

## **CHILD PROTECTION (SAFEGUARDING) POLICY**

This policy has been produced in compliance with *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*, section 2.22 and with reference to North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Guidelines and Procedures.

It is of paramount importance that the girls at Queen Margaret's School feel safe, secure and free from any form of abuse. The school is committed to the protection and promotion of the pupils' welfare and providing an environment in which they may thrive.

All school employees have a responsibility to protect children from bullying, harassment, physical, sexual and emotional abuse and/or neglect and to report any suspicion of abuse of a pupil at the school whether the alleged abuse is at school, at home or outside the school. Any report should be made to the Nominated Officer. Confidentiality is guaranteed to any member of staff who reports suspicions of a colleague or other person on site or who has contact with QM girls.

If a pupil makes an allegation against a member of staff you must inform the Head or, if he is implicated, the Director of Pastoral Care/CPO, the Chair of Governors or police immediately. The matter has to be referred to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) on the same day.

### **The Child Protection Officer**

The Nominated Officer for Queen Margaret's School is Miss Amanda Proctor, Director of Pastoral Care. Her Deputy is Carole Cameron the Deputy Head. Liaison with the Social Care Department and York Policy Family Protection Unit is their responsibility entirely. The Hon Mrs Justice Eleanor King DBE is the Governor with special responsibility for Child Protection. The Director of Pastoral Care submits a report on Child Protection/Safeguarding to the Governors annually. Child Protection records are kept securely in the Deputy Head's study, separate from routine pupil records. Access is restricted to the CPO, her Deputy and the Headmaster. The CPO updates the Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy annually.

### **Induction and Training**

The CPO keeps up to date with Child Protection issues by attending training and conferences both locally and nationally. She updates her training every two years. She provides induction training for new staff and provides training for teaching and boarding staff every three years. Under her guidance the School Housekeeper provides regular training for the domestic, maintenance and catering teams. The Director of Pastoral Care/CPO gives training to the School prefects in Child Abuse and active listening at the start of the academic year.

### **The Staff Code of Conduct**

The staff code of conduct provides guidance to all members of staff on interaction with pupils.

### **Girls' Awareness**

QM's Worries and Concerns Policy and Confidentiality (Girls) Policy are available to supplement the supportive pastoral system which includes the Medical Centre, School

Counsellor and a resident Chaplain in addition to housemistresses, tutors and Year Heads. Important addresses are published in the girls' planners and on the Worries and Concerns Policies displayed prominently in the boarding areas. The Child Line number is displayed by telephones, to which all girls have access.

### **Staff Recruitment**

All members of staff appointed to QM are required to have an enhanced CRB check. The QM Recruitment Policy can be consulted for further information.

### **Other sources of help**

The Family Protection Unit and Social Care Department have total interdependency and either can be contacted if you wish to discuss a concern. This does NOT necessarily lead to formal procedures suddenly taking over.

North Yorkshire Police

Family Protection Unit: 01904 669354

Or

Duty Social Worker

North York County Council

**01757 213651**

More detailed information can be accessed in the Staff Library and the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board training is on the Staff Shared Area of the school intranet.

### **Definition of Child Abuse:**

An abused child is a boy or girl under the age of 18 who has suffered from physical injury, physical neglect, a failure to thrive, emotional or sexual abuse, which the person or persons who had parental responsibility, charge or care of the child either caused or knowingly failed to prevent.

#### **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 and development'

#### **Physical Abuse:**

'may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child'

#### **Sexual Abuse:**

'involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening'

#### **Emotional Abuse:**

'the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development'.

The NSPCC defines child abuse as:

*"Child abuse is the term used when an adult harms a child or a young person under the age of 18.....Child abuse can take four forms, all of which can cause long term*

*damage to a child: physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and child sexual abuse. Bullying and domestic violence are also forms of child abuse.*

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

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

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

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

### **Symptoms**

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

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

### **WHAT TO DO . . . . .**

if you become aware of abuse:

- Find time **immediately** to listen to the child making a disclosure of abuse.

- Write brief notes of exactly what you are told at the time and keep these original notes. You should then write a detailed report on the interview. You should note the time and date on all notes made.
- Do not promise to keep the disclosure a secret. It is your responsibility to inform the Nominated Officer immediately. Reassure the child that only key personnel will be informed.
- Do not ask a child to repeat the disclosure to another person.
- Do not ask leading questions and do not attempt to carry out your own investigation. You may compromise any subsequent police investigation.
- The Nominated Officer will refer the matter to the Police Family Protection Unit or Social Care Department the same day. These Interdependent Agencies will provide immediate guidance.
- Never presume that abuse in your school is an impossibility.
- Children may confide in young people or other children rather than adults. Prefects receive training on Child Protection and active listening from the Director of Pastoral Care early in the autumn term.
- Be reassured that this is in the best interest of all concerned. School Child Protection Records will be confidential and access limited to a 'need to know' basis.

If you suspect abuse:

- Report the information to the Nominated Officer **on the same day**. If the allegation implicates her, then the report should be made to the Headmaster, the Chairman of Governors or an outside agency.
- Do **not** attempt to investigate the report or suspicion yourself. There is a danger that you will have compromised any further investigation by the police.

See also

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Procedure when a Member of Staff etc Faces an Allegation of Abuse
- Recruitment Policy
- Worries and Concerns Policy for girls
- Confidentiality (Girls)Policy
- Policy for the Use of ICT, Mobile Phones and Other Electronic Devices
- Policy on Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children

## REGISTRATION AND ROUTINE SAFETY CHECKS ON GIRLS, INCLUDING INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT TO DO IF A PUPIL GOES MISSING

### **Registration and regular checks are essential.**

Times should be stated and emphasised at the start of term and displayed prominently in Year Group areas.

The morning check is confirmed **by registration at 08:25)**

Morning checks on Sundays must be thorough so that even when there is a lie in there should be a check at a suitable time e.g. 11:00 latest. Girls do not have to be up and dressed but you or one of your team should have seen them all. House lists are very useful for this and you should never seek to economise on their use.

Afternoon registration is at 14:00.

Between 17:25 and 19:00 each girl should check in with either the resident on duty or Sixth Formers who have been properly briefed and who are overseen by the resident on duty.

All girls must be seen **before bed**. No notes on doors or reports from friends are acceptable. If you are sharing the duty you must arrange a brief rendezvous with your colleague in order to confirm that you are sure all girls are accounted for.

Lesson attendance is recorded on CMIS by the teacher.

### **Missing pupils**

If a girl is missing you should search your area, alert colleagues and also question the missing girl's friends.

If you find her quite easily you should deliver a warning and log it on her discipline record sheet.

If it takes more than 15 minutes to locate her, a punishment such as getting up promptly on the rising bell and Year Group duties should be given and recorded.

If the girl cannot be found you should report to Deputy Head or, if she is unavailable, the Headmaster. They will then direct the search.

**Once a girl has been missing for 2 hours** at whatever time of day or night and she has not been traced her parents or UK guardian will be contacted and the police informed. You should never make such calls without the approval of CMC, Hm or their nominated substitute.

Checks on the signing out books and at mealtimes should be routine. Any problems should be dealt with promptly and disciplinary measures put in place.

See also: **Pupil Supervision Policy**