of facing suspension, re-assignment to other duties etc in exactly the same way as if the allegation had involved a school pupil. If the allegation subsequently

proved to be unfounded, he or she would be given full support by the school in resuming his/her career.

#### ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING THE HEAD OR PRINCIPAL

The Principal should be told at once by the Deputy Head of any allegation involving the Headmaster. He will obtain legal advice before proceeding to the steps outlined above. The Headmaster will normally be suspended for the duration of the investigatory process and asked to vacate his school residence, and the Deputy Head will be made acting Head until the conclusion of the investigation and resolution of the issue. The Principal will become the CPO in the event of the Headmaster being stood down.

The Headmaster should similarly be told at once of any allegation involving the Principal and legal advice obtained. The Principal will normally be suspended for the duration of the investigatory process.

# MISSING CHILD POLICY

## PART ONE:

### INTRODUCTION

The welfare of all of our children at Riddlesworth Hall Preparatory 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 supervised the whole time that he or she is in our care.

### INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Our companion document, “Information for Parents of EYFS and Early Years Children” describes:

- The arrangements for handing over children to the care of their parents at the end of the day
- The qualifications of our staff and the arrangements for supervising the children whilst they are in school
- The arrangements for registering the children in both morning and afternoon
- The physical security measures which prevent unsupervised access to or exit from the building
- The supervision of the playground and the physical barriers that separate it from the rest of the school

The enhanced supervisory arrangements for outings involving our youngest children are set out in a detailed policy document: “Educational Visits for EYFS Children.” Both documents are on our web site and can be provided to parents on request. We review these policies regularly in order to satisfy ourselves that they are robust and effective. All new staff receive 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

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 Early Years 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) by reading to them
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within the Early Years Department, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms where a small child might hide
- Check the doors, gates for signs of entry/exit

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

- Inform the Headmaster
- 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 school at once
- The Headmaster would notify the Police
- The Headmaster would arrange for staff to search the rest of the school premises and grounds
- 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 Headmaster 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 Principal
- Ofsted would be informed
- 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
- The remaining children would be taken back to school
- Inform the Headmaster by mobile phone
- 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/ the school at once
- Contact the venue Manager and arrange a search
- Contact the Police
- The Child Protection Officer/Headmaster 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 Principal
- Ofsted would be informed
- 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 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 promise 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.
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## **PART TWO: PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF WHEN A CHILD IS NOT COLLECTED ON TIME**

If a child is not collected within half an hour of the agreed collection time, we will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers. If there is no answer, the Head of the Early Years Department will begin to call the emergency numbers for this child.

During this time, the child will be safely looked after.

If there is no response from the parents' or carers' contact numbers or the emergency numbers within a 3 hour period **the Headmaster will then make a decision whether to call the Social Care Duty Officer**. Social Care will make emergency arrangements for the child and will arrange for a visit to be made to the child's house and will check with the Police. We will make a full written report of the incident.

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

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## **PART THREE: SYSTEMS IN PLACE TO MINIMISE THE RISK OF BOARDERS GOING MISSING**

Boarding pupils are registered each morning by Form Teachers and in the evenings by Matrons in the 'House Boarding Register'.

If a boarder leaves the School during the day, they are required to sign out with Matron in the House Boarding Register. Boarding staff must inform the School Office as soon as possible if a pupil does not leave the House in the morning to go to School for any reason, such as illness. The School Office will ensure that the Form Teachers are aware of this and a note is made in the Register to ensure that all other teaching staff are aware of the absence.

Parents and guardians inform the School via telephone or email if their child will be absent from the Boarding House for any reason in the evening. The School Office will make a note of the absence in the Boarding Register.

Parents and guardians wishing to take a pupil out of School in the evening must inform House Staff beforehand and must come to the Boarding House when collecting and returning them. House staff will not permit a boarder to leave the House with anyone other than a parent or guardian, unless authorisation is given to the member of staff by a parent or guardian.

Staff will make informal checks on the whereabouts of each child in the House or School grounds throughout the evening.

Boarders are expected to sign out and sign back in when leaving and returning to School.

Boarding pupils are encouraged to spend time outside the House and the Main School Building, to take part in recreational activities and games. This will be at the discretion of House Staff, but younger boarders and children deemed to have an impaired awareness of their own personal safety will never be outside unless accompanied by a member of the boarding staff or a senior responsible boarder.

The clearly defined boundaries as to where children may and may not go whilst outside will be constantly reinforced, but all are expected to remain visible to boarding staff by using the front lawns and sports fields in the School grounds only. Children will not be allowed out in the School grounds after dusk unless playing sport under the supervision of a member of staff.

All pupils are checked ten minutes after their allotted 'lights out' time when they have gone to bed, so that staff can ensure that they are settled in their bedroom. Younger children are checked at regular intervals until they have gone to sleep.

