



# Hopelands Preparatory School

## Child Protection Policy

At School, as in all other schools in the UK, we work within a legislative framework that seeks to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children (for example the Children Act 1989 and the Education Act 2002). We are committed to the principles that lie behind this legislation that are articulated in the 'Every Child Matters' initiative and we aim to achieve best practice in all areas of Child Protection.

Fundamental to this aim is the creation of a culture of openness throughout the school where all members of the community feel able to express their concerns and anxieties without fear of retaliation or humiliation and have confidence that they will receive a serious, sensitive and professional response from those in positions of responsibility.

The policy covers the following areas:

- Pupils' and parents' awareness
- Staff recruitment, employment and training
- Responsibilities and Procedures
- Action to be taken by staff
- Review
- Legislation and Guidance

### **Pupils' and parents' awareness**

Opportunities will be created, in PHSE (and other areas of the curriculum if appropriate), for pupils to develop an understanding of what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable behaviour on the part of others and to develop their own self-confidence and assertiveness.

This policy is drawn up in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures and will be published on the school website.

### **Staff recruitment, employment and training**

The School recruitment procedures, in accordance with ISSR (Independent School Standards Regulations), (see Staff Recruitment Policy) will have regard to current expert advice (e.g. NCSL) on advertising, scrutiny of applications, interviewing, references, personal documentation, CRB checks etc. The Head, Bursar and other staff involved in employing staff will be trained in these procedures.

The Head (Mrs Sheila Bradburn) and other designated person (Mrs Nina Prout) will undergo refresher Child Protection training at least every two years. This will be cascaded down to both new staff and existing staff at INSET training days at least every three years.

Staff will be encouraged to pay attention to Child Protection issues in all areas of School life for instance (but by no means exclusively) risk assessments for trips, planning of staff, organisation of external events and so on.

Staff should always ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil (for example, in one-to-one tuition, sports coaching, conveying a pupil by car, engaging in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil, and so on).

Any concerns about a member of staff's behaviour towards pupils will be dealt with under the School Staff Disciplinary Procedure, having particular regard to expert advice on Child Protection issues involving staff and to the legal obligation to report any possible offences.

### **Responsibilities and Procedures**

School's designated person responsible for Child Protection matters is the Head and other delegated person. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) designated practitioner responsible for Child Protection matters is the Head. The EYFS designated practitioner will liaise with local statutory agencies, as appropriate. The contact details for the local authority can be found at the bottom of this policy. The safety of the child is paramount and if a member of staff were ever to feel that their reported concerns had not been taken sufficiently seriously they should contact Social Services directly.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board establishes the procedures to be followed if concerns are raised about a child; School will follow these procedures. We will work closely with Social Services and the Police as required, for example by attending case conferences, and will keep appropriate, confidential and secure records of any concerns, even if a referral is not necessary. If a pupil on the Child Protection register is absent for more than two days or leaves the school, her social worker will be informed by the Head.

Staff will be informed about individual Child Protection issues on a need-to-know basis. We will endeavour to achieve the best balance between the desire for confidentiality on the part of the child and the need to give members of staff sufficient information for them to fulfil their role responsibly.

Every effort will be made to support any children who are known to have experienced abuse of any kind. In everyday School life we will seek to provide a stable, secure and consistent environment and to create opportunities to build a sense of self-worth; we will also find external professional help if appropriate. We recognise that children who have suffered abuse may display challenging or withdrawn behaviour. While making it clear that some behaviour is unacceptable we will also ensure that the pupil knows he/she is valued and not blamed for any abuse that has occurred.

### **Action to be taken by staff**

There are four main categories of abuse: physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect. All of these can happen at home, at school, or elsewhere, inflicted by adult on child or by child on child.

Members of staff involved with a pupil should aim for a relationship which engenders trust. They should also be prepared to listen and to be observant and sensitive to changes in attitude and well-being.

If any member of staff suspects that a pupil has been abused, the circumstances should be reported to the Head, who is the "designated person", immediately. Allegations of abuse must also be reported. The Head will follow the guidelines published by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board on their website.

If a pupil confides in a trusted member of staff that he/she has been abused, he/she should be allowed to talk without any suggestion that judgement is being passed. He/she should not be questioned in any depth as this could compromise a subsequent investigation by specially trained Social Workers or Police. Staff should not promise unconditional confidentiality as it may be

necessary to involve these other agencies but the pupil should be reassured that any information passed on will be on a "need to know" basis for his/her own welfare. Members of staff should ensure they do not ask any leading questions. Notes should be made immediately after a talk with a pupil in which abuse has been alleged. These confidential notes should be retained by the member of staff involved. They could be needed for reference should the case go further.

If the Head is absent, the allegation should be passed to the delegated member of staff (Mrs N Prout – Foundation Stage Teacher). 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.

Where the allegation of abuse is against one or more other pupils, the designated person will refer to the school's Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policies.

Any member of staff or volunteer suspected of abuse may be suspended from duty while a proper investigation is carried out. Disciplinary measures may be taken even if there is insufficient evidence for a prosecution. If the person suspected of abuse is the "designated person" (i.e. the Head), the Chairman of the Governing Body should be informed. Action would be taken in accordance with existing disciplinary procedures.

If abuse is alleged or occurs, the normal channel of communication is through the Head to the relevant Social Services Departments. The Children Act (1989) requires an additional channel for serious complaints or concerns should the normal channel be blocked. Concerns or allegations about School practices or the behaviour of colleagues which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm can also be referred directly to Ofsted.

If an employed, contracted or volunteered member of staff is considered unsuitable to work with children because of any Child Protection issues, the Head will report the matter to the ISA within one month at the following address PO Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA (tel 0300 123 1111). Information on these guidelines can be found in the Independent Schools Inspectorate Handbook, Part 3.

The procedures contained in this policy, including child protection checks and procedures, apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with the school's pupils on another site (for example, in a separate institution).

Parents, staff and children can talk to the Gloucestershire SCB, Childline or the NSPCC.

The names and telephone numbers of contacts are: GSCB <a href="http://www.gscb.org.uk">www.gscb.org.uk</a> Chair: Jo Grills Shire Hall Westgate Gloucester GL1 2TP <a href="mailto:jo.grills@gloucestershire.gov.uk">jo.grills@gloucestershire.gov.uk</a> 01452 425 301	Childline: 0800 1111 NSPCC: 0808 800 5000
	Ofsted <a href="http://www.ofsted.gov.uk">www.ofsted.gov.uk</a>

**Review**

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the school's governing body. The governing body will ensure that the procedures contained in this policy have been and will be discharged efficiently.

Any deficiencies or weaknesses in the school's child protection arrangements will be remedied without delay.

## **Legislation**

### ***Children Act 1989***

The Children Act 1989 gives every child the right to protection from abuse and exploitation and the right to have enquiries made to safeguard his or her welfare.

### ***Education Act 2002***

Section 175 of this Act came into force in 2004. It requires arrangements to be made by maintained schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (e.g. the leaflet 'What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused').

***Education (Independent Schools) Regulations 2003*** introduced a similar requirement to the above for independent schools.

### ***Education (Prohibition from Teaching or Working with Children) Regulations 2003***

These regulations require information to be given to the Secretary of State following dismissal, resignation etc of a member of staff on grounds that the person is unsuitable to work with children; or relates to the person's misconduct.

### ***Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2001***

This act sets out an offence of 'abuse of trust' – a sexual or otherwise inappropriate relationship between an adult who is responsible for young people and a young person in his or her care. Subject to a number of limited defences it will be a criminal offence for a person in a position of trust in a school to engage in any sexual activity with a person aged 18 or under with whom a relationship of trust exists, irrespective of the age of consent, even if the basis for the relationship is consensual.

## **Guidance**

***Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children*** (DfES - ISBN 011 322309 9)

***Safeguarding Children in Education*** (DfES/0027/2004)

***'What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused'***(DfES 2003)

***Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings*** (DfES/1568/2005)

***Safeguarding Children in Education: Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff***(DfES/2044/2005)

***Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings*** (teachernet website)

***Staff Subject to Allegations – Thresholds for and Alternatives to Suspension*** (teachernet website)

***Managing the Aftermath of Unfounded and Unsubstantiated Allegations*** (teachernet website)

***The Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003*** (ISI)

***National Minimum Standards: Boarding Schools*** (DoH)

***Safer Staff Recruitment Training*** (NCSL [www.onlinecommunities/comms-join.cfm](http://www.onlinecommunities/comms-join.cfm))

***Boarding Schools Association publications*** (BSA [www.boarding.org.uk](http://www.boarding.org.uk))

***Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board guidelines*** ([www.gscb.org.uk](http://www.gscb.org.uk))

***Every Child Matters*** (government website)

## Fox Cubs Nursery – EYFS Safeguarding children and child protection

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

### Policy statement

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Our safeguarding policy is based on the three key commitments of the Pre-school Learning Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

### EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	4.4 Personal, social and emotional development

### Procedures

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet the three key commitments of the Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

#### **Key commitment 1**

The Alliance is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

#### *Staff and volunteers*

- Our designated person (a member of staff) who co-ordinates child protection issues is:  
Mrs Sheila Bradburn

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- Our designated officer (a committee member) who oversees this work is:  
Mr Alan Gould (Governor)

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- We ensure all staff and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Criminal Records Bureau before posts can be confirmed.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.

- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Criminal Record Bureau checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.

### ***Key commitment 2***

The Alliance is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006).

#### *Responding to suspicions of abuse*

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as abuse of disabled children, fabricated or induced illness, child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession, sexual exploitation of children such as through internet abuse and Female Genital Mutilation that may affect or may have affected children and young people using our provision.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or maybe victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
- Where we believe a child in our care or known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedure for reporting child protection concerns.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the setting leader or manager who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.

- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation.  
NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young persons refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

#### *Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures*

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), observes signs or signals that gives cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect that member of staff:
  - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
  - does not question the child;
  - makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
    - the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
    - the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
    - the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
    - the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file which is kept securely and confidentially.
- Where the Local Safeguarding Children Board stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

#### *Making a referral to the local authority social care team*

- The Pre-school Learning Alliance's publication Safeguarding Children contains procedures for making a referral to the local children's social care team, as well as a template form for recording concerns and making a referral. This is based on 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'(HMG 2006).

- We keep a copy of this document alongside procedures set down by our Local Safeguarding Children Board

#### *Informing parents*

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events unless we feel this may put the child in greater danger.
- We inform parents where we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the social workers will inform parents.

#### *Liaison with other agencies*

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We have a copy of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and social services to work well together.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff.
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.

#### *Allegations against staff*

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.

- We refer any such complaint immediately to the local authority's social care department to investigate. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management committee and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chairperson will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

#### *Disciplinary action*

- Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) of relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups), can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

#### ***Key commitment 3***

The Alliance is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

#### *Training*

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

#### *Planning*

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

#### *Curriculum*

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be *strong, resilient and listened to* and that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.

- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

#### *Confidentiality*

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

#### *Support to families*

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

### **Legal framework**

#### *Primary legislation*

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

#### *Secondary legislation*

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equalities Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance

**Further Guidance**

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised HMG 2010)
- What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2006)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (HMG 2008)
- Independent Safeguarding Authority: [www.isa-gov.org.uk](http://www.isa-gov.org.uk)

**Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications**

- Safeguarding Children (2010)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

Hopelands Preparatory School

Held on

17<sup>th</sup> February 2011

Date to be reviewed

17<sup>th</sup> February 2012

Signed on behalf of the senior management team



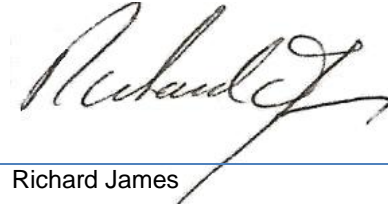
Name of signatory

Sheila Bradburn

Role of signatory

Head

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body



Name of signatory

Richard James

Role of signatory

Chair of Governors