

# HEATHCOTE PREPARATORY SCHOOL & NURSERY



## Safeguarding Policy

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**This policy should be read in conjunction with:**

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Recruitment policy
- EYFS Mobile phone and camera policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Managing Allegations against Staff, Volunteers and Contractors Policy
- Pupils' use of ICT, mobile phones and other electronic devices policy
- Lost or Missing child policy
- Uncollected Child policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Staff Handbook

## **CONTACTS**

DSL – Bursar - Safeguarding Director - Nadine Solsberg – School Office – 01245 223131

Headmistress/Deputy DSL – Caroline Forgeron– School Office – 01245 223131

Head of Early Years/EYFS DSL - Sam Scott – School Office – 01245 223131

Designated Teacher for Looked After Children - Sam Scott – School Office – 01245 223131

**If you are concerned that a child or young person is in need of Early Help, being harmed or neglected or is at risk of this you should contact the Children and Families Hub on:**

**0345 603 7627 (8.45am- 5.30pm Monday - Thursday, 8.45am- 4.30pm Friday)**

**Out of hours: Tel: 0345 606 1212 This is an emergency number. Call 999 if you have immediate concerns for a child's safety**

*Police Central Referral Unit (FGM concerns) - 101 (0800 028 3550 – helpline)*

*Police Central Referral Unit (Prevent) - 101 (0207 340 7264 – staff advice)*

**If there is an immediate risk of harm to a child then contact the Police on 999**

If there is an allegation against a member of staff, the Headmistress will contact the LADO on 0333 0139797

### **Other contacts:**

- LADO – 03330 139797
- Schools Safeguarding Advisor: Jo Barclay 033101 31078
- [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- NSPCC – 0808 8005000
- Prevent Anti-Terrorist Hotline 0800 789321
- Department for Education (support and advice about extremism) non emergency number: 020 7340 7264/ email: [counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk)

- Teaching Regulation Agency – 0207 5935393 email: [misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk)
- OFSTED Safeguarding Children – 0300 123 4666 (Mon to Fri 8am-6pm), email: [whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk)
- NSPCC Whistleblowing advice line – 0800 028 0285/ email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)
- Disclosure and Barring Service – PO Box 181 Darlington DL1 9FA, Tel: 01325 953 795, email: [dbsdispatch@dbs.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:dbsdispatch@dbs.gsi.gov.uk)

# **Safeguarding Policy**

**This policy applies to all pupils in our school including those in the EYFS.**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Heathcote Preparatory School and Nursery is committed to the safeguarding and promotion of children's welfare. At Heathcote we understand that promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone has a role to play in safeguarding children. This means that all staff should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child and take action to enable all pupils to achieve the best outcomes.

Our school has arrangements for listening to children and providing early help. Details of these arrangements can be found within this policy

Our policy and procedures comply with the DfE publication Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018), and has regard to DfE 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)', 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2015)', The Use of Social Media for Online Radicalisation (July 2015), The Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) and Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales 2015'. They are in accordance with locally (Essex) agreed inter-agency procedures. We operate safe recruitment procedures (including DBS checks and compliance with Independent School Standards Regulations), provide the required staff training (currently every two years for designated persons and upon induction and every three years for all staff). We provide an annual safeguarding update for staff and ensure that all staff, including part-time and voluntary staff, who work with children are made aware of the school's Safeguarding Policy and procedures and staff code of conduct. This policy is available to all interested parties on the public area of the school website, [www.heathcoteschool.co.uk](http://www.heathcoteschool.co.uk) and a hard copy is available on request from the school office.

The safety and well-being of all our pupils at Heathcote 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 his/her full potential and feel positive about him/herself as an individual. All pupils should care for and support each other.

Everyone who works with children and their families has a responsibility to safeguard children. School staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating.

The school has a duty to refer children who they believe have suffered or are at risk of suffering serious harm immediately to children's social care. We also have a duty to refer children who we believe are in need of additional support from outside agencies, this would lead to inter-agency assessment using local processes.

Heathcote Preparatory School and Nursery prides itself on promoting respect and mutual tolerance and the traditional British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

Parents and carers have an important role in supporting Heathcote Preparatory School and Nursery. We hope that parents and guardians 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 take any concerns seriously. Open communications are essential.

## **DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING PERSONS**

Mrs Nadine Solsberg, a member of SLT and our Bursar, is our Designated Safeguarding Lead. She has been fully trained for the demands of this role in safeguarding and inter-Agency working in line with “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018”. She regularly attends courses with other child support agencies to ensure that she remains conversant with best practice. She undergoes refresher training every two years as well as keeping up to date through informal supplementary training at least annually. She reports at least once a year to the Board of Directors on the safeguarding issues outlined above.

In her absence either Mrs Caroline Forgeron (Headmistress) or Mrs Sam Scott (Deputy Head/Key Stage Leader for Early Years) will assume the role of DSL. They have been fully trained for the demands of this role in safeguarding and interagency working. This training is updated at least every two years with informal supplementary training also taking place at least annually.

All staff who work directly with children including any volunteers in regulated activity have regular safeguarding training every three years. Safeguarding training also occurs at least annually as part of the school’s inset programme. All staff are given KCSIE (September 2018) including Annex A as part of their induction and sign to acknowledge they have read this document. All staff are expected to re-read this document annually as part of our update training programme.

The safeguarding committee, consisting of Mrs Nadine Solsberg (DSL/Bursar), Mrs Caroline Forgeron (Headmistress) and Mrs Sam Scott (Deputy Head/Key Stage Leader for Early Years) sits every half term to review safeguarding matters or when a new concern is raised. They attend regular update meetings organised by the LCSB/Jo Barclay.

The school’s records on safeguarding are kept locked in the DSL’s office, and are separated from routine pupil records. Access is restricted to the DSL and the Headmistress.

The DSL or Headmistress will contact the LCSB or Channel promptly to discuss any concerns they may have or to seek advice on a course of action.

# **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

## **THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED PERSONS**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputies when necessary) will:

### **Manage referrals**

- refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required;
- co-ordinate action within the school and support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care;
- refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
- support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
- refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.
- ensure that appropriate strategies for recording and reporting incidents, allegations and concerns are in place and adhered to within school and that records are stored securely and confidentially.

### **Work with others**

- liaise with the Headmistress to inform her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- as required, liaise with the "case manager" and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member); and
- liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies. Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.

### **Training**

- undergo inter-agency training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role at least every two years.
- undertake Prevent awareness training.
- refresh their knowledge and skills at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:
  - understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments;
  - have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
  - ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;
  - are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
  - are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;

- understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.
- organise training on child protection and safeguarding within the school liaising with the LSCB

### **Raise Awareness**

- ensure the school's child protection policies and procedures are known, understood and used appropriately;
- ensure all staff have the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and know how to refer them for help
- ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the governor and director regarding this;
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this; and
- link with the local LSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- ensure the school's online safety policies and procedures are known, understood and used appropriately;

### **Safer Recruitment**

- ensure that the school recruitment and appointment process is rigorous to ensure the suitability of staff employed and follows the school's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- ensure temporary and voluntary staff, who work with children, are made aware of the child protection arrangements
- obtain assurance that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with the school's pupils on school and other sites
- be required to report to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), within one month of leaving the school any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children. Failure to make such a report constitutes an offence and the school may be removed from the DfE register of independent schools and all parties should note that 'compromise agreements' cannot apply in this connection.
- where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a Prohibition Order may be appropriate, the school will make a referral to the National College for Teaching & Leadership (NCTL). The reasons such an order would be considered are "unacceptable professional conduct" "conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute" or "a conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence".
- refer any historic allegations of abuse to the police as they arise

- The Designated Person (EYFS) will 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. The school will inform ISI as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days.

### **Child Protection File**

- Ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible where children leave the school. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

### **Availability**

- Always be available in person (during school hours) for staff in school to discuss any safeguarding concerns or if not the DSL then one of the deputies.

## **THE ROLE OF THE SAFEGUARDING DIRECTOR**

The Safeguarding Director will:

- be responsible for reviewing annual updates of the policies and procedures that apply to child protection and safeguarding and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged
- be responsible for receiving and discussing updates provided by the designated person as part of the Head's report.

The Directors of the school are responsible for the final annual review.

## **THE ROLE OF SCHOOL STAFF**

All teachers are responsible, in conjunction with other school staff, for the pastoral needs of the children in their care. This includes maintaining opportunity for children to share their concerns and follow the guidance in this document. Care should always be taken in regard to the discussion of sensitive issues and advice should be sought where there are concerns.

Within the curriculum during PSHRE, Computing and Circle Times there is provision made for educating pupils about keeping safe. The risk of online radicalisation is reduced by building resilience and understanding across the curriculum of British values. There are also opportunities to discuss issues which some children might find sensitive. Care is taken particularly in relation to discussion about families and their make-up. Assumptions about members of families and the presence of both parents should be avoided both in discussion and the presentation of materials. During health, safety and sex education lessons, staff are alert to the fact that some children will have very different experiences and may find content at odds with

their own experiences. Staff make themselves familiar with the background of the children in their care in order to avoid distress.

School staff should:

- be alert to the signs of abuse as detailed in this policy
- listen carefully and attentively to children's worries, concerns and disclosures
- ensure pupils know where they go for help and ensure clear Childline and other points of help are clearly signposted to them through posters and regular talks in form time/PSHRE
- ensure pupils know who the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies are and that they may go to the DSL or ANY member of staff if they need to talk to someone
- report any concerns immediately, to any of the designated persons named above
- consult with the designated persons if in any doubt as to how to proceed
- be aware that they may make a referral to external agencies
- follow the advice given in this policy in relation to how to handle disclosures
- ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or allegations of harm to a pupil (for example, in one-to-one tuition, sports coaching or engaging in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil)
- ensure that they are familiar with and act in accordance with the guidance on physical restraint found in the Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- ensure that assurance is obtained that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with the school's pupils on another site
- receive training in child protection, online safety and Prevent (on induction and updated at least every three years)
- receive, read and acknowledge receipt of policies and guidance regarding safeguarding, staff conduct for staff pupil relationships, and confirm no change to their DBS status
- ensure concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the schools safeguarding regime are raised with the leadership team, following guidance set out in the school Whistleblowing Policy.

The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment: the initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should follow the referral process as set out in KCSIE 2018. As is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

## WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm or maltreatment to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention. We know that neglect, whatever form it takes, can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse.

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children,

An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. It often happens over a period of time, rather than being a one-off event. Furthermore it can increasingly happen online.

## TYPES OF ABUSE: THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

**Physical Abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, excessive physical constraint or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It may also involve consumption of drugs or alcohol. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Typical signs of Physical abuse are:

- *Bruising on the cheeks, ears, palms, arms and feet, back, buttocks, tummy, hips and backs of legs – areas of the body which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc.*
- *Grip marks on arms or trunk*
- *Bite marks*
- *Fractures*
- *Burns and scalds: burns to the backs of hands, feet, legs, genitals or buttocks*
- *Injuries that have not received medical attention or that are not consistent with the explanation given for them.*

Staff are reminded that children who have been physically abused will often go to some lengths to hide or cover up their injuries. For example, wearing longer clothing even in hot weather.

**Emotional Abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they

say or how they communicate. It may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Typical signs of Emotional abuse:

- *Children who are excessively withdrawn,*
- *Changes or regression in mood or behaviour*
- *Nervousness, frozen watchfulness*
- *Obsessions or phobias*
- *Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration*
- *Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults*
- *Attention seeking behaviour*

**Sexual Abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education. Sexual abuse of children by other children can and does occur and staff will be given relevant training with regards to managing a report of child-on-child sexual violence, abuse or harassment. This is covered in more detail later.

Typical signs of Sexual Abuse are:

- *sexually explicit behaviour (e.g. playing games and showing awareness which is inappropriate for the child's age),*
- *Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations*
- *A fear of being alone*
- *Loss of appetite / eating disorder*
- *Urinary tract infections*

- *Discomfort or pain in genital / anal area*
- *aggressive and inappropriate sex play*

**Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to;

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Typical signs of Neglect:

- *Children living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe*
- *Frequently hungry or pre-occupied with food, stealing food.*
- *Inadequate clothing, i.e. not having a winter coat*
- *Angry, aggressive or self-harm*
- *Fail to receive basic health care*
- *Left in unsafe situations, or without medical attention*
- *Seems afraid of parents or carers*

### **Children missing from education**

All children regardless of their circumstances are entitled to a full-time education. The child going missing from education is a potential indicator of neglect and other forms of abuse. As required by law all schools must have an admissions register and an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers and attendance must be logged daily. Beyond general concerns and neglect arising from absences all staff must be alert to the risks of potential safeguarding concerns triggered by children missing education such as: travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

The local authority must be informed of any child who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- have ceased to attend at school and no longer live within a reasonable distance of the school at which they registered;
- Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age and neither he/she knows his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;

- are in custody for period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or have been permanently excluded

Notification should be made as soon as the grounds for deletion are met but no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register. It is essential that schools comply with this duty so that local authorities can as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education, follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as agreed between school and the local authority or (in default of such an agreement) at intervals determined by the Secretary of State.

**Peer on Peer Abuse:** Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include any form of bullying (including cyber), online abuse, gender based abuse, sexting, or sexually harmful behaviour or initiation of hazing types of rituals leading to violence.

Staff are made aware through training and regular safeguarding updates, about sexual harassment and sexting as well as the procedures they should follow should these be identified.

Abusive comments and interactions should never be passed off or dismissed as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Nor will harmful behaviours be dismissed as the same or 'just having a laugh', 'boys will be boys.' The School recognises that a child is likely to disclose an allegation to someone they trust; this could be any member of staff. By making such a disclosure the pupil is likely to feel that the member of staff is in a position of trust.

The School recognises that children with special educational needs and disabilities can be more prone to peer on peer group isolation than other children and the school will consider extra pastoral support for those children when required (through mentoring or regular well-being review meetings).

The School takes the following steps to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse:

Incidents of peer on peer abuse will be dealt in line with the school safeguarding procedures (*please see appendix for quick reference guide and the procedures section on page 26*).

Where an issue of pupil behaviour or bullying gives 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, **significant harm** staff should follow the procedures below:

- A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the school during an investigation.
- The school will take advice from the Children and Families Hub on the investigation of such incidents and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved including the alleged victim and perpetrator.
- If it is necessary for a pupil to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse, the School will ensure that subject to the advice of the Children and Families Hub, parents are informed

as soon as possible and that the pupils involved are supported during the interview by an appropriate adult and until the investigation is completed.

- Confidentiality will be an important consideration for the School and advice will be sought as necessary from the Children and Families Hub and/or the Police as appropriate.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse: Sexting – Specific Guidance**

There are a number of definitions of sexting but, for the purposes of this policy, sexting is simply defined as images or videos generated by children under the age of 18, or of children under the age of 18, that are of a sexual nature or are indecent. These images are shared between young people and/or adults via a mobile phone, handheld device or website with people they may not even know.

Sexting may be categorised as:

- *Aggravated incidents of sexting* involving criminal or abusive elements beyond the creation of an image. These include further elements, adult involvement or criminal or abusive behaviour by minors such as sexual abuse, extortion, threats, malicious conduct arising from personal conflicts, or creation or sending or showing of images without the knowledge or against the will of a minor who was pictured.
- *Experimental incidents of sexting* involve youths taking pictures of themselves to share with established boy or girlfriends, to create romantic interest in other youth, or for reasons such as attention seeking. There is no criminal element (and certainly no criminal intent) beyond the creation and sending of the images and no apparent malice or lack of willing participation. Wolak and Finkelhor 'Sexting: a Typology' March 2011

Young people involved in sharing sexual videos and pictures may be committing a criminal offence. Specifically, crimes involving indecent photographs (including pseudo images) of a person under 18 years of age fall under Section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1978 and Section 160 Criminal Justice Act 1988. Under this legislation it is a crime to:

- take an indecent photograph or allow an indecent photograph to be taken;
- make an indecent photograph (this includes downloading or opening an image that has been sent via email);
- distribute or show such an image;
- possess with the intention of distributing images;
- advertise; and
- possess such images.

Incidents of sexting will be dealt in line with the School safeguarding procedures (*please see appendix for quick reference guide and the procedures section on page 26*). If a child is at risk of significant harm, the DSL will refer on the matter to the children's social care services at least for advice.

In responding to a disclosure regarding sexting, the School will consider:

- Is the pupil making a disclosure about receiving an image, sending an image or sharing an image?
- What sort of image is it? Is it potentially illegal or is it inappropriate?
- How widely has the image been shared and is the device in their possession?

- Is it a school device or a personal device?
- Are there other pupils and/or young people involved?
- Do they know where the image has ended up?

In line with the revised Education Act 2011 and the Powers of Search Policy, the School may examine, confiscate and securely store a device if there is reason to believe it contains indecent images or extreme pornography. The School will not search a mobile device even in response to an allegation or disclosure if this is likely to cause additional stress to the pupil/young person unless there is clear evidence to suggest that there is an immediate problem.

If any illegal images of a child are found, the school will consider whether to inform the police.

As a general rule it will almost always be proportionate to refer any incident involving “aggravated” sharing of images to the police, whereas purely “experimental” conduct may proportionately be dealt with without such referral, most particularly if it involves the child sharing images of themselves. Any conduct involving, or possibly involving, the knowledge or participation of adults should always be referred to the police. If an “experimental” incident is not referred to the police, the reasons for this should be recorded in writing. In making a decision to refer, the School will take into a range of factors such as the age of the victim, the level of coercion involved and the degree of nudity in the images.

If the image has been shared across a personal mobile device, the School:

- will confiscate and secure the device(s);
- will not view the image unless there is a clear reason to do so;
- will not send, share or save the image anywhere;
- will not allow pupils to view, send, share or save the image.
- If the image has been shared across a school network, a website or a social network, the School:
- will block the network to all users and isolate the image;
- will not send or print the image;
- will not move the material from one place to another;
- will not view the image unless there is a clear reason to do so.

The School will never print an image as evidence.

Appropriate action, recording, referring and support will be put in place in line with the school safeguarding procedures.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Signs of CSE:

- *Children appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions*

- *Associate with other children involved in exploitation*
- *Have older boyfriends/girlfriends*
- *Suffer from Sexually Transmitted infections or become pregnant*
- *Changes in emotional well-being*
- *Go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late*
- *Regularly miss school*

### **Honour Based Violence**

So-called 'honour based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect and defend the honour of the family and/or the community including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so-called HBV or abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt staff should speak to the DSL.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** refers to all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury for non-medical reasons. It causes long term mental and physical suffering, difficulty in giving birth, infertility and even death.

FGM is much more common than many realise both worldwide and in the UK, and is increasingly found in Western Europe and other developed countries amongst immigrant and refugee communities. The procedure is typically performed on girls aged between 4 and 13 but can be performed on babies and young women before marriage or pregnancy.

### Warning signs of FGM

- *Plans for the family to take the child out of school for a period of time (especially just before a school holiday)*
- *Talk of a holiday to a country of origin known to practice FGM*
- *Confiding in someone about a special procedure or becoming a woman*
- *An "elder" woman coming to stay*
- *Difficulty walking, sitting or standing*
- *Spending longer in the bathroom due to difficulties urinating*
- *Frequent urinary or menstrual problems*
- *Noticeable behaviour changes; withdrawn*

From 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 schools have a mandatory duty (under Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003) to report any suspicions or evidence of FGM to the police and/or social care. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary measures including, where appropriate, referral to DBS.

### **Radicalisation**

Protecting children from radicalisation is part of the school's wider safeguarding duties and is similar to protecting them from other harms. Although it is not an accepted category of abuse in its own right, the vulnerability of children to being seduced by extreme ideological positions is something we take very seriously. Recent government legislation means that it is helpful to include here a summary of the Prevent

Duty for those working in education. For further information the Department of Education has published advice for schools on the Prevent Duty 2015 and has launched a website [educateagainsthate.com](http://educateagainsthate.com)

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Consistent with the requirement to promote fundamental British values, all staff have a statutory duty to have due regard to the need to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. In interpreting what is meant by 'due regard' we take guidance from the government's Prevent strategy including the Channel programme which aims to ensure that vulnerable children from any faith, ethnicity or background receive support before their vulnerabilities are exploited by those that would want them to embrace terrorism. Success of this program depends on effective communication and cooperation between staff, individual, their families and, where appropriate, the local authority and other agencies.

Without undermining values such as freedom of speech, mutual respect and tolerance, all staff must respond to the ideological challenge of extremist views. 'Extremism' is defined *as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values* including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. The definition specifically includes calls for the death of members of our armed forces whether in this country or overseas. It also includes the notion of non-violent extremism which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. Extremism can take many forms whether ideological, political or religious. It can manifest itself explicitly and aggressively, for example through inciting hatred or a call to arms or through more subtle and sophisticated channels of propaganda including social media. These channels explore aspirational images of success, status and belonging, and personal and moral duty which can capture the imagination of young minds.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology but young children may be vulnerable to radicalisation by others influence. The use of internet and social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

Factors associated with people who are vulnerable to being drawn to terrorism:

- Extremist views, and unwillingness to consider other faiths and views
- Lack of self esteem / identity
- Personal or political grievances
- Family tensions
- Crime / anti social behaviour
- Bullying

### **Prevent Duty (July 2015)**

From 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015, all schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and must have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

There are five dimensions to the actions we take in response to the Prevent Duty:

- Risk assessment
- Working in partnership with local authorities
- Awareness raising amongst staff
- Protection from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the Internet in school
- Building resilience to radicalisation through the curriculum e.g. through citizenship and Religious Education and considerations for pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. These aspects are addressed throughout PSHRE policy.

### **Other Signs Indicative of Abuse**

- repeated minor injuries
- an air of 'detachment' or 'don't care' attitude
- overly compliant behaviour
- a 'watchful attitude'
- 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.

### **SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES**

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues, some of which are listed below. Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse, what may be perceived as banter and bullying.

Staff should be aware of the following specific safeguarding issues which are covered as part of the school's regular safeguarding training and updates and they should remain vigilant to these at all times.

- [bullying including cyberbullying](#)
- children missing education (CME)
- [child missing from home or care](#)
- [child sexual exploitation \(CSE\)](#)
- [domestic violence](#)
- [drugs](#)
- [fabricated or induced illness](#)
- [faith abuse](#)
- [female genital mutilation \(FGM\)](#)
- [forced marriage](#)
- [gangs and youth violence](#)
- [gender-based violence/violence against women and girls \(VAWG\)](#)
- [hate](#)
- [mental health](#)
- [missing children and adults](#)
- [private fostering](#)
- [preventing radicalisation](#)
- [relationship abuse](#)
- [trafficking](#)
- unacceptable banter
- [Youth Produced Sexual Imagery](#) (YPSI or "Sexting"). *NB: This can be defined as images or videos generated by children under the age of 18 that are of a sexual nature or are considered to be indecent. These images may be shared between children and young people and/or adults via a mobile phone, webcam, handheld device or website/app.*

*Further information, handouts and web links are available from the DSL.*

### **SEND pupils**

It is not always obvious that a child is being abused, and it is recognised that SEND pupils are at greater risk of abuse (they may be less likely to disclose abuse if they have communication difficulties and/or are isolated). Frequently it is the culmination of information that is important. Concerns, however small must be recorded and given to the Designated Person so that any patterns may be identified quickly.

### **Online safety**

It is recognised by Heathcote Prep School and Nursery the use of technology presents challenges and risks to children and adults both inside and outside of school. The DSL has overall responsibility for online safeguarding within the school. Heathcote identifies that the issues can be broadly categorised into three areas of risk:

1. **CONTENT:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material

2. **CONTACT:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
3. **CONDUCT:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm.

Heathcote will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring of systems are in place when pupils and staff access school systems and internet provision.

## **EARLY HELP**

All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from Early Help. Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the Foundation Years upwards. In the first instance, staff should discuss Early Help requirements with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an Early Help assessment. All staff are required to be aware of the Early Help process. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an Early Help assessment. If Early Help is appropriate the Designated Safeguarding Lead should support the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. If Early Help and or other support is appropriate the case should be kept under constant review and consideration given to referral to children's social care if the child's situation does not appear to be improving. The school will make prompt contact with children's social care services or Channel where there are concerns a child may be in need of help or at risk.

## **INTER-AGENCY LIAISON**

At times school staff may be called to participate in meetings organised and chaired by social care. These might include:

- register reviews
- case conferences
- professionals' meetings such as CAF (Common Assessment Framework) and TAC (Team around the Child) Meetings) in which representative professionals from different agencies
- are asked to meet to discuss children and their families with a view to providing support or making
- recommendations in terms of next stages of involvement
- core group meetings in which a "core" group of professionals associated with the family are asked to
- meet to review the progress of actions decided at case conferences and register reviews.

At these meetings, representatives from the school should be ready to report back providing information about:

- attendance and punctuality
- academic achievement
- child's behaviour and attitude
- relationships with peer group and social skills generally
- child's appearance and readiness for school

- contact with parents/carers
- any specific incidents that need reporting.

Prior to the meeting, class teachers and other adults working closely with the child will be asked for their comments. Following the meeting feedback will be given and staff brought up-to-date with any actions that are needed.

## **SAFER RECRUITMENT**

Heathcote Preparatory School and Nursery follows the Government's recommendations for the safer recruitment and employment of staff who work with children. All members of staff taking part in regulated activity at the school, including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff, will have an enhanced check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), a check of the DBS Children's barred List, Prohibition from Teaching and Prohibition from Management (where appropriate) before starting work. The school will seek assurances that visiting professionals such as sports coaches have had appropriate checks by their employing organisation. Our checks involve verifying identity, address, employment history and their right to work in the UK. References from previous employers are taken up and qualifications also verified.

We ensure that at least one member of the interview panel has undergone training in the safer recruitment processes.

In line with KCSIE (September 2018): Any member of staff that cares for children under 8 years old will be required to complete a suitability declaration to ensure that they are not disqualified from working with children, (Childcare Act 2006, Feb 2015).

Prohibition checks with the NCTL (National College for Teaching and Leadership) are also completed on teaching staff and for staff taking part in the management of the school that are not in regulated activity.

Our Recruitment policies are reviewed by Directors annually.

*For further information please see our Recruitment Policy*

## **ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE BY STAFF**

While considerations of child protection must always be paramount reasonable care must also be taken to safeguard staff against the effects of false and malicious allegations. However, if it is suspected or alleged that the member of staff, DSL or a volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way it has harmed a child or may have harmed a child; or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards the child in a way that suggests the staff member might pose a risk of harm if they were to work closely or regularly with children

Then the matter must be brought promptly and confidentially to the notice of the Headmistress. In her absence then any allegation regarding a staff member or volunteer must be brought to the attention of the Safeguarding Governor (Mrs Paula Hobbs). If the Headmistress is the subject of the allegation then without informing the head the nominated Safeguarding Governor must be informed (Mrs Paula Hobbs).

The Headmistress or Safeguarding Governor will contact the LADO within 24 hours of receiving a complaint, concern or allegation of a child protection nature that is made against a member of staff or volunteer linked to the School. The school will not investigate allegations before first speaking to the LADO.

The school will inform the National College for Teaching and Leadership and DBS promptly (and definitely within 30 days) if they have reason to dismiss someone with regard to Safeguarding, or if someone leaves during an investigation.

*For further information please see our Managing Allegations against Staff, Volunteers or Contractors Policy, and referral routes at the end of this policy.*

## **ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEWING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Board of Directors formally considers safeguarding issues at termly Board Meetings, with day to day issues being delegated to the Headmistress and the Designated Safeguarding Lead. An annual review of the school's Safeguarding policies and procedures and their implementation is also undertaken during the Autumn Board Meeting. That Committee is responsible for:

- Reviewing the procedures for and the efficiency with which the safeguarding duties have been discharged.
- Ensuring that any deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements are remedied without delay.
- Approving amendments to safeguarding arrangements in the light of changing Regulations or recommended best practice.

Ensuring we work with regard to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018),
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)"
- "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused" (March 2015)
- The SET Procedure (Southend, Essex and Thurrock)
- The Revised Prevent Duty (July 2015)
- "The use of social media for online radicalisation" (July 2015)
- Preventing and tackling bullying (July 2017)

- Indecent images of children: guidance for young people (July 2017)
- Effective support for children and families (ESCB) (July 2017)

***This policy also takes into account the procedures and practice of Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set by the Essex Children and Families Hub.***

## **INDUCTION AND TRAINING**

Every new member of staff, including part-time, 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Headmistress. Training in safeguarding is an important part of the induction process and is ongoing throughout the year in staff meetings. We ensure that all staff receive basic safeguarding training at least every 2 years but endeavour to update this every year.

All staff will be made aware of the school's safeguarding policy and procedures including the code of conduct of staff, the identity of the Designated Person and are given a copy of part 1 of KCSIE (September 2018) including Annex A. During induction they will also be given the Whistleblowing policy and the Acceptable Use of ICT policy and E-safety policy.

They are made aware of the SET Procedures and our obligations under the Prevent Duty (July 2105) ensuring they have the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, to challenge extreme ideas and to promote traditional British values. Furthermore, regular updates are given regarding online safety to staff, pupils and parents. Staff are required to sign to confirm their full understanding and awareness of our safeguarding policies and procedures and other accompanying policies i.e. Missing child policy.

## **STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT**

New members of staff, Directors and volunteers are given copies of the school's policy on *Staff Code of Conduct for Staff*. Discussion of the procedures set out in that document forms a vital part of our induction procedures. As well as this document, staff are also given copies of our Whistleblowing policy, Acceptable use of ICT and Managing Allegations against Staff policies. The Safeguarding Procedures at the end of this document also provide 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.

Nadine Solsberg, our designated Safeguarding Lead, or in her absence Mrs Caroline Forgeron or Mrs Sam Scott, who have received specialist training in this topic, should always be informed if a member of staff has any concerns.

## **RAISING AWARENESS WITH PUPILS**

Heathcote 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 PSHRE for discussion of child abuse and in developing in pupils the confidence which they require to recognise abuse and to stay safe.

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 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 PSHRE and assemblies 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. We use opportunities when they arise, such as current news stories to teach about the unacceptability of bullying and abusive behaviour. Heathcote recognises that abuse can take place wholly online or through technology which may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Safe use of the internet and mobile phones, inside and outside of school as well as all aspects of E-safety are embedded in the curriculum in both Key Stage 1 and 2, with visiting speakers and workshops providing further support. The use of appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place in school to ensure children are safe from potentially harmful and inappropriate material on-line including from terrorist and extremist material.

## **PROMOTION OF WELFARE**

The ethos of Heathcote 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. All our pupils take part in a large number of charitable activities. We see this as making an important contribution towards the development of the whole person, who grows up to value society and to expect to make a personal contribution towards the general.

## **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

Mrs Caroline Forgeron (Headmistress) has been appointed to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after. She will ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after status and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They will also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after them. The DSL will have details of the child's Social Worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

## **MISSING CHILDREN**

A child missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. *(See information under Neglect – Children Missing in Education)*

The School can longer give permission for absence from school for anything other than medical/dental appointments or very exceptional circumstances. Parents should inform the school in writing or email of any appointments or reasons for absence. Any unauthorised absence from school for 10 days or more will now be reported to our Local Authority as a safeguarding precaution.

At Heathcote School our registers are checked every day and any unknown absences are checked immediately. We require written notice of any child who will be absent from school.

Repeated absence without reason would be cause for concern and we would contact our LCSB to discuss our options.

## **EQUAL TREATMENT**

Heathcote 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. *For further information please see our Equal Opportunities Policy*

## **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.

*For further information please see our Anti-Bullying Policy*

## **MOBILE PHONES AND CAMERAS**

Pupils are not allowed phones or internet devices in school. Members of staff are permitted to access their personal mobiles during break or lunchtimes when in the staffroom or when the children are not present. A school iPad is used to take photos of the children to record information and observations for 'Tapestry' and ELJs.

**Mobile phones and cameras are not permitted in our Early Years department by any staff or visitors.**

*For further information please see EYFS Mobile Phone and Camera Policy*

## VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

All visitors will be checked as suitable whether they are invited by staff or pupils including through a Google search. All visitors to the school may be asked to bring formal identification with them at the time of their visit. They must follow the procedure below:

- Once on site, all visitors must report to reception first. No visitor is permitted to enter the school via any other entrance under any circumstances.
- At reception, all visitors must state the purpose of their visit and who has invited them. They should be ready to produce formal identification upon request.
- All visitors will be asked to sign the Visitors Record Book which is kept in reception at all times making note of their name, organisation, who they are visiting, time of arrival. They must read the fire evacuation notice and be given the visitors booklet which details information regarding our Safeguarding procedures.
- All visitors will be required to wear an identification badge – the badge must remain visible throughout their visit.

SIGNED – DSL.....

Date.....

SIGNED – HEADMISTRESS.....

Date.....

SIGNED (DIRECTOR).....

Date.....

## **SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES**

### **1. What to do if a child reports abuse**

#### **Confidentiality**

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. 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 DSL with a written account of what has transpired as a matter of urgency.

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

- Listen carefully
- React professionally and remember that they are not carrying out an investigation.
- Take what the child said seriously and calmly without becoming emotionally involved.
- Make it clear why unconditional confidentiality cannot be offered.

- Explain that any adult member of staff is obliged to inform the DSL, if child protection and safeguarding issues are involved in order that specialist help can be arranged.
- Encourage the pupil to speak directly to the DSL.
- 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, that their complaint/allegation will be taken seriously, and that he or she is not to blame for having been bullied or abused.
- Allow the child to tell his or her own story **without asking detailed or leading questions.**
- Record what has been said in writing.
- Inform the DSL or the Headmistress as soon as possible - at least by the end of the morning or afternoon session of that day.
- Inform the Headmistress 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 Headmistress is unavailable the Governor should be telephoned immediately. (See contact details at the front of this policy booklet).
- Where there are evident signs of physical injury, that may or may not be the result of abuse or bullying, medical help should be summoned, or the pupil should be taken to the medical room. In serious cases the Police should be informed from the outset
- The DSL or Headmistress will contact the Local Area Designated Person (LADO) at the Essex Safeguarding Children's Board for advice on how to proceed in any instance of the report of abuse.
- Where the allegation relates to harmful sexual behaviours, if possible the disclosure should be managed with two members of staff (preferably one of them being the DSL or their deputy).
- Allegations will be discussed with the LADO considering their nature, content and context and a course of action including any involvement with the police will be decided.
- The school will take into account the views of the LADO, KCSIE and Working Together when making a decision such as a suspension.
- GDPR cannot be allowed to stand in the way of any safeguarding issue.

All parents and staff should feel able to raise any concerns about a child. We encourage staff to log a minor concern in the 'worry logs' in the staffroom to help build a picture of that child.

**Any member of staff can make a referral to external agencies - the contact details can be found at the**

front of this document and are displayed in the staff room.

**If there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to the local children's safeguarding board immediately.**

### **Action to protect the child**

Information about possible abuse may come to a member of staff in several ways such as direct allegation from a child that has been abused, through a friend, a 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 DSL and/or the Headmistress will consider how best to support and monitor the pupil concerned through any process of investigation, liaising closely with parents, carers, the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LCSB) or other agencies involved to identify the support strategies that will be appropriate.

### **Pupil On Pupil Abuse**

In the event of a disclosure of pupil on pupil abuse, all children involved whether perpetrator or victim would be treated as being 'at risk.' If we have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm this abuse will also be referred to the ESCB.

## **2. What to do if you are concerned about a child**

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

We encourage staff who have concerns, no matter how minor they think they may be, to log their concerns on a child concern log form to help the DSL build a picture of circumstances.

If a member of staff suspects abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil and have reasonable cause to suspect that child is suffering or likely to suffer serious harm, they should be reported to the Headmistress or DSL immediately. They will consider the circumstances and will contact the ESCB for advice.

### **Parents**

In general, we believe at Heathcote Preparatory School and Nursery 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, any concerns relating to parents must be referred to the DSL or the Headmistress. In very few cases it may not be right to inform parents of our concerns immediately, as that action could prejudice any investigation or place the child at further risk. In such cases advice will be sought from the Essex Safeguarding Children's Board (ESCB).

**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 such as "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 concern to the DSL or Headmistress immediately.

**Child protection is always our top priority**

**Appendix – Quick Reference**

# **Safeguarding Checklist for Staff**

*Safeguarding Is Everyone's Responsibility*

*Anyone Can Make A Referral*

**IF**

- You suspect a child may have been abused
- A child discloses abuse
- A third party expresses concerns to you

**YOU SHOULD**

**LISTEN, OBSERVE, RECORD AND REPORT**

**R**            **Respond** without showing signs of disquiet, anxiety or shock, or disbelief

**Reassure** the child that he or she is not to blame

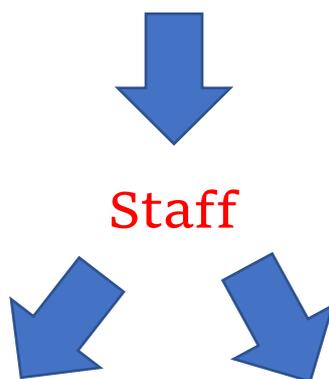
- E** Enquire casually about how an injury was sustained or why a child appears upset
- C** Confidentiality **should not** be promised to children or to adults
- O** Observe carefully the behaviour or demeanour of the child or the person expressing concern
- R** Record in detail what you have seen and heard; avoid being judgemental
- D** Do not interrogate or enter into detailed conversation; rather encourage the child to say what he or she wants until enough information is gained to decide whether or not a referral is appropriate. Affirm the child's feelings as expressed.

**And then REPORT to the DSL**

## Referral Routes

### Child in Need

(This means a family or child is in need of help from Support Services)



**Complete worry log Complete Child concern form**

(minor or rare such as dirty uniform)

(Larger, more specific or frequent concern such as a child continually hungry)



**DSL**



**Children's Social Care/LSCB**

**Child at Risk**



**Staff**

**Complete Child Concern Form**

(For example unexplained hidden mark/child discloses they were left home alone)



DSL



Children's Social Care/LSCB

Allegation against

A member of staff, the DSL

Headmistress

visitor contractor



Headmistress



Safeguarding Governor



LADO



DBS/NCTL