Staff will check every bedroom, do a final head-count and re-check the Boarding Register as a last duty before they themselves retire.

In the mornings, each child is expected to see a member of the Boarding Staff during Bedroom Check time prior to going to breakfast.

Younger pupils, or those new to the School, will be accompanied to their classrooms or sent with an older, experienced boarder, at the staff's discretion.

Should a boarding child be perceived to be missing, the missing child procedure will be followed.

## **POLICY FOR WHISTLEBLOWING PROCEDURES**

### Introduction

**This policy arises out of both standard 3.4 and Appendix 1 within the standards of OFSTED. Standard 4 deals with complaints and representations and appendix 1 requires the school to have procedures in place for responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse.**

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with other related school policies and practice guidelines –

- Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Permissible Sanctions
- Code of Conduct
- Staff Disciplinary Policy

**In the standards document whistle blowing is defined as – “ A person who in good faith reports significant concerns, allegations or suspicions of circumstances, situations or the behaviour of others which is likely to put a child’s safety or welfare at risk.”**

**Some people within the school have considerable power over other adults and boarders. Research into the causes of abuse within residential settings has clearly shown a link between those who are in a position of power and an abuse of that power. It has been shown that staff were aware of abuses taking place, would not speak out for fear of victimisation from their bosses.**

**Following the Waterhouse Inquiry into abuse within children homes and residential schools in Wales, OFSTED required that every residential school have a so called “whistle blowers” charter.**

### Aims of the Policy

- 1.1 Staff and volunteers have the right, and a responsibility, to raise *genuinely* held concerns about abuses of power and trust by colleagues towards pupils.
- 1.2 This policy is designed to ensure that genuinely held concerns are raised, and effectively addressed, by people working for Riddlesworth Hall School on a paid and unpaid basis. This policy also covers other people who come into the school in an official role i.e. students on placement and inspectors from outside agencies.
- 1.3 A genuinely held concern might be about the following.
  - Illegal and unacceptable behaviour, for example a member of staff having a physical relationship with a student.
  - Misuse of school budgets.
  - Poor standards of physical and emotional care.
  - The “cover up” of a serious incident.
- 1.4 No-one exercising their right to raise a concern in good faith under this policy will be penalised for doing so. Any attempt to victimise staff, volunteers and students for raising genuine concerns, or to prevent such concerns being raised, will be regarded as a disciplinary matter.

- 1.5 This policy does not-
- Replace the Grievance Procedure.
  - Replace the school's Complaints Procedure.
  - Replace the schools Disciplinary Procedure.
  - Replace the Child Protection Policy.
  - Require staff, volunteers or students to prove that their suspicions are well-founded, however they must have reasonable grounds for their suspicions.
- 1.6 Under this policy managers are required to act promptly and appropriately when concerns have been raised.

### Personal Awareness and Social Context

- 2.1 However good we, and others, consider the practice at Riddlesworth Hall School, the school cannot work in isolation from the various scandals and inquiries that have impacted upon schools with residential provision. Parents and outside agencies are more demanding in their reassurances that practice is sound and safe.
- 2.2 Professional practice and behaviour towards children and young people has changed over the last 20 years. Similarly, the behaviour of a small number of abusive staff in other establishments has meant that all residential staff have had their practice reviewed.
- 2.3 Staff should read through the practice guidelines on the child protection issues of children attending a residential school and the discussions around the concept of created vulnerability.

### Who should a member of staff contact?

Everyone is encouraged to talk directly to their line manager about concerns without having to necessarily involve outside bodies. Within the school the Head of the school can always be directly contacted by any of his staff.

Similarly any member of staff or student can also directly contact the school Principal or Deputy Head

Staff and pupils are required under OFSTED to have access to the OFSTED. In practical terms this means having the address and phone number of the local OFSTED office which is –

#### **OFSTED**

**Building C, Cumberland Place, Nottingham NG1 6HJ**

**Tel. 08456 404040**

Staff can also “whistle-blow” to the school's Principal who is available at –

**Colonel Keith Boulter, Barnardiston Hall School, Nr Haverhill, Suffolk**

**Tel. 01440 786316**

People who contact another person in order to whistle blow must be prepared for their concerns to be taken further. No one can expect their concerns to be kept confidential but they can be reassured that they will not be victimized subsequently. Whistle blowing is rooted in the need to keep children and young people safe, it is **not** about getting other people into trouble.

An independent authority on whistle blowing the Public Concern at Work website can be found at – [www.pcaw.co.uk](http://www.pcaw.co.uk)

The website contains all relevant legislation, policy and publications for those concerned about malpractice. It provides free, professional and personal advice, a campaign to change policy, and provides a consultancy to employers.