



WESTMINSTER CITY  
SCHOOL

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

<b>Scrutinised and agreed by</b>	Full Governing Body
<b>Next Review by</b>	Spring 2021
<b>Responsibility</b>	School Leadership Group / Safeguarding Governor

This policy is designed to support our expressed mission which is that Westminster City School offers exceptional learning opportunities promoting wisdom, integrity, compassion and excellence within an inclusive community. The school's dynamic Christian foundation and rich heritage help equip each person with the life skills needed to flourish.

Westminster City School fully recognises its responsibilities for Child Protection and this policy and code of practice has been written in line with the legal framework as defined in the Children's Acts of 1989 and 2004 and with the recommendations for schools in the documents 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DOE September 2019), 'Working Together to Safeguard children' (DOE July 2018), Sexual Violence And Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges (Govt May 2018), the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Acts of 2006 and 2012 and the Care Act (2014). We also follow the statutory duty with regards to 'Prevent' and follow agreed inter-agency procedures put in place by the Bi-Borough Safeguarding Partnership (June 2019).

As a school we recognise that the protection and welfare of a pupil or student, hence referred to as a young person must always be the first priority and that young people have a fundamental right to learn in a safe environment and to be protected from harm. We have young people in our school from Year 7 to Year 13, of ages 11 to 19 years, all of whom are subject to this policy.

**Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. The main elements to our policy are to:**

- Ensure we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with pupils
- Raise awareness of child protection issues and equip young people with the skills needed to keep them safe, including providing input within our existing curriculum, through all key stages.
- Implement and continue to develop procedures for identifying and reporting actual or suspected cases, or suspected cases, of concern and we will then work effectively with and in liaison with parents/carers and other professionals.
- On referral, we will follow advice given to us by the professional bodies concerned regarding notifying parents/carers and the immediate safety of the young person.
- Support identified young people in accordance with their agreed child protection plan.
- Establish a safe environment in which young people can learn or develop.
- Make appropriate links and references to policies in related areas such as discipline and anti-bullying.

**We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with young people, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse or of concerns. The school will therefore:**

- Establish and maintain an environment where young people feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to
  - Ensure that young people know that there are adults in school whom they can approach if they are worried, being especially alert to the additional barriers in recognising abuse or neglect where a child has SEN or a disability.
  - Provide members of the school community with appropriate external support agency details
  - Include opportunities in the curriculum and during form time to develop the skills that they need to recognise how to stay safe.
  - Ensure that young people receive guidance regarding appropriate use of on-line and social media websites
  - Ensure that computer facilities and websites available for use in school include automatic filtering and monitoring systems whereby inappropriate words, phrases or web sites can be identified. There is also an acceptable user policy displayed for any stake holder on accessing any school computer.
- Any disregard of this policy will be investigated, with appropriate action being taken.

**We will follow the procedures set out by the Bi-Borough Safeguarding Partnership, as well as those set out in the ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ document and take account of guidance issued to us to:**

- Ensure that we continue to have a designated lead (Miss Kim World) and deputies (Mr Christopher Rees, Ms Jennifer Lockyer & Ms Sarah Mole) for child protection and safeguarding who have received appropriate training and support for this role
- Ensure that we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection (Ms Sandrine Sauvel) and that governors receive training from the United Westminster & Grey Coat Foundation.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and the governing body know the name of the designated people responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure that all staff, as well as volunteers, receive detailed training regarding Child Protection and Safeguarding and procedures and Prevent Channel awareness, with all staff receiving regularly updated information, including an update at the INSET at the start of the academic year. This includes reference to the school’s behaviour policy, the school’s procedures for managing children who are missing education and the staff code of conduct.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the members of staff designated for child protection.
- Visitors are chaperoned on site. A signing in system at Reception and the issuing of a visitor pass and lanyard clearly identifies visitors to the school.
- Ensure that our Lockdown drill is clearly known and practised annually.
- Ensure that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus
- Notify social services if there is an absence or exclusion of a pupil who is the subject of a child protection plan or who is a Looked After Child.
- Develop effective links with the relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at case conferences, core group and Children in Need/Team around the Family meetings. This will also include providing information for section 17 and 47 assessments and providing written reports as required.
- Keep high quality written and dated records of concerns about young people, which separate fact, allegation, hearsay and opinion.
- Ensure that all records are maintained accurately and kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in a locked location.
- Report annually to the governors on the effectiveness of the Child Protection policy and on associated issues over the previous year.
- Follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure that safe recruitment practices are always followed.
- Any alternative provision provider used by the school is sent a copy of our Safeguarding & Child Protection policy, as well as details of our Safeguarding Team. In turn we request a copy of their own policy and staff contact details.

We recognise that young people who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. Our school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of young people at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the young person through:

- The content of the curriculum
- The Christian ethos of the school which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued
- The school behaviour policy, which is a strong tool in supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the young person knows that although some

behaviour is unacceptable, they are valued and not to blame for any abuse which has occurred.

- Recognising that young people with special educational needs may be especially vulnerable to abuse, with staff expected to take extra care with them to interpret correctly signs of abuse or neglect. The designated teachers work closely with the AHT (Inclusion & Partnerships) regarding this.
- Checking when we visit students at alternative provision placements that they have no safeguarding concerns that they wish to raise.
- Specific PSHCE off timetable days being provided for each year group where issues are dealt with and discussed.
- Awareness of topical issues, which in recent times have included areas such as Female Genital Mutilation, Sexting, Honour Based Violence, Acid Attacks, Transgender awareness, Upskirting, Radicalisation and Extremism which could affect members of the school community. External agency guidance will be sought where appropriate regarding such issues.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the young person such as social services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), EWO, education psychology service, medical services or the police service.
- Ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at the previous educational provider of any young person coming on roll is contacted, to request the transfer of any appropriate information.
- Ensure that if a young person who is on, or at any time has been on, the child protection register or has received social services or external agency support leaves the school, that information regarding them is immediately forwarded on to the DSL at their new education provider or to the relevant social services department if they are leaving education.

## **Types of abuse and neglect**

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. Multiple issues will often overlap with one another.

### **Abuse**

Is a form of maltreatment of a young person. Someone may abuse or neglect a young person by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them, or more rarely, by others (eg via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another young person or persons.

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical abuse to a young person. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a young person.

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a young person, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the young person's emotional development. It may involve conveying to young people 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 young person opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. These may include interactions that are beyond a young person's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the young person participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing young people frequently to feel frightened or in

danger, or the exploitation or corruption of young people. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a young person, although it may occur alone.

### ***Sexual abuse***

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the young person 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 the touching of the outside of clothing. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving young people in looking at, or in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a young person in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other young people.

### ***Neglect***

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the young person's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a young person is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment) and clothing, failing to protect a young person from physical and emotional harm or danger, ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers) or ensure adequate access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a young person's basic emotional needs.

### ***Indications of abuse***

Because of our day to day contact with individual young people, teachers and other staff in school are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop. Bruises, lacerations and burns may be apparent, particularly when young people change their clothes for physical education and sports activities. Possible indicators of physical neglect, such as inadequate clothing, poor growth, hunger or apparently deficient nutrition, and of emotional abuse, such as excessive dependence or attention-seeking, may be noticeable. Sexual abuse may exhibit physical signs, or lead to a substantial behavioural change including precocity or withdrawal. Staff should be aware that young people who are victims of abuse often display emotional or behavioural difficulties.

These signs and others can do no more than give rise to suspicion - they are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred. But teachers and other members of staff should be alert to all such signs.

### ***Confidentiality***

Child protection raises issues of confidentiality which should be clearly understood by all staff.

Staff have a professional responsibility to identify, report and share relevant information about the protection of young people with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies, as well as provide a safe and caring environment for our young people and allow them to develop the confidence to voice ideas, feelings and opinions, in order to ensure their safety and wellbeing and allow them to develop the confidence to voice ideas, feelings and opinions. If a young person confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff stays calm, listens, avoids being judgemental and tells the student sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for the young person's own sake, and hence must share this information. Within that context, the young person should, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it. Staff who receive information about young people and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.

## Guidelines on normal physical contact

Staff are generally advised not to make physical contact with a young person, although it is accepted that this may happen as a last resort and that therefore some degree of contact can be unavoidable. The '**Use of reasonable force- advice to head teachers and governing bodies' document is** available for reference for all staff. This forbids corporal punishment, but allows all teachers to use reasonable force to prevent a young person from:

- committing a criminal offence
- injuring themselves or others
- damaging property
- acting in a way that is counter to maintaining good order and discipline at the school.

Staff should be aware that any use of force must be 'reasonable' and parents have the right to complain if they feel a teacher has acted in an 'unreasonable' manner. If any use of control or physical restraint has occurred then a record must be made of this and the young persons' parent/carer informed. DfES guidance on restraining young people can be found in the health and safety folder of the shared area. Staff other than teaching staff may use physical force if necessary, provided they have been authorised by the Head Teacher to be in charge of the young people.

## Safer Recruitment

Safer recruitment practices are adhered to. Examples of our procedure includes:

- The panel has safeguarding trained staff on it
- Application forms are used, not curriculum vitae, and work history is scrutinised
- Two references are taken up
- DBS checks are carried out
- Contractors, if regular, are required to submit evidence of a satisfactory DBS check. Reliance is placed on the sending bodies only for those organisations for whom no due diligence has been carried out.

## Key Points of our school policy

- If you are concerned about a young person, or suspect that abuse is taking place, it is your statutory duty to act upon it by reporting it as directed by the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.
- Staff should be able to identify signs and symptoms of abuse, including specific safeguarding issues.
- You must always report your concerns immediately, whether this is inappropriate adult behaviour, a disclosure from a young person or merely you having concerns. Never wait to 'see what happens'.
- Never question a young person or try to investigate yourself and avoid asking leading questions. You could prejudice a case by probing for more information than is given. If an investigation is necessary it will be handled by safeguarding and child protection professionals.
- In order to minimise the risk of accusations being made against staff as a result of their daily conduct with students, all staff should familiarise themselves with the school's expectations regarding professional conduct (see Staff Handbook)